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# GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

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Inside...

# The Open

Open Review Special

Behind the scenes at Muirfield

ALSO INSIDE... THE RICHMOND GC : TORO FINALISTS



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Photograph by Richard Jenkinson



## A classic summer links test

**An extraordinary final round 66 by Phil Mickelson to clinch the 2013 Open Championship at a sun-drenched Muirfield will live long in the memory of all those who witnessed it.**

Great shot-making, ball striking, considerable patience and a quite brilliant putting display combined to produce a round that is already being talked about as one of the top ten major winning final day performances. It capped a superb Championship played on one of the world's greatest courses in absolutely immaculate condition. Course Manager Colin Irvine and his team presented a classic summer links test, the greens were firm and fast but utterly true, the rough was long but the test was fair.

Unfortunately, as is so often the case these days, there was a hint of controversy. Stronger than forecast winds on day one drew some of the moisture from the putting surfaces meaning that green speed increased as play went on. This led to some criticism of the pin positions but also to some of the players being asked to give their views on the actual condition of the course. Indeed the eventual champion opined after round one that some parts of the greens were actually dying! It is a concern that the watching public can take such comments at face value. But the following three days showed vividly that the course was in fact being beautifully managed by Colin and his team, with support from both the local support team and the additional greenkeepers that the R&A now bring in from fellow Open Championship venues. The loud cheers for the greenstaff at the final presentation spoke volumes for the overall presentation of the course.

For the 29th successive time the volunteer BIGGA Support Team played their part, and it was a great privilege to have the opportunity to spend the week with this year's selected few. The variety in age and experience is vast but the

enthusiasm levels are consistently high and I'm pleased to say that was true right up to the end - even though all four rounds were played out in energy sapping heat.

As always at this event there are a myriad of tales to tell, many of which are captured in the Review (pages 20-25) but one of the highlights for me was hearing of the generosity and welcome shown to our visitor from the US Sean Sullivan. After scheduling a few additional days in the area before the event, Sean utilised the BIGGA Bulletin Boards to contact greenkeepers in Scotland to possibly give a course tour or contribute a day or two's free labour. The response was extraordinary with BIGGA members offering him bed, board and travel. Part One of his two-part account of a memorable trip is on page 66.

The Open Championship also provides a fantastic platform for BIGGA to engage with the many golfing bodies that govern and support the game of golf in the UK and beyond. The Chairman and I took the opportunity to meet with the Home Unions, the R&A and numerous other golfing associations during the week and productive discussions were held on topics as diverse as golf management education pathways, sustainability and golf development.

I would like to publicly congratulate Colin Irvine and his team for a job well done and to thank the R&A for continuing to work with us to provide such a quality support team to the world's greatest golf tournament.

The Open is not the only show in town this month; hearty congratulations are due to Les Howkins and all at The Richmond Golf Club for winning Golf Inc's prestigious 'Renovation of the Year' title against a strong field of competitors sporting many times their budget. A profile of the work - which involved a major overhaul of the course - begins on page 34.

Enjoy the read.

**Jim Croxton, BIGGA CEO**

A look at what's inside the magazine this month

**AUGUST 2013**

## FEATURES

### 16 The final eight

Find out who has won through to the final of the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year award

### 20 Behind the scenes at The Open 2013

How this year's Open Support Team survived a red-hot Muirfield

### 26 Visit the States

Apply to be a part of the next Bernhard's BIGGA Delegation

### 28 A double edged sword for soil moisture management

We put Qualibra through its paces at Kings Hill Golf Club in Kent

### 34 A Rich reward

How Richmond Golf Club won a prestigious award

### 40 You've got the power!

How to get the most from PowerPoint presentations

### 42 Brushing-in top dressing...the options

Laurence Pithie examines methods used past and present for working top dressing into the turf surface

### 46 Hands on with ATT INFiNiSystem

The verdict on the new greens mower from ATT

### 56 How well do you know your greens?

How the Greenstester can help you monitor the performance of your greens

## TORO Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year 2013

### The final eight

The finalists for the annual Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year competition, held at BIGGA House, have now been chosen. Here's the shortlist...

Here are this year's finalists for the overall Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year prize, who will all be taking part in the final at BIGGA HQ next month.

Who will succeed Thomas Fildes? Thomas has already enjoyed a trophy for the States and secured another job since he was the award last year - although when a boost it can be for your career.

Even being nominated is an achievement, so congratulations to the candidates. The final consists of two intense days during which there will be asked to complete a written task focusing on the golf course here at Ashurst Manor and interviewed by a panel of judges from Toro and BIGGA.

The winner and two runners-up will then be selected. The winner will travel to the USA on an all expenses paid trip courtesy of Toro. This will be the right to see and include an exciting study course at the University of Massachusetts.

They will also get the opportunity to visit the GCMA's Golf Industry Show in Orlando (shown right) and report back to the conference. The runners-up will receive a paid trip to the Conference for Learning Education programme at BTME 2014.

To be eligible for the next award, candidates should be a greenkeeping student studying for a qualification up to Level Three. Students are nominated by their course tutor.

Thanks to everyone who entered, including those who did not make the shortlist - there's nothing to stop you reapplying again next year. Good luck to all the finalists - the winner will be announced next month.



<p><b>JOSHUA THORLEY</b> Born: 17 February 1985 Role: Assistant Greenkeeper Club: The Richmond Golf Club Handicap: 24 College: Myerscough</p> <p>Joshua began his working life as a student but found his true calling as a greenkeeper after joining The Richmond in 2010. He is studying for his level 3 qualification, and is looking to work overseas and gain experience at working as a tournament. He would eventually like to progress to Deputy then Course Manager. He enjoys football, golf and runs his own sports clothing website.</p>	<p><b>SCOTT ROBERTS</b> Born: 23 September 1990 Role: Assistant Greenkeeper Club: Handley Common Golf Club Handicap: 6 College: Merrist Wood</p> <p>Scott grew up on Handley Common and spent a lot of work experience at Queenswood Golf Club, where he became involved in a project of extending it 21 acres. In 2011 he joined Handley Common where he works alongside his Course. He's joined the support teams at a series of tournaments including the BMW PGA at Wentworth and has joined BIGGA's Survey committee. Ultimately he would like to work abroad. He enjoys golf, football and cars.</p>
<p><b>SAM EVANS</b> Born: 13 August 1988 Role: Deputy Head Greenkeeper Club: Oakland Park Golf Club Handicap: 24 College: Myerscough</p> <p>Sam worked for some time at Hoythya Park where he passed a series of qualifications, before recently moving to Oakland Park. He wants to improve his maintenance knowledge and ultimately become a Course Manager. He's had a highly successful few years as the holder of prizes in Sports Management &amp; Coaching and got married last year. He enjoys all manner of sports especially cricket, and is also a fan of football, golf and rugby.</p>	<p><b>DANIEL HARDY</b> Born: 13 December 1984 Role: Deputy Course Manager / Mechanic Club: Crown Hill Estate Golf Club Handicap: 14 College: Myerscough</p> <p>Know golfer Daniel started his career as an assistant motor mechanic before undertaking a Motor Engineering course. He then took on his current dual role at Crown Hill Estate and plans to start his Level 3 studies soon, and holds ambitions of not only managing a course but eventually undertaking the Master Greenkeeper qualification. As well as golf enjoy chess, engineering, football and cricket.</p>
<p><b>REN WATERS</b> Born: 23 May 1984 Role: Assistant Greenkeeper Club: Shrewsbury Golf Club Handicap: 12 College: Hasehead</p> <p>Ren began greenkeeping in 2010 after initially working in manufacturing, and after a period of work experience at Shrewsbury Golf Club realised it was the job for him. He has aspirations of becoming a Head Greenkeeper and also would like to work in the USA. He is currently studying a Sports Turf NVQ2.</p>	<p><b>JAMES WILKINSON</b> Born: 29 April 1981 Role: Assistant Greenkeeper Club: Highlands Golf Club Handicap: No College: Plumpton</p> <p>James was working for a landscaping firm when the opportunity of a job offering him to be on a local golf course, and being involved in the course he started to get into greenkeeping. He moved on the job before joining the rolling parcel at Highlands. He's enjoyed this role highly and has been supported by the club in his college studies. Outside of work he enjoys fishing, running and watching football.</p>
<p><b>LUKE TURNER</b> Born: 24 May 1990 Role: Greenkeeper Club: Winterset Golf Club Handicap: 28 College: Harrogate</p> <p>Luke is currently studying for his level 3. He has regularly volunteered to join the team at Devonshire Park which holds tennis tournaments, while continuing to put all his efforts into Winterset. He would like to gain international experience at some point in his career. He's always been fascinated by links golf courses and is a keen surfer and rugby player.</p>	<p><b>PAUL WALSH</b> Born: 5 May 1981 Role: First Assistant Greenkeeper Club: The Royal Dublin Golf Club Handicap: No College: Tralee - College of Anatomy Horticulture in Dublin</p> <p>Paul began his career studying Mechanical Engineering but became highly interested in turf care management, and in 2008 began working at Palmerston House Golf Club in County Kildare. He joined The Royal Dublin Golf Club in 2010 and after achieving his FETAC Advanced Certificate in Greenkeeping was promoted to First Assistant. He hopes to progress to Deputy Head Greenkeeper in time.</p>





20



46



56

## REGULARS

- 3 Welcome from BIGGA
- 6 Chairman's Word
- 8 Newsdesk
- 12 Membership News
- 14 Learning & Development News
- 18 New Products
- 48 Around the Green
- 51 Puzzle Page
- 60 Buyers' Guide
- 66 The Back Nine

*Cover photography by Richard Jenkinson, Deputy Golf Course Manager at G West, and a member of the BIGGA Support Team at The Open 2013*



The official monthly magazine of  
**British and International  
 Golf Greenkeepers Association**



# Chairman's Word

National Chairman, Tony Smith, gives his thoughts for the month

## Muirfield signals a year to cheer

**A fabulously sunny week at Muirfield marked a year for me as Chairman. The 12 months really have flown by, and now seems the perfect time to take stock of the last year, and look at what the Association has done well on and the things we need to improve.**

Becoming Chairman has given me a great chance to get in touch with members I don't see very often. I have been surprised by a few things.

I think the regional roadshows broke down a few barriers, and the regional conferences were also well attended and very successful. One of the disappointments has been the lack of feedback in from members to the roadshows. We knew that members wanted us to go out and see them, which we did, but we haven't had much response from them.

I think one of the reasons is simple – lack of time. I'm well aware that you are all hugely busy on your courses, particularly after the terrible weather last year, and I know this has also been the case when other events have not been as well attended as in the past. I understand the circumstances completely but my message hasn't changed from the moment I became chairman – you get out what you put in and I urge you to attend as many sectional and regional events as possible.

The course at Muirfield was second to none, a true links course and the perfect test for the world's best golfers – which was shown by the fact that only the winner managed a below par score, exactly how it should be.

Our Support Team have again done outstandingly well and made a really positive impression on everyone they met, really showing the Association in the best possible light.

It was a fairly young team this year, along with a few more experienced guys, but their enthusiasm, professionalism and commitment was wonderful to see. Every single one of them did an absolutely marvellous job.

I'd also like to thank the staff from BIGGA HQ who came up to support the event. Rachael and Tracey did a phenomenal organisational job, and



**“You get out what you put in and I urge you to attend as many sectional and regional events as possible”**

John and Sandra performed a vital role throughout at the first tee organising the guys as they prepared to head out on to the course. It was also excellent to see all the board members in attendance performing hands-on roles – from first tee duties to driving minibuses and match raking. Jim and I had some hugely worthwhile and progressive meetings with, among others, the R&A and the Home Unions, and it's great to see everyone getting together at golf's showpiece event to support the industry and move it forward.

I'd also like to say it's a shame that I just haven't had the time to return to Teesside. But I've heard many people say that it's in excellent condition, and it makes me feel proud that I've left it in the hugely capable hands of Gary Evans and all the team there. I miss it and promise I'll be back soon.

I had the chance prior to The Open to

attend Turf Science Live at Wentworth – this was a brilliant event featuring superb technical briefings. I know I went away having learnt a lot and I'm sure everyone else did too.

I also had a message from my predecessor Andy Mellon who sends his regards to one and all. As he's now based in Qatar he's become more accustomed to the sort of weather we were lucky enough to enjoy at Muirfield. I liked Lee Westwood's interview where he joked that he didn't realise the time he spent in Florida would acclimatise him for the Scottish weather – sums it up nicely.

Cheers  
Tony

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## JOHN'S CHARITY WHIZZ

John Hall, Golf Course Manager at Tewkesbury Park Hotel & Country Club, is running a half marathon for charity on October 6.

John's best friend has a son with Cerebral Palsy and is restricted to a wheelchair, and has been helped out by 'Whizz Kidz' - a charity who help kids who have mobility issues.

John said: "Seeing the cost of my friend's son's chair really opened my eyes. As well as paying for the chair they had to widen the door frames in their house to accommodate it, and also buy ramps. This charity helps by supplying everything from wheelchairs to toys."

He will be running the Royal Parks Marathon in London and there are various ways to donate. Either call John on 07900 620987, or text kidz96 then £1, £2, £5 or £10 to 70070 to make a donation to this hugely worthwhile cause.



## NEIL SALUTES 25 YEARS

Neil Fauble, Course Manager at East Herts Golf Club, has marked 25 years at the parkland course and says he's loved every minute.

Neil joined the club straight from school and served a four year apprenticeship. He continued to work at the course - and his career - before becoming Course Manager ten years ago.

He said: "I used to watch The Masters when I was a kid and marvel out how fantastic the golf courses looked. I thought 'someone's got to look after that, what a great job' and that's how it all started.

"I've loved every minute, the best thing about the job is there is a different challenge every day. Of course it's very, very hard work and there's so much to get involved with, for example today I've been painting fence posts. But when you get great feedback from

golfers it makes it all worthwhile - we recently had a members match versus a local club and the visitors said the course looked superb, which was so satisfying to hear.

"But my main priority is to keep the people who pay their annual fees happy."

He added that members had recently asked him where the club's finances had been directed, so Neil and his team made a point of putting all their machinery on show during a competition.

He said: "They generally only see one guy on a mower so they were amazed we had so much kit when they walked past, and began to understand where their membership fees were spent.

"It's all part of communicating with them, because if they don't like the club they will leave, simple as that."

## TORO FINALIST SAM IS RADIO STAR

Sam Evans, Deputy Head Greenkeeper at Oakland Park Golf Club, appeared on Radio One recently as part of a regular feature called "Here all week".

Early morning DJ Dev seemed fascinated by Sam's job and the fact he is a finalist for the Toro Student of the Year 2013.

But Dev seemed to be under the impression that greenkeeping was a matter of landscaping and occasional hedge trimming...so it was over to Sam to try and educate him! If you've appeared on TV, radio or in newspapers let Steve Castle know and spread the word.



# ROUTE 66 WINS SCOTTISH NATIONAL

This year's Scottish National Tournament was hosted by Largs Golf Club on Thursday 13 June and drew an excellent 62 competitors from all over Scotland who benefitted from glorious sunshine throughout the day.

A parkland course, it was originally designed as a 9-hole course before becoming a full 18-holer in 1953. Playing to its full length from medal tees it covers some 6150 yards with a par of 70 and a CSS of 71.

This year, we had our own version of Ivor Robson on the first tee to announce each player. John Sneddon has worked with the PGA on a number of their events and kindly agreed to participate adding a touch of class to proceedings. First on tee at 11.15am was a guest, Gordon Clarke from West Kilbride Golf Club. Subsequent games then teed off every 9 minutes until the very last game at 2.15pm comprising an East/West combination of Gregor Wilson (Turnberry) and Robbie Murdoch (Dundas Park).

The standard of golfer taking part was very high with more than half the field being single handicappers. Indeed it proved to be one of our lowest handicappers that turned in the performance of the day to win the Championship trophy. Gordon Sangster from Cathkin Braes Golf Club produced a magnificent gross score of 66 that included an eagle, 4 birdies and only 2 bogies. Gordon managed to get to the turn in only 29 blows narrowly missing out on a short putt for the 28.

Not to be completely overshadowed by Gordon, Iain MacDonald on his home course recorded a great score of 68 gross and less his 2 handicap won our Friendship Trophy with a nett 66. In addition to winning the trophies, Gordon and Iain will have their entries to the BIGGA National Tournament at Frilford Heath paid for them and will receive expenses towards travel and accommodation.

There was one common theme shared by all competitors on the day, their unequivocal praise of the golf course condition. Our whole-hearted congratulations are reserved for Iain Barr, Course Manager and his team for producing an excellent facility for the competition. Even the tricky position of the 18th flag,



Iain MacDonald

thanks to George Morrison for that one, didn't diminish the players' admiration of the course.

Throughout our day we were treated to a very warm welcome by Keith Howie (Secretary), Andy Fullen (Professional) and the other members of the team.

Andy O'Hara, Scottish Chairman, was on hand at the end of the day to thank the captain Brian Fulton, the committee, Keith and everyone else for the tremendous hospitality that was received and presented a Quaich to the club as a thank you for the courtesy of the course and clubhouse. Keith thanked Andy and reaffirmed the club's delight at hosting this event and for the hard work of all greenkeeping staff required at golf courses throughout the country.

Congratulations to all who took part and we hope to see everyone at next year's championship at Renfrew Golf Club on Thursday 12 June.

*John Young*



Gordon Sangster

## PRIZE LIST

### SGGA CHALLENGE CUP (SCRATCH CHAMPION)

Gordon Sangster Cathkin Braes 66

### FRIENDSHIP TROPHY (NET CHAMPION)

Iain MacDonald Largs 68 2 66

### RANSOMES TROPHY – 1st CLASS

1. Kenneth Mitchell St Andrews Links 77 5 72  
2. Dougie McIntosh Cathkin Braes 77 2 75  
3. Gary Tough Letham Grange 73 +2 75

### PATTISON TROPHY – 2nd CLASS

1. Martin Lothian Turnberry 82 12 70  
2. John Watson Downfield 86 12 74  
3. Iain Barr Largs 85 10 75

### STRI TROPHY (St. IVES JUBILEE) – 3rd CLASS

1. John Barr Cardross 90 16 74  
2. John Wilson Irvine Bogside 94 18 76  
3. Michael Maxton East Kilbride 98 22 76

### DICK AITKEN TROPHY – BEST HEAD GREENKEEPER

Derek Wilson Irvine Bogside 81 8 73

### M & M TROPHY – BEST ASSISTANT

David Simpson Crieff 71 +1 72

### SIGGA TROPHY – BEST VETERAN

Archie Dunn Auchterarder 79 5 74

### ST MUNGO TROPHY – AYRSHIRE SECTION

Iain McDonald Largs 66  
Martin Lothian Turnberry 70  
David Nelson Trade 72  
Derek Wilson Irvine Bogside 73  
TOTAL 281

### QUAICH – TRADE PRIZE

David Nelson Nelson Vecchio 77 5 72

### NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP QUALIFIERS

Scratch: Gordon Sangster, Cathkin Braes Golf Club  
Net: Iain McDonald, Largs Golf Club

# INNOVATION CORNER!

We're still hunting for the unusual innovations greenkeepers have on their courses – and Stuart Yarwood, Course Manager at Lymm Golf Club, has several!

He said: "When out deep slitting weekly during the winter we found the slitter removes the dew off the green but left a little strip one inch wide in between the rear rollers. One of our lads, Robert Cooper, fitted a scrap piece of astro turf to cover the gap, and brush the little strip of dew off as he went along, leaving the surface right for our visitors and members."

"The next is our drainage trench gravel filling machine, or 'Nellie' as we call her, (after the elephant).

"It's a piece of plywood attached to traffic cone with a length of hose bolted on. We can drop the tail board on the workman and fit this in seconds. Then when we have excavated our drainage trenches, and installed the pipe, we can back fill the trench, by straddling the trench with the workman, with large or small gravel in a fraction of the time by hand and without spilling a drop. Saves on shovels and backs.

"Thirdly, we found that some drains were capping over with grass clippings, wear and tear over time, and we needed to uncap these. We tried with half moons and by hand but it was very slow. We needed to uncap down to 6" till we hit the clean gravel then we could replace with clean sand and restore the effectiveness of the drain.

"So we purchased an old Sisis turf cutter (18" wide turfs) and chopped and rewelded the cutting blade so that it can cut 5" wide. We now mark the drain line by finding the gravel line in the ground with a probe, and mark the centre. We mark the centre of the tractor bonnet, we drop the implement into the ground and it shaves out the waste material on top of the drain live to a depth of 6" to clean gravel.

"This is simply forked off onto a waiting cart and away to our compost heap. Really saves a monumental amount of time in a soul destroying task. I feel it's hugely important to find an efficient way of doing tasks both from an operations and moral point of view."



## JIMMY LEAVES NORTH EAST SECTION

Jimmy Richardson has left the North East section after many years of service.

He said: "Having served as Section Secretary/ dogsbody I have decided to retire from all section duties and would like to take this opportunity to thank past Committee members for their support over the years.

"Special mention to my other two helpers Steve Pope and Russ Black. Steve has also decided to retire but Russ is staying on as Section Chairman.

"Now we have a young energetic Committee taking over headed by Simon Olver of Percy Wood GC I would ask all members to give him a lot of support as he's working very hard on pushing the Section forward. Other members are Glen Baxter, Michael Gunn, David Wilkinson and James Parker.

"New competitions are being arranged as well as lectures and seminars for the Autumn and Winter so please support the North East Section as much as you can."

# CHALARA ASH LATEST

Dr Terry Mabbett updates us with the recent news about Chalara ash dieback



Chalara ash dieback has been firing warning shots at the UK government's management plans but the two latest salvos were right on target.

The first shot from Wales hit one of the three main planks of Defra's Chalara Management Plan below the water line, while the salvo from Devon was a top deck direct hit.

First main plank of Defra's Chalara Management Plan (March 2013) is the

creation of a disease free zone of counties along the western edge of England comprising Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, Gloucestershire and up through the West Midlands.

Underpinning the programme is assistance to forest and woodland owners of recently planted ash confirmed with chalara.

They will be given grants to dig up and destroy the ash trees and plant with

alternative species. General idea is to slow the westward spread of the disease from current hotbeds in East Anglia and Kent/ East Sussex.

Even if this 'generosity' had been extended to the amenity and landscape sectors including golf courses (Greenkeeper International May 2013), and used to cover all recently planted ash (healthy as well as infected), success was unlikely considering this pathogen is disseminated by airborne spores and the sheer ubiquity and frequency of its common ash host.

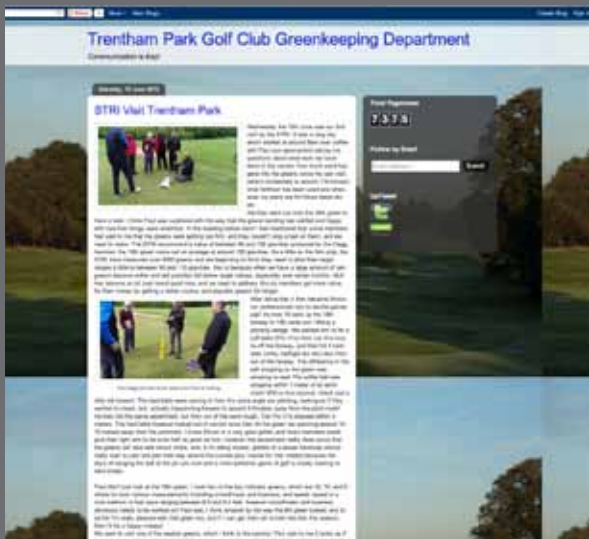
Recent events are proving this thinking to be right. In May 2013 Chalara ash dieback was found in the wider Welsh environment at Ferrybridge (south of Carmarthen town) in Carmarthenshire. This leaves the door wide open for spores to be picked up and carried eastwards into western England by strong south westerly prevailing winds.

But that is all 'red herring' thinking since chalara was actually identified in the west of England wider environment in July 2013 in woodland between Exeter and Tiverton in Devon.

Forestry Commission (FC) did not reveal the exact location, although BBC Devon said the outbreak was at Byway Farm near Tiverton. According to the BBC, FC said the disease must have been on these trees when they were planted in 1996/1997.

This is highly unlikely. After 16-17 years the disease would have already spread far and wide. In 1996/1997 Chalara ash dieback disease was still confined to Poland and Lithuania, and unlikely to have arrived that early in the UK on imported planting material. In those 16-17 years it has moved westwards from Poland to reach Pas de Calais in France.

## BLOGGING AT TRENTHAM PARK



This month's featured blog is from Leigh Swann, Head Greenkeeper at Trentham Park Golf Club.

He started the blog using 'blogger' in January and has already had over 7,000 views – plus it's improving the communication between Leigh, his team and the members.

He said: "After improving the club's website the year before I wanted a clear concise way of communicating out to the membership.

"I also wanted to give them a way, and means of asking questions, and for me to answer them honestly and truthfully.

"I often get members stopping me on the course telling me how much they enjoyed reading it, and comment on how easy it is to understand. I think they appreciate the honesty.

"The thing that has worked out

best is the ability for members to comment on the blogposts. So if they don't understand anything they can always ask!

"I think an important thing is not to ignore the complaints that come through. If the greens are bad, then explain why!

"I use 'blogger' which is free and enables you to post pictures and videos to it completely free. It's connected to your Google account so everything blends in well, and is easy to use."

What advice would he give greenkeepers thinking of setting up a blog?

"Take your time deciding on what you want. Try to get it integrated into the club's website, so it's easier for your members to find."

See for yourself at <http://trentthamparkgolfclub.blogspot.co.uk>



# Membership News

The latest news from BIGGA

This month we look at how you can use our new link-up with Arco to kit you and your team out with discount workwear

## BIGGA TEAMS UP WITH ARCO FOR DISCOUNT WORKWEAR

**BIGGA and Arco Limited are pleased to announce a new partnership which will enable BIGGA members to take advantage of special terms agreed against a core range of products covering waterproofs, workwear, safety footwear, personal protective equipment, workplace safety items and Arco's range of landscaping equipment.**

As well as the terms agreed on a core range of items there are range discounts across the rest of Arco's product range showing BIGGA members further savings.

Arco is the UK's leading supplier of personal protective equipment, workwear and workplace safety products offering a world-class range of over 170,000 products. As experts in safety, Arco is widely recognised as a provider of specialist advice through their network of 42 locations across the UK and Ireland and this is further supported by their own Training and Consultancy division, offering tailor-made safety and training packages. Each BIGGA member will have the support of a local Arco Account Manager who

will be able to offer help and advice on product selection, standards and other general health and safety matters.

One BIGGA member who is a long-term supporter of Arco's range is Peter Craig (bottom right) Course Manager at the Hurlingham Club in Fulham, who has 25 full-time staff.

He said: "We get all manner of items from Arco, mostly health and safety equipment from ear protectors to overalls, gloves to chainsaw helmets – you name it, we've sourced it from them and it really is top quality equipment.

"They're very efficient and quick to respond. Delivery is always within two days and they also offer a next-day delivery service which has proved very useful in the past. I genuinely wouldn't hesitate to recommend Arco and their service to any BIGGA member, and I'm currently looking to place even more orders with them."

If you already have a trade account with Arco the terms agreed will now be loaded against your account and you can start to benefit from excellent discounts on a choice of quality safety products. However if you do not have an account with Arco but would like to take advantage



of these terms please complete contact your local Arco and request an account application form to complete and post back. You can find details of your local Arco at [www.arco.co.uk](http://www.arco.co.uk) using the branch locator tool on the homepage.



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John Young Sandra Raper



Clive Osgood

### OTHER USEFUL NUMBERS

(Full Members only)

Personal Accident Helpline  
0207 2048952

Greenkeepers Legal Assistance  
0800 177 7891

Lifestyle Counselling Helpline  
0844 770 1036  
[www.arclegal.co.uk/carefirst](http://www.arclegal.co.uk/carefirst)

Visit the BIGGA Stand  
at SALTEX - G98

# BIGGA

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# L&D News

The latest from the Learning and Development department at BIGGA



**Gold Key Individual Members:**  
Steven Tierney MG, Chris Lomas MG, Andrew Campbell MG CGCS, Ian MacMillan MG, Ian Morrison, Andrew Turnbull, W J Rogers, Sam Langrick, Espen Bergmann, Nick Gray

**Silver Key Individual Members:**  
Steve Dixon, Richard McGlynn, Douglas Duguid, Jaey Goodchild, Graham Wiley, Michael Beaton, Paul Jenkins, David Barker

The funding provided by Gold and Silver Key Sponsors is used to produce training and career aids, DVDs, CD Roms, field guides and provide refunds for training fees and subsidised learning and development courses. The funding also helps support seminars, workshops, courses, the lending library, careers advice, posters and manuals.

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## BIGGA ANNOUNCE OPEN-PANEL DEBATES AT SALTEX 2013

**In addition to the free-to-attend BIGGA day-long series of education presentations at this year's SALTEX (Sports Amenity & Landscape Trade Exhibition) national show at Windsor Racecourse, greenkeepers will find a number of open panel debates of interest as well as a showground packed with useful products, many of them being shown for the first time.**

The free-to-attend BIGGA Golf Education Day (on Wednesday September 4, visit [www.iogsaltex.com](http://www.iogsaltex.com) for details) will appeal to greenkeepers at courses of every size and type and will focus on drainage, bunkers, composts and disease management.

A number of panel debates will also appeal, including the 'Integrated control of pests, weeds and diseases: What does this

mean in practice?' Hosted by John Moverley, chairman of the Amenity Forum, the panellists for the session will include Paul Singleton, chairman of the Forum's Education and Training Committee; Will Kay, managing director of Languard; and Sheffield Council's David Wain.

As John Moverley says: "We are all aware of the need to take a more integrated approach to pest management but there remains many questions as to exactly

what this means or how we can achieve it – including addressing issues of effectiveness, costs and environmental factors."

Visit [www.iogsaltex.com](http://www.iogsaltex.com) for more details of the BIGGA Education Day, the full programme of SALTEX panel debates, exhibitor profiles and to register to attend SALTEX for free.

Don't forget BIGGA has a separate stand - G98 - at SALTEX. Come and see us!

### New BIGGA Education Scholarship supported by Ransomes Jacobsen

George Stephens, Deputy Course Manager at Exeter Golf & Country Club, is starting an NVQ Level 4 Amenity Horticulture Management Course @ Duchy College.

For more information on these fantastic educational opportunities please contact the L&D department at BIGGA House.

## GRADUATION AT MID SURREY

Royal Mid Surrey Deputy Head Greenkeepers Kevin Glazier and Harry Cannon recently visited Myerscough College to attend their Sportsturf foundation degree graduation ceremony.

Kevin and Harry completed the three-year online course in May and received their certificates on July 11.

At work at the 36-hole Royal Mid Surrey Club in south-west London, Harry is Deputy Head Greenkeeper of the Pam Barton course and Kev is the Deputy Head Greenkeeper on the JH Taylor course.

Keen triathlete and recent first-time father Kevin said: "The online foundation degree has helped to swiftly progress my career at Royal Mid-Surrey. With improved analytical and technical awareness I am much better equipped to add value into short-term practical operations, medium-term special projects and long-term greenkeeping strategies."

Former England under-18 karate champion Harry assesses the Myerscough course as a valuable addition to his CV to further his career ambitions.

He said: "This qualification provides me with the comfort and knowledge to be more expansive and dynamic with essential greenkeeping activities. It's also given me an introduction to management which I will serve me well when I progress my career to hopefully



becoming a Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager at some point."

RMS Courses Manager Gavin Kinsella commented: "The Club are very proud of Kevin and Harry. They were identified as bright young things some years ago and have fully embraced the Club's continuing investment in them. Their application to their studies was first-class and they are now an even more important asset to the team here."



## NEW BOOKS ADDED TO THE BIGGA LIBRARY

A series of management books have been added to the BIGGA library. Published by the Chartered Management Institute (CMI), they provide expert guidance on Managing Yourself and Others.

These books would be useful for anyone undertaking a management unit within their qualifications or for who have an interest in improving their management skills and knowledge.

Managing Yourself – this is for anyone who wants to further their career as a manager. Offering information on development and career planning; workplace relationships; managing time effectively; problem solving; decision making; managing your relationship with your boss and networking.

Managing Others: The Organisational Essentials – this focuses on the organisational aspects of managing those people that you are responsible for. Providing information on the

recruitment process; managing staff retention and turnover; 360° feedback; training and learning evaluation; succession planning; organisational culture; managing creativity; redundancy; managing the survivors and enabling a work-life balance.

Managing Others: Teams and Individuals – focusing on selecting and building a successful team. Providing information on getting the right people; using verbal communication effectively; building trust; delegation and empowering your people; SMART objectives; how to motivate the demotivated; coaching and mentoring and how to manage conflict.

The BIGGA Library service is a membership benefit. To borrow any of these books, access the BIGGA library via the Members area of the BIGGA website to place your order. Two books can be loaned for up to six weeks at a time. The books are sent out free of charge, however the borrower is responsible for the cost to return.

## Assistant Profile

*Our monthly look into the life of an assistant greenkeeper...*

**Name:** Steven Morris  
**Age:** 26  
**Club:** Royal Dornoch Golf Club  
**Position:** Assistant Greenkeeper  
**Nickname:** 'big man'



**1. How long have you been greenkeeping?** 9 years

**2. What was it about the career that attracted you?** Working outside, interest in maintaining sports turf areas, using machinery

**3. If you weren't a greenkeeper what do you think you'd be?** snowboard instructor/Work in a ski resort in Austria

**4. Which task do you most enjoy doing and why?** Working tractors, changing hole positions as you can decide where it goes!

**5. Which task do you least enjoy doing and why?** Cutting greens with a walk-behind mower because it is such a long job!

**6. What one thing would improve the greenkeepers' lot?** More respect from the golfer and general recognition for what we do as greenkeepers.

**7. Hobbies?** Golf, going out for weekends, skiing/snowboarding, cycling, hill walking, camping. Working on cars.

**8. Favourite Band?** Changes but at the moment - Mumford and Sons

**9. Who do you support?** In golf – Paul Lawrie, Darren Clarke

**10. What is your claim to fame?** None as yet.

# TORO®

## Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year 2013

# The final eight

The finalists for the annual Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year competition, held at BIGGA House, have now been chosen. Here's the shortlist...

Here are this year's finalists for the coveted Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year prize, who will all be bidding to walk away with the crown at the final at BIGGA HQ next month

Who will succeed Thomas Flavelle? Thomas has already enjoyed a superb trip to the States and secured another job since he won the award last year – showing what a boost it can be for your career.

Even being nominated is an achievement, so congratulations to the eight finalists.

The final consists of two intense days during which they will be asked to complete a written task focusing on the golf course here at Aldwark Manor and interviewed by a panel of judges from Toro and BIGGA.

The winner and two runners-up will then be selected.

The winner will head to the USA on an all expenses paid trip courtesy of Toro. This will last for eight weeks and include a six-week study course at the University of Massachusetts.

They will also get the opportunity to visit the GCSAA's Golf Industry Show in Orlando (shown right) and explore Toro's base in California.

The runners-up will receive a paid trip to the Continue to Learn education programme at BTME 2014.

To be eligible for the next award, candidates should be a greenkeeping student studying for a qualification up to Level Three. All entrants are nominated by their course tutor.

Thanks to everyone who entered, including those who did not make the shortlist – there's nothing to stop you entering again next year. Good luck to all the finalists – the winner will be announced next month.



**GI GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL**  
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**15 Weeks to BTME 2013**

**Thomas's travels**  
Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Thomas Flavelle took us aboard a life-changing eight weeks in the States, his reward for scooping the coveted prize last September

**CLIMATE CONTROL**  
Coping with our unpredictable climate

**A BRUSH WITH FAME**  
Karl Parry's new product

**Featured**  
**TORO BOY**  
Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year 2012 is Thomas Flavelle

**ALSO INSIDE... DRAINAGE • BASIS POINTS • HORSE CHESTNUT**

**UMASS AMHERST**  
"I will never forget the experience that I had at UMASS and the people I met there"



**JOSHUA THORLEY**

Born: 7 February 1985  
 Role: Assistant Greenkeeper  
 Club: The Richmond Golf Club  
 Handicap: 24  
 College: Myerscough



Joshua began his working life as a roofer but found his true calling as a greenkeeper after joining The Richmond in 2010. He is studying for his level 3 qualification, and is looking to work overseas and gain experience at working at a tournament. He would eventually like to progress to Deputy then Course Manager. He enjoys football, golf and runs his own sports clothing website.

**SCOTT ROBERTS**

Born: 15 September 1990  
 Role: Assistant Greenkeeper  
 Club: Hankley Common Golf Club  
 Handicap: 6  
 College: Merrist Wood



Scott grew up at Hankley Common and spent a spell of work experience at Queenwood Golf Club, where he became involved in a project of rebuilding all 21 greens. In 2011 he joined Hanley Common where he works alongside his dad Gareth. He's joined the support teams at a series of tournaments including the BMW PGA at Wentworth and has joined BIGGA's Surrey committee. Ultimately he would like to work abroad. He enjoys golf, football and darts.

**SAM EVANS**

Born: 13 August 1988  
 Role: Deputy Head Greenkeeper  
 Club: Oakland Park Golf Club  
 Handicap: 24  
 College: Myerscough



Sam worked for some time at Heythrop Park where he passed a series of qualifications, before recently moving to Oakland Park. He wants to improve his mechanical knowledge, and ultimately become a Course Manager. He's had a highly eventful few years as he holds a degree in Sports Management & Coaching and got married last year. He enjoys all manner of sports especially cricket, and is also a fan of football, golf and rugby.

**DANIEL HARDY**

Born: 13 December 1984  
 Role: Deputy Course Manager/Mechanic  
 Club: Cams Hall Estate Golf Club  
 Handicap: 14  
 College: Myerscough



Kenn golfer Daniel started his career as an assistant motor mechanic before undertaking a Marine Engineering course. He then took on his current role at Cams Hall Estate and plans to start his Level 3 studies soon, and holds ambitions of not only managing a course but eventually undertaking the Master Greenkeeper qualification. As well as golf sporty Daniel enjoys cycling, football and cricket.

**BEN WATERS**

Born: 23 May 1984  
 Role: Assistant Greenkeeper  
 Club: Shrewsbury Golf Club  
 Handicap: 13  
 College: Reaseheath



Ben began greenkeeping in 2010 after initially working in manufacturing, and after a period of work experience at Shrewsbury Golf Club realised it was the job for him. He has aspirations of becoming a Head Greenkeeper and also would like to work in the USA. He is currently studying a Sports Turf NVQ2.

**JAMES WILKINSON**

Born: 29 April 1981  
 Role: Assistant Greenkeeper  
 Club: Highwoods Golf Club  
 Handicap: No  
 College: Plumpton



James was working for a landscaping firm when he was given the job of returning the tees on a local golf course, and became so interested in the course he secured a job as a greenkeeper. He learned on the job before joining the rolling parkland at Highwoods. He's enjoyed this role hugely and has been supported by the club in his college studies. Outside of work he enjoys fishing, running and watching football.

**LUKE TURNER**

Born: 24 May 1980  
 Role: Greenkeeper  
 Club: Willingdon Golf Club  
 Handicap: 28  
 College: Plumpton



Luke is currently studying for his level 3. He has regularly volunteered to join the team at Devonshire Park which holds tennis tournaments, while continuing to put all his efforts into Willingdon. He would like to gain international experience at some point in his career. He's always been fascinated by links golf courses and is a keen surfer and rugby player.

**PAUL WALSH**

Born: 5 May 1981  
 Role: First Assistant Greenkeeper  
 Club: The Royal Dublin Golf Club  
 Handicap: No  
 College: Teagasc - College of Amenity Horticulture in Dublin



Paul began his career studying Mechanical Engineering but became hugely interested in turfgrass management, and in 2008 began working at Palmerston House Golf Club in County Kildare. He joined The Royal Dublin Golf Club in 2010 and after achieving his FETAC Advanced Certificate in Greenkeeping was promoted to First Assistant. He hopes to progress to Deputy Head Greenkeeper in time.

# GI NEW PRODUCTS

The latest products on the market reviewed

## NEW TYM COMPACT MAKES BIG IMPACT



Chipping Sodbury has become the latest golf club to choose a TYM compact tractor, for work around its 18-hole Cotswold course. It is one of a growing number of clubs that have opted for a TYM tractor from Toro distributor Lely UK when buying new Toro turf equipment and irrigation products.

Models range from 23hp to 100hp to cater to a wide variety of needs, but Lely says the 40hp and 50hp tractors are particularly suited to the turf sector. The 43hp T433 model, with its working speed of almost 20mph making it ideal for general turf maintenance duties, is a particular favourite with turf managers. And this was the model chosen by Chipping Sodbury, whose course manager John Keenaghan says he's been like "a schoolboy in a sweet shop" with his new machine!

"The hydrostatic power-steering gives it a wide turning radius, making it easy to use and ensuring no tyre marks are left on the greens," says John. "We bought the mid-duty 43hp model which is efficient and well suited for golf clubs."

## SISIS TO SHOWCASE THREE NEW PRODUCTS AT SALTEX

Always a popular stop with groundcare professionals at IOG SALTEX, SISIS will be showcasing three new products for the 2013 show.

The company will be launching a new pedestrian scarifier and will be bringing two redesigned products – the SISIS Dart pedestrian aerator and SISIS TM1000 tractor mounted scarifier to join the familiar range of British manufactured favourites on stand B40 from 3-5 September.

Working alongside existing end users, the SISIS Dart and TM1000 have both been redesigned to include ease of operation and functionality with the operator in mind.

The new pedestrian scarifier has been extensively trialled before its official launch at the exhibition and shows the improvement and investment in products that the company continue to make.

Full details of the products are being kept under wraps until the first day of the exhibition.



# BLEC EXPANDS RANGE AT SALTEX



BLEC GLOBAL will use IOG SALTEX at Windsor to show a wider range of products for the groundcare, landscaping and sportsturf marketplace.

Two models of the Multivator, both heavy duty and compact, will be on show – and demonstrated - as well as the new BLEC Power Box Rake powered by the Avant Skid Steer unit.

The Multivator is a multi-use machine carrying out a wide range of tasks achieved with only one drive unit. Decompacting, soil recycling and topdressing all in one pass, the Multivator has quick hook-on rear attachments, an easy-change blade system and heavy duty reversible drive system.

Also on the stand will be the laser-guided BLEC Power Box Rake heavy duty version for tractors – cultivating, pulverising, earth moving, grading and stonepicking all in one tough machine for landscapers.

The Disc Seeder (heavy duty), Multi-Seeder, Cultipack Seeder and Star Seeder will all be on show and the contractor's favourite, the BLEC Laser Grader, will also be on display.

BLEC managing director Gary Mumby said: "SALTEX is a very important show for us where we get the chance to demonstrate all our innovations for turf and landscaping professionals."



## NEW FROM THE GRASS GROUP

Saltex 2013 will once again see The Grass Group exhibiting a good array of established machinery - and several new models too!

Pride of place will be ATT's pedestrian mower – the INFiNiSystem™. Recently awarded the Quiet Mark for its low noise output from the battery power capability, The Grass Group will be showing a brand new cutting cassette in the 'Razor Cutter'. This cassette is non-carbide tipped and can be reversed in order to achieve a consistently sharp cut. It will join the line-up of nine other cassettes to create the ultimate in turf maintenance.

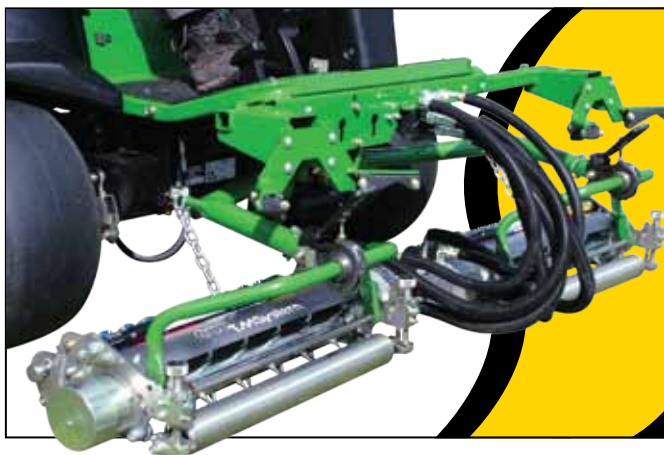
Next up is the updated B7 blower from Netherlands manufacturer, Trilo. This three point hitch blower is your best choice when it comes to blowing leaves, litter, standing water and debris off sports grounds, fields, artificial turf, golf courses, urban and private greens and the like.

For 2013 a new model has been introduced where the standard hydraulic operated 180 degree reverse spout is replaced with a straight spout. This adaptation allows for use by any

compact tractor as hydraulics will not be needed to move the reverse spout. In addition to a reduced purchase price, the unit becomes even more compact and will stay inside the tractor dimensions.

Over in the Progressive corner the Grass Group will be demonstrating how the universal acclaimed Pro-Flex 120B has been re-designed to achieve a lower cost of operation. This contour mower has a 10 feet cutting width and is now equipped with rubber-damped, automatic belt tensioners and maintenance free bushings to increase belt durability and life. This modification also eliminates 25% of the grease points compared to previous models and means that routine servicing is faster and easier - leaving more time for mowing!

As well as lower maintenance costs, the Pro-Flex 120B now has the industry exclusive Pro Lift-N-Turn™ system as standard which allows the operator to temporarily raise the decks slightly off the ground without stopping and with the PTO still engaged. This makes it easier to operate than ever before!



## Lovin' the multi-tasking

The ATT TMSsystem™ is the world's only complete Turf Management solution that's compatible with mainstream Triplex mowers.

The TMSsystem™ is a master of multi-functionality including grain control, soil gas/air exchange, green-speed manipulation, top-dressing integration, organic matter reduction and high quality mowing.

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# Behind the scenes at The Open 2013

The BIGGA Open Support Team tell the inside story of a red-hot Open Championship with their own words and photos from a scorching Muirfield





**The 142nd Open Championship proved to be a real scorcher with the downpours of last year replaced by bright sunshine, at times intense heat and a true links look to the course. This all added up to a tough but fair challenge for the world's best golfers, and Phil Mickelson's 66 on the final day to secure the Claret Jug has already passed into the annals of golf history. Of course, the Support Team will be able to say "I was there".**

As well as the BIGGA Support Team, the home team headed by Course Manager Colin Irvine were assisted by a team of local greenkeepers from neighbouring courses at Gullane, Archerfield, Luffness and the Renaissance Club, plus a greenkeeper from each of the other Open venues and some on R&A scholarships.

On the very first morning Gary Salisbury from Burghley Park Golf Club went out with KJ Choi, Miguel Angel Jimenez and the American Jimmy Walker. Gary said: "Jimmy seemed fascinated by my rake and asked how heavy it was and whether he could hold it. I replied that he could if he let me hold his driver to see how heavy it was!"

Gary Cunningham joined Justin Rose and saw a highly frustrating incident for the US Open winner: "He went to use the players' toilet near the 6th only to find it was locked. He knocked on the door and a female spectator eventually emerged – she'd been getting changed in it. Rose's face was a picture."

John Keenaghan from Chipping Sodbury Golf Club saw an outrageous shot on the 9th during the Second Round:

"Stephen Gallacher played his ball deliberately off a wall, on to the green, putted and made an eagle."

The start of the Third Round saw two players struggle to make their 8.20am tee time. Michael Joyce from Moortown Golf Club witnessed the mayhem:

"Carl Petterson and Jonas Blixt were late and had to sprint to the tee chased by marshalls. The lack of preparation clearly didn't affect Petterson because he holed an iron shot from the fairway to eagle the 6th."

As the crowds increased over the weekend, the team heard the occasional boisterous and bizarre shout from the public galleries. Adam Scott's round on Saturday was followed by Richard Holmes from Crosland Heath Golf Club,

and Richard said: "Scott was struggling on one hole and a fan shouted to his caddy Steve Williams 'do something'. Williams replied 'what more do you want me to do? He's just won the Masters'."

The final morning saw a relaxed Peter Senior chat to Stuart Ferguson from Dundas Park Golf Club. Stuart said: "At the start of the round Senior apologised to me for the amount of bunkers he was about to go in! In the end he hit six."

The final day also saw drama at the 9th hole – but not the sort Jason Day was looking for. Gary Cunningham said: "Day hacked a shot into one of the stands and someone shouted 'six'...but it was 'caught out' by a fan!"

The random draw to see who would accompany which player rewarded Jaey Goodchild from Bowood Golf & Country Club with the once-in-a-lifetime chance to follow fellow Aussie Adam Scott around the links as he made his bid for the Claret Jug on the penultimate round of the week.

Of course, there was to be no Aussie celebration, but Jaey summed the experience up by saying: "It was an awesome week and I was privileged to be part of it. I love the atmosphere at big events and when you get a bunch of guys together who are all there for the same reason, with the same mindset, and the team spirit is brilliant. I hope I get a chance to do it again one day."

Michael Llong from Littlestone Golf Club said: "I had a fantastic time working with superbly professional greenkeepers from around the country. I made a few good friends, and it's great to spend time

Sam Bethell got the final match on Saturday



Billy Merritt with Justin Rose (photo by Richard Jenkinson)



Part-time photographer, Richard Jenkinson



Stefan Carter with Lee Westwood (photo by Richard Jenkinson)



## TECH CORNER

The Muirfield team presented a true links course, aided by fabulous weather leading up to the tournament and during The Championship itself.

Indeed, Support Team members who departed on the Monday after the tournament discovered that the weather had reverted to type with a steady drizzle accompanied by a cool breeze and mist, making the blazing sunshine and heat during the tournament all the more miraculous.

The fairways were cut at 10mm and the semi rough, which was around 3m wide, was cut at 50mm but not daily. The second cut of rough was cut in early June at 150mm and allowed to go to seed. Before play the greens were double cut at 4mm. Officially, the greens were at 11 feet first thing on Thursday, then 10.5 for the rest of the week.

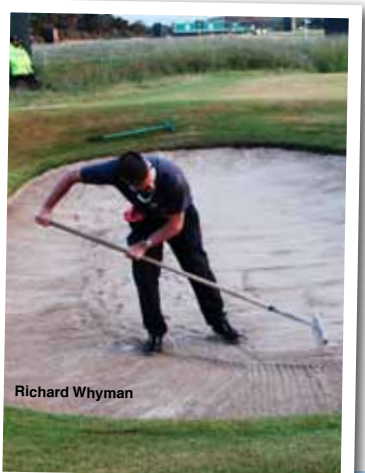
Before the final round the greens were hand watered, as they were throughout. Before Friday and Sunday, some selected greens were hand rolled to bring them up to speed with others.

at such a highly prestigious golf club. Strangely great weather for Scotland as well which was a real bonus!”

Stefan Carter from Forest Hill Golf & Country Club added: “It’s been an amazing week with superb weather which has been a massive factor for us. It’s my first time doing anything like this and I can’t wait to do it again. I raked for Lee Westwood which was a privilege – the only disappointment for me was he didn’t win it so I can’t say I was with the winner!”

Andy Slingsby from Halifax West End Golf Club said: “The organisation has been superb, everything about it has been first-class and it’s been a pleasure to be here. The weather’s been magnificent which has topped it off.”

Jamie Finch from Sheringham Golf Club said: “Where else do you get the chance to follow the world’s greatest players up the fairways? I’ve found all the players to have been friendly and a lot of us have got signed golf balls and gloves. It gives you a real buzz especially when the crowds are big.”



A shot of the fescue, by Michael Joyce



The early morning prep team



The early morning prep team on the 18th



## BUNKER STATS

Before the tournament began we asked all members of the Support Team to guess how many bunkers would be hit on each day, and the closest guesses win vouchers for each day and overall. Here are the results:

- Thursday** – 453  
Closest Guess 444 John Keenaghan
- Friday** – 577  
Closest Guess 472 Jamie Reeves
- Saturday** – 262  
Closest Guesses 260 Steven Lloyd & Gary Cunningham
- Sunday** – 279  
Closest Guess 261 Adam Matthews
- TOTAL** – 1,571 Closest Guess 1,531 Jamie Reeves



Phillip Snellin (photo by Richard Jenkinson)

## DIARY FROM THE OPEN – PHILLIP SNELLIN

I'm a greenkeeper at Donaghadee Golf Club where I have also been a member for 20 years. When I got into greenkeeping I never dreamed I would have the best week of my life doing something I love. I applied back in January to work at The Open and when I was accepted I was so excited, I'd heard my Course Manager Aaron Small tell many stories about his time on the Support Team at Turnberry in 2009.

I flew to Edinburgh and as soon as I arrived was made to feel so welcome. It was great to talk to so many other professionals in the same field as myself.

Before I knew it, Thursday morning had arrived and I was on the tee with my rake at 8am with Jason Day, Martin Kaymer and Garrick Porteous – what a fantastic experience. When I returned to the BIGGA cabin close to the first tee I shared my story with other greenkeepers who had got back and also chatted with those who were excitedly waiting to go out.

On the Friday I got what I thought was the dream draw – Tom Watson, Fred Couples and Sir Nick Faldo! Just watching them hit shots is something I will remember forever. I didn't think it could get any better than that until I was drawn to accompany game number 41 for the Saturday. The cut was at +7 for ages which would have meant I wouldn't have had a game, but when it went to +8 I ended up with Tiger Woods and Lee Westwood. They are two of my favourite golfers of the modern era so being inside the ropes walking behind them is the greatest moment of my golfing life bar none. What a day it was watching them play and I only had seven bunkers to rake behind them.

On the Sunday I was with Boo Weekly and Thongchai Jaidee who were really nice guys and chatted to us walking up the fairways. After the game was over I retired to the BIGGA marquee to watch the last few holes on TV before heading out for photos on the 18th fairway.

I have met so many greenkeepers who have become great friends, just chatting to them all and asking them about their courses and how they do things has been brilliant and I urge any greenkeeper to apply to work on a support team at a major championship and they will feel the same.

Lastly I want to say a massive thank you to Donaghadee Golf Club and all the BIGGA staff for their help and support in what has been the best week of my life and I will definitely be doing it again in the future.



### Thank You from BIGGA

Once again, thank you to Sherriff Amenity for kindly sponsoring the internet in the BIGGA marquee keeping the Support Team connected. During the prolonged dry spell, several of the team used this facility to monitor their course irrigation so it proved to be an invaluable resource.

We are also very grateful to Ransomes Jacobsen for providing the rucksacks used by the team – this year they were mostly used to carry water and suncream rather than rain jackets! Also, many thanks to the R&A for working with us to support the entire team before, during and after the event.

Sandra Raper in the cabin near the first tee fully stocked with sun cream!







**STANDING FROM LEFT:** Rob Hogarth, Adam Matthews, Jack Sims, Sam Horner, Stuart Ferguson, Martin Woods, Darren Moxham, John Ryan, Bruce Watson, Ronan McKeown, Richard Saunders, Ash Marshall, Richard Jenkinson, David Cooper, Neil Ivamy, Ben Bouchier, George Pitts, Matthew Holden, Jim Croxton, Dan McGuckin, Michael Joyce, Stefan Carter, Phillip Snellin, Paul Jenkins, Gary Salisbury, Jamie Reeves, Kevan Glass, Tony Smith, John Keenaghan, Tony Gooch, Chris Sealey, Michael Llong, Sean Sullivan, Jez Hughes, Steve Mason.

**SEATED FROM LEFT:** Andy Unwin, Richard Holmes, Jason Brooks, Myles Wood, Jaey Goodchild, David Wilkinson, Stephen Dale, Andy Slingsby, Jamie Finch, Daniel Woodcraft, Paul Armour, Gary Cunningham, Tracey Maddison, Rachael Duffy, Sandra Raper, John Young, Tom Brearley, Bruce Hicks, Billy Merritt, Mark Tucker, Steve Hemsley, Michael Gunn.

*\* Some of the team left early for transport reasons so are not pictured*

(photo by Arnold Phipps-Jones)



Inside and outside the BIGGA Marquee, with Jez Hughes and Steve Mason above right, outside the BIGGA cabin on the first tee





# Visit the sunshine state

Here's your chance to apply for a spot on the trip of a lifetime to Florida courtesy of BIGGA and Bernhard

**The 12th BIGGA Delegation sponsored by Bernhard will be setting their sights on Orlando, Florida – and here's how you can be on the plane.**

February 2014 sees the world renowned Golf Industry Show head for the Orange County Convention Center which will be showcasing all manner of new products.

The delegates will also have the opportunity to sample the show's superb educational programme – this really is an unmissable chance for BIGGA members to further your personal and professional development.

Many previous attendees have spoken of the trip enhancing their CV and career prospects – and have also met fellow greenkeepers who they are still in touch with years later.

Here's a selection of the glowing reports we had from some of last year's delegates:

"I've made some very good friends for life, and you've made a normal

greenkeeper who's just starting out in the industry very welcome after one of the best weeks of my life." Tim Johnson, The Wilmslow Golf Club.

"It was fascinating to see how the industry operates over there. The Golf Industry Show was on such a large scale it took me two days to take it all in! The delegation were a really good range of ages, jobs and courses.

"My room mate was Derrick Johnstone from Wentworth and it was a great chance to compare the similarities and differences between his club and mine." Asa English, Rothley Park Golf Club.

So fill in the form on the front cover of this month's magazine, return it to BIGGA House and you can be in with a shout of joining this trip of a lifetime. The closing date is 20 September 2013.

You will then be sent an application form to fill in asking you a series of questions on about yourself, your career ambitions and more.



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# A double edged sword for soil moisture management

How Duncan Kelso at Kings Hill deals with his course's unique soil moisture management challenges

**The name Qualibra has the ring of 'Excalibur' but this double-edged sword of the wetting agent world is made for mending – turf that is – by cutting through hydrophobic profiles of potentially drought stricken soils and drought stressed swards.**

Traditional soil wetting agents are exclusively penetrants or polymers, but Qualibra's duality gives it the mantle of both and the 'top hat

and tails' of soil moisture management in more ways than one.

Greenkeeper International spent a day with Dr Simon Watson of Syngenta and Duncan Kelso Course Manager at Kings Hill Golf Course at West Malling near Maidstone. Duncan uses Qualibra as part of an integrated soil moisture management programme. We could not have come to a better place to see Qualibra put to the test and through its paces and to pass with

flying colours on this particular golf course.

## Oasis in dry climate

Combined climate and topography place Kings Hill in an inherently high evapo-transpiration situation. This is a smart course in looks and the methods used to manage sports turf in clearly less than ideal environmental conditions. Duncan Kelso has been here since



**MAIN:** Undulating greens at Kings Hill lead to differential drying out with susceptible 'high spots'

**BELOW LEFT:** Kings Hill's very own weather station in operation '24-7'

**BELOW:** In spite of high percolation and evapo-transpiration pressures on soil water turf grass at Kings Hill displays good growth and colour



the course was constructed in 1995 on the 'old' West Malling Airfield, a Second World War Night Fighter Station boasting the legendary Guy Gibson of Dambusters Fame as a station commander.

Duncan explained how the course was constructed on a lowland heath environment with classic heathland substrate and soil, very rocky but by the same token exceptionally free-draining. At 300 m above sea level it suffers the twin effects of free draining soil and high evapo-transpiration from strong drying winds.

Soil moisture drop from evapo-transpiration can be up to 6.5 ml/day during periods of 30°C ambient temperature. "Only UK coastal locations can compare with that" says Duncan, adding how even on an average temperature day the drop is a hefty 3.0 to 3.5 ml. "During the three critical summer months (June, July and August) we expect to lose 100 ml per month. You can see the effects of evapo-

know where to channel the irrigation.

This is supplementary irrigation and extra and on top of 'base irrigation' delivered at night via the Toro sprinkler irrigation system. Governing how much is applied is the information sourced from their very own weather station. Key parameters measured, collated and calculated include solar radiation, wind speed, air temperature, soil temperature and natural rainfall.

"We can measure how much is lost during the day and we calculate on putting back about 50 per cent of this in base irrigation at night. If we lose 3.5/day expected during an average summer we will aim to return around 2.0 ml of this in base irrigation," says Duncan.

Kings Hill clearly requires a reliable source of water for irrigation but unfortunately that cannot always come from the local water course. They have an abstraction licence to take 4 million gallons of water/year from Stanton Brook (a

## “Undulating greens at Kings Hill lead to differential drying out with susceptible ‘high spots’”

transpiration by four o'clock in the afternoon with footprints staying on the turf and grass plants visibly wilting.”

These greens were constructed according to strict USGA specifications using layers of sand. USGA greens are designed with the maintenance of firmness, smoothness and playability very much in mind but the soil conditions are tough on turf – like 'trying to grow grass on a beach'. High surface temperatures reaching 5-8°C above ambient temperature in no time are a fact of life at Kings Hill. And any fall-out from this rapid and reactive response to rising air temperature is over and above inherently high percolation and leaching rates through the soil profile.

### Rivers and reservoirs

During a normal summer the workforce manually water the greens with hosepipes during the day. "Our greens are characteristically undulating and therefore suffer differential drying out with 'high spots' always going first" says Duncan, adding how it all comes down to skill and experience and knowing each green like the back of your hand, so you instinctively

tributary of the River Medway) from October to March. Abstraction is allowed only when pre-set flow conditions of 890 megalitres/day are met. These will typically exist for only for a relatively short period of time. Fortunately, they are sitting pretty thanks to an on-site reservoir built in 1995 with 5 million litres capacity.

### Deficit irrigation

Kings Hill clearly runs a policy of 'Deficit Irrigation' so I asked Duncan why not put back the full amount of water lost during the day. "Firstly we will invariably get some rainfall even during the summer months. We calculate on receiving 30 ml/month during each of June, July and August and that goes into the equation."

The second reason is what can best be described as a 'horses for courses' policy to soil moisture movements. By design the sward was originally sown and maintained as a fescue/bent mix. As a natural heathland site fescues and bents would have been the predominant wild grasses (*Agrostis* spp and *Festuca* spp), inherently well adapted and suited to prevailing climate and soil conditions. "We

work on the basis of ensuring these turf grasses 'stay alive' in summer while letting nature take over and do the rest. The original seed mix was fescue/bent 'wall to wall' and a logical choice given the Kentish Ragstone substrate and soil and the accompanying high drying conditions."

Out on the greens with minimal Poa incursion it was clear to see how the fescue/bent combination was thriving, dominant and clearly at home in this location. As Duncan says, for 17-year old USGA greens to have less than 5 per cent Poa is virtually unique.

Kings Hill's turf is challenged by perennial ryegrass which we saw first-hand out on the course. But we also saw how this is taken care of using herbicide in an all Syngenta exercise, applying 'Rescue' at 1 L/product as a foliar spray through XC nozzles mounted on a boom sprayer. 04 and 025 XC nozzles are used respectively, for fairways and greens.

#### **Qualibra – the double edged sword**

A reservoir and a sprinkler irrigation system is clearly not the total answer to King's Hill unique water

resource, supply and utilization situation. Without sustainable soil water management the course would always be in a 'catch up' situation with water literally 'running away' before its very eyes. Helping the course to hold onto its water is Syngenta's Qualibra wetting agent used as a key component within an integrated soil moisture management programme.

"The design and development background to Qualibra was quite simply the idea of making much better use of valuable water resources in turf management", says Dr Simon Watson, Technical Manager at Syngenta. He highlights two basic situations where the services of a wetting agent are traditionally sought after.

First situation is water remaining in the top layer of soil to create a soft layer which the roots are unable to exploit. Soft surfaces are the norm. Footmarks stay and playability is compromised with ball roll speed reduced on characteristically soft slow greens.

"Such situations", says Simon, "tend to be species related with worst effects on Poa-based and non-USGA greens." Kings Hill and other comparable courses have overcome such problems by investing in tech-



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*"Greens treated with Qualibra were clearly healthier and provided better playing surfaces."*

**Ian Coote**  
Royston Golf Club,  
Herts

*"From what I have seen, using Qualibra would mean I may only need to irrigate once a week – a big saving in time and money."*

**Glenn Rayfield**  
Felixstowe Ferry Golf  
Club, Suffolk

*"Where we had sprayed Qualibra there has been a marked and sustained improvement in sward quality."*

**Philip Baldock**  
Ganton Golf Club,  
Yorkshire

LEFT: Roughs are awash with wild flowers and classic heathland shrubs like wild broom and gorse. Course manager Duncan Kelso in the picture



ABOVE: Dr Simon Watson of Syngenta with a soil/root core (Picture Syngenta)

#### about the author



#### Dr Terry Mabbett

Dr Terry Mabbett is a disease, pest and weed control specialist with forty years international experience covering research, advisory and journalism. His current fields of focus are professional turf and alien insect pests and pathogens of Britain's native and naturalised trees.

nology and growing medium from the very start, designing and constructing to USGA specifications for year-round playability. There is always the option of re-constructing greens to USGA specifications but you can't just do one. You have to do 9 at least and at up to £25,000/green you are talking about up to half a million pounds for an entire 18-hole course.

Managers of such courses are looking for products that will move rainwater and night-time irrigation down through the soil profile so that water is not just sitting there during the day to create a wet top layer and poor playability. They would traditionally go for a wetting agent with small molecules and accompanying strong penetrant properties to take water right down through the soil profile. However, by facilitating straight through movement of surface layer water droplets they are also promoting the accompanying rapid passage of dissolved nutrients which are no longer available to the grass plant.

"Duncan and other course managers in similar situations are looking to retain moisture in the soil profile", says Simon, "and are therefore looking to polymer technology featuring bigger molecules that can

hold on to water by re-connecting with soil particles."

#### Bridging the gap

Qualibra fundamentally bridges an apparent divergence in situation and need by presenting both penetrant and water holding properties. The research and development behind Qualibra is all about more evenly distributing moisture throughout the soil profile, thereby increasing the interfacing area of root surface and soil water containing dissolved nutrients.

Qualibra achieves the desired even spread of soil moisture through a unique combination of 'soil wetting' components. First is a small-molecule penetrant to move water and achieve the desired spread along the length of root mass, cutting through any hydrophobic zones along the way. Working in tandem with these penetrant properties, is the larger molecule water holding polymer also in Qualibra. This retains moisture right through the root zone, a feat unlikely to be achieved when using a conventional exclusively polymer product.

Soil moisture is now held more effectively at increasing depths in

# Qualibra

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the soil profile. Reduced leaching leading to improved nutrient uptake and more efficient fertiliser application, and less environmental impact from nutrient loss into groundwater, are now all on the agenda.

Many might automatically assume that lack of water is the cause of turf yellowing in summer but Simon says it is more likely due to a lack of available nitrogen. Nitrogen in its soluble, plant-available form only exists dissolved in water. In situations where Qualibra makes moisture more accessible, greater availability and higher uptake of soluble nitrogen should automatically follow. Syngenta say Qualibra can delay the onset of summer senescence if used in a programmed approach from spring through to autumn.

### Out on the course

'Proof of the pudding is in the eating' and a walk around King's Hill showed clearly the potential soil water management problems faced by Duncan and his team, and also how an integrated soil water management programme, including aeration, is maintaining and retaining grass root structure through the delayed spring and summer of 2013.

Our visit to Kings Hill took place on a bright, sunny and warm June day but with a distinctly drying wind blowing across the course. Soil temperature measured on one of the greens at 4 inches depth was 17.5°C. Duncan said this would be expected to drop some 2-3°C at night. Undulating nature of the greens was clear to see. A soil/root core taken from one of many 'high spots' showed how excellent grass root formation, structure and depth was being maintained.

Syngenta recommends foliar applications of Qualibra through a 08 XC nozzle at between 550-800 L/ha. Duncan uses a Gambetti sprayer mounted on a Toro Workman. He tank mixes Qualibra wetting agent with nutrients including sulphate of iron (Ferrous sulphate) to get that little bit more acidity for good grass growth, while keeping the turf hard.

"The course is not normally troubled by turf diseases like Fusarium Patch and anthracnose or surface worm casts", says Duncan. "Greens were uniformly constructed at 90 per cent sand and 10 per cent peat. We work hard to keep the organic matter fraction down in order to keep the greens firm and the spin-side of this effort

is inherently low turf disease and surface worm casting." The extra acidity from iron sulphate is clearly helping on both counts. Duncan uses Qualibra alongside Primo Maxx growth regulator to obtain the mutually provided benefits of improved rooting, drought tolerance and good grass colour.

**RIGHT:** A soil/root core taken from one of the many 'high spots' on greens showed how excellent grass root formation, structure and depth was being maintained (Picture Syngenta)

**BELOW:** Constructing the reservoir was the best decision we ever made says course manager Duncan Kelso pictured here (Picture Syngenta)

**BOTTOM:** Roughs are both scenic and challenging with gorse, broom and other typical heathland shrubs very much in evidence





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# A Rich reward

**Les Howkins admitted he was “shattered” as we chatted in his office at The Richmond Golf Club. Just 12 hours earlier, he had spent an eventful evening separating warring teenagers at a sixth form leaving bash held deep in the 105-acre grounds of the club – which is owned by The Crown.**

“I was asked to do security and at one point these two girls were really going at each other” he recalled, “so I just picked one of them up, carried her away and plonked her outside to calm her down. She was kicking her legs as I lifted her out. Later one of her friends came up to me and said it was the funniest thing she’d seen all year.”

It’s no exaggeration to say Les lives and breathes this club – he lives on site – and this explains his sheer pride in their amazing recent achievement. They fought off worldwide competition from the likes of Oklahoma Golf & Country Club and Denver Golf Club to win the title of ‘Renovation of the Year’ from Golf Inc – a well-respected industry magazine based in California. A panel of judges hailed the work Les and his team completed in-house to overhaul the club’s bunkers which had previously

suffered from flooding and wash down issues. In fact they described it as an “extremely elegant solution to transform a course, showing in dramatic fashion how bunkering defines a course. For a club wanting to make a statement, but faced with limited funds, this is a great example to follow”.

After considering proposals from several architects the club picked Thompson, Perrett & Lobb (TPL) to plan the work in 2009 – and it was TPL who suggested entering the competition. Les thought Richmond stood no chance as they were competing against huge clubs worldwide – some with budgets of well over £10million (Richmond had £125k), and five times the number of staff.

He said: “We had nothing to lose – it was free to enter – so we put a portfolio together with before and after shots, explained the process and the rest is history. I think the fact we’d done it all ourselves maybe gave us an edge, but I was gobsmacked when I was told we’d won. The work was worth it anyway, but to be given an award by industry leaders is the icing on the cake and made all the blood, sweat and tears worth it. Hopefully we’ll get a certificate soon to hang in my office!”

The Richmond Golf Club are celebrating after winning an international award after renovating 56 bunkers. Course Manager and part-time bouncer Les Howkins explained how they defeated American clubs with multi-million pound budgets with their £125k project





**So how did they do it?**

Les arrived at the club in April 2008 with an extensive woodland management project already underway – but his focus quickly turned to the problematic bunkers. His team had a novel way of highlighting the issues.

“On my first day there was one particular bunker which was full of water and we pumped it out. The following day it was full of water again so we pumped it out again. The third day it was full again.

“Of course, the other lads knew the water table was so high it would just fill up overnight, they just thought it would be funny to watch me flounder each morning. They made sure I realised the scale of the task.

“The wash down was particularly bad, which contaminated the sand, which in turn created muddy sand which just did not drain.

“We’ve got a team of ten here including one full-time mechanic, and were spending so much time on the bunkers, especially after wet weather, we had little time for anything else, although the rest of the course does drain very well as it’s on a sand and gravel base.”

Les spoke to several architects and met four on the course, and TPL stood out due to the depth of their research and general work

ethos. They looked through the club’s archives to get a flavour of the course’s history, watched members play to gauge the standard of golf and produced an outstanding plan with their design ideas – some of which were radical.

“I took their plans to the committee and there was uproar immediately over plans to get rid of a bunker on the third fairway.

“It was a good shot for bad golfers so it was punishing the wrong standard of golfer but they replied ‘that’s part of the challenge’ and they didn’t want that challenge removing.

“I had to be fairly forceful and tell them this work was absolutely necessary, and promise results. Our aim was to place the bunkers strategically, giving the longer hitters a tougher challenge while giving the higher handicappers an easier route to the greens.

To an extent I hung my career on this project succeeding because I’d only been here a year when we started the pilot.”

The team used the 11th hole as the pilot in 2009, putting drainage in, experimenting with different liners and different types of sand. They chose buckbricks sand as it compacts down well, so provides a firm footing and is also free draining.

“The pilot was a success so we were all set. I had a fair bit of drain-



**PROFILE**  
**Name:** Les Howkins  
**MG**  
**Position:** Course Manager  
**Born:** Leicester, 18 May 1973  
**Handicap:** 6  
**Hobbies:** Golf, spending time with wife and two young daughters  
**Favourite Sports Team:** Leicester Tigers

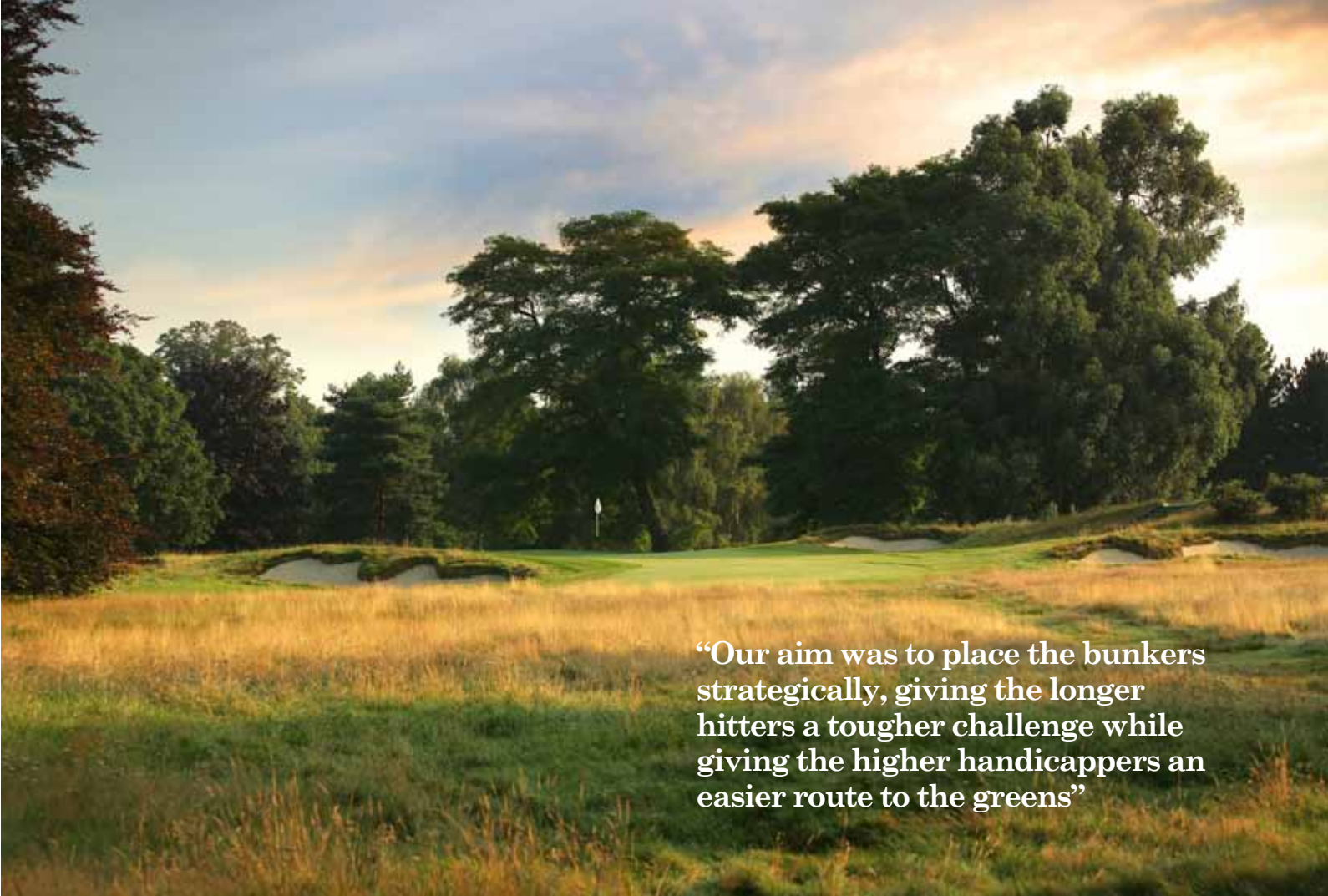
age and digging experience and the now Deputy Course Manager Dan Norsworthy is a fully qualified digger driver, so we knew we had a great team to do it.

“When we started the work Jaey Goodchild was the Deputy and he was hugely involved in it too – it was a tremendous team effort. Of course, there was an element of learning for us all along the way and TPL supported us with the final grading and shaping of the bunkers.

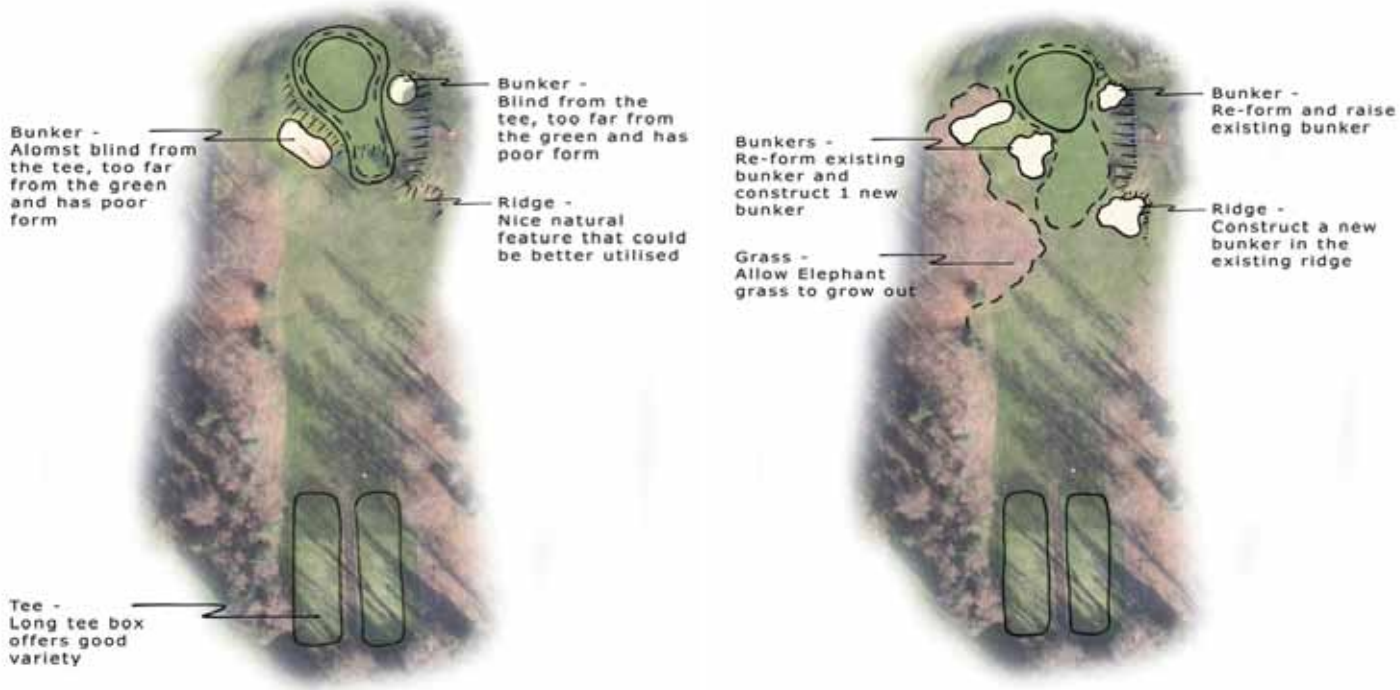
“The company we used for the original bunker liners went under, so we then approached Blinder Bunker who I was hugely impressed with. We also used Steelwrist who manufacture tilt rotating buckets on diggers.

“We bought our own digger and a Steelwrist bucket, it’s phenomenal and pretty unique.

It ended up being an absolutely essential piece of kit for the work we needed to do, enabling you to do the work much more quickly and



“Our aim was to place the bunkers strategically, giving the longer hitters a tougher challenge while giving the higher handicappers an easier route to the greens”



**TPL PLAN: KEY FINDINGS**

- Many of the fairway bunkers were out of position punishing the average golfer and most of the greenside bunkers were too far from the green to pose a serious threat to the better golfer.
- Many of the bunkers left the golfer with downhill lies resulting in thin or ribbed shots.
- Many of the bunkers were at the bottom of hollows and only just above the water table, causing them to gather large amounts of water and drain very slowly.
- Most of the bunkers were barely visible to the golfer, and those that were visible were not very visually appealing.





The team from left: Sam Bethell, Paul Carella, Les Howkins, Tony Bartram, Pat Kidd, Dan Norsworthy, Joshua Thorley  
Missing are: Adam Wise and John McPherson

efficiently. We also used Speedcut who installed around 4,000 linear metres of drainage across the course that we could then tap into for the bunkers. We sourced the turf from Inturf, which was flawless.”

Phase one of the work began in October 2010 and was completed in January 2011, with a similar timescale for phase two a year later. Except for occasional closures on the par threes as the team worked near the aprons, disruption to play was minimal.

With each phase they allowed

three months for the bunkers to grow in before opening them.

Some holes were radically changed with bunkers moved or removed, greens widened or shortened and mounds introduced to add to the playability factor. Others were tweaked more aesthetically with hollows strengthened and tees relocated slightly

Les, who began his career at 15 with a work experience stint at Kibworth Golf Club and worked at Cleethorpes Golf Club prior to his move south, said:

“I did have to give some of the older members bunker lessons because they couldn’t get out of them at the start.

“They just needed to hit the ball a bit harder, and once they got used to them they loved them.

“I’m really proud of what we’ve achieved here. All the team are happy with the results, and the committee, members and visitors have been 99% positive too.

Golf should be a game where the player has to think before every shot and that’s what I believe we’ve reinforced with these changes.”

Congratulations to all the team at Richmond – the final word goes to architect Tim Lobb.

He said: “I’ve been in the business for close to 20 years and this is the best in-house result I’ve ever seen, it’s stunning.”

### Before the renovation

After heavy rain almost all of the bunkers on the course had severe wash down on the faces. So all the bunkers were edged, banks flymoed and all the sand pushed back up the face and the bunkers given a full rake.



The contamination of the sand is not only aesthetically displeasing, it effects the playing qualities of the sand by creating a compacting, muddy sand that does not drain. The new bunkers without the wash down have no such problems and the bunker liner creates a permanent barrier between soil and sand.



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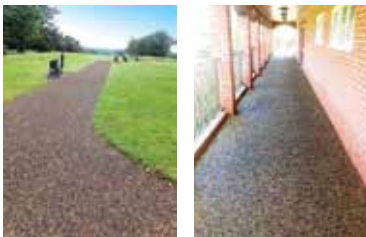
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# You've got the power!

Jacky Lowe shows you how to present effectively using PowerPoint

**How did that happen? A quick chat with the chairman of green, and you've somehow ended up offering to do a presentation to the membership. It can be the stuff of nightmares - standing up in front of a room full of people.**

Where do you start? This article aims to take some of the fear (and pain) out of presenting your chosen subject matter to your designated audience. It will also introduce the most effective use of PowerPoint as a presentation and visual aid.

So, why should you use PowerPoint?

PowerPoint should help you bring together all the elements of your presentation, enabling you to get your point across in a visually stimulating and memorable way. The use of a slideshow will enhance your presentation and add an extra dimension to your message.

Where do you start?

## Significance

It might sound obvious that you should start by deciding on the message behind your presentation. Make sure that you are clear as to why you are presenting in the first place. If you can't make your subject matter meaningful, you shouldn't be presenting.

It needs to be significant – why? Because significance creates passion, and passion leads to action. There is nothing better than a passionate speaker – if you are passionate (or at least interested) in your subject matter, then you will present a confident and clear speech.

## Structure

The structure of your presentation is your next consideration.

What structure should you use? It doesn't matter, as long as there is a structure. The three main things you need for your structure are:

**Credible** – Ensure it's believable and convincing. You may choose to have an introduction, a middle and a summary. Or maybe problem, pathway, solution. Choice of structure doesn't matter, as long as one exists.

**Memorable** – keep to 3 or 4 reasons to each point (or argument) – your audience won't remember any more than this. If you need more than 4 reasons, develop a new point.

**Scalable** – whatever you can say in 30 minutes should be scalable to 45 minutes, an hour, 5 minutes.

An example of a good, or widely used structure would be:

- Memorable opening
- Point 1 (3 reasons)
- Point 2 (3 reasons)
- Point 3 (3 reasons)
- Memorable closing/ Summary

## Simplicity

Albert Einstein once said "If you can't explain it to a six year old, you don't understand it yourself" and this is completely true of PowerPoint presentations. If you can't explain something so that any audience member will understand, then you don't understand it yourself. This also brings us to the point that you should know your audience. Are you addressing a room full of six year olds, or a room full of agronomists? This simplicity (or lack of) is one of the main reasons for the failure of PowerPoint presentations. We don't seem to be able to keep things simple. We end up cluttering slides with complicated diagrams, loads of text, or complicated graphics.

Powerpoint is designed to visualise ideas, create key points and

## about the author



Jacky has been training across Microsoft office, accounts and business skills for the last 18 years, across all levels and sectors. She has knowledge of the greenkeeping and turf industry from being married to a former Course Manager.







impress the audience. I would also argue that it is there to help take the focus away from the speaker, but that's not a popular argument. Unfortunately, PowerPoint tends to actually be used as a prompt, in place of handouts, or as a data dump.

If you put too much text on a slide, the audience will read faster than you can speak which makes you useless!

Break it down into an extra slide – it costs nothing. Keep to one main point per slide and remove everything else. Forget the PowerPoint 'rules' – some expert came up with the 2 rules that you shouldn't have more than 7 words per line, or 7 lines per slide. Forget that one – just make sure it can be read, clearly. When it comes to design, stick to the following 'rules' (sorry):

- One point per slide
- Few, matching colours – use one of the built-in themes or designs to keep it looking consistent.

- Keep the fonts to a minimum – again, using the themes and designs will help with this.

- Use photos NOT clipart. Some larger organisations have banned the use of Clipart in company presentations, and not before time!

If you need to send or print the slides, put it into a document, or create a second set.

#### Rehearsal

The final (and probably most important thing) when it comes to presenting is rehearsal. Practice, practice, practice. It will never work first time, trust me. Try to get some feedback; your most difficult audience is people you know, so practice to the family, the dog, and if you can't find an audience, tell the chair but make sure you practice aloud. Always double check the room and your equipment – don't arrive with 10 minutes to spare expecting everything to be set up for you!

#### Presentation Checklist:

With this simple checklist, you can effectively use PowerPoint as a powerful visual aid to your presentations.

- **Significance**

- Why does it matter?
- How do I grab their attention?
- What do I want them to do?

- **Structure**


- Credible
- Memorable
- Scalable

- **Simplicity**

- 1 Point per slide
- Pictures, not clipart
- Consistent design

- **Rehearsal**

- Practice aloud
- Gain feedback
- Check room and equipment



With ever more emphasis on greens performance and the need for regular top dressing, Laurence Pithie examines the methods used past and present for working top dressing into the turf surface

# Brushing-in top dressing - the options



Dressing and drag matting  
(1984, Minchinhampton)



Modern day drag matting on  
the 9th green at Frilford Heath

## The Early Days

The spreading of a sand based top dressing onto putting surfaces for improving playability has been in use for around 150 years. It was certainly an essential part of Old Tom Morris's program of work, first on Prestwick and then latterly at St Andrews during the middle part of the 19th century.

What isn't clear however, is how this was 'worked-in' to the surface in these bygone days; possibly using a broom or yard brush. There are no records of the amounts or frequencies used but it is likely that this would be relatively small and used more for turf repairs and leveling out ruts, hollows and animal scrapes.

Rolling was the other mainstay of 'early' greenkeeping. Ironically this is back in vogue after an absence of nearly 100 years when it was found that after prolonged use of heavy iron rollers, greens were becoming 'hide-bound' or compacted.

## More Modern Times

Although Sisis had developed various pedestrian driven aerifying units soon after William Paul's three prong coring fork invention

circa 1920, it wasn't until the 1950s that a powered coring aerifier was introduced by the American, Thomas Mascaro. He would later produce a vertical cutting machine for thatch removal.

The use of powered aerifying and vertical cutting machines became ever more popular as the demand for improved putting greens became greater. This also meant that larger amounts of top dressing were required to follow up these cultural practices and so began the next phase in how to move this material into tine and core holes, as well as vertical grooves. Chain link drag mats were introduced which could be pulled by hand or towed by machine, thus allowing material to be dragged into the surface once dry.

Prior to 1980, top dressing in the UK was still largely confined to spring and autumn following pre and post season renovation work to coincide with the golfing calendar; a topical issue at many clubs some 30 years later! Course Managers introduced or developed various techniques to spread top dressing, some of which are shown in the accompanying photographs. Lines of greenkeepers brushing greens with besom brushes was not uncommon, particularly on the more traditional golf courses. Even



Drag brushing the green after top dressing

the use of hover mowers to blow the sand into the turf canopy has been used in recent times.

### A Remaining Challenge

The introduction of 'spinner' type top dressers presented Course Managers with the opportunity of applying top dressing little and often, very quickly and ahead of play. A few passes with a drag brush or similar implement soon made the material disappear and following a dry cut, the golfers were largely unaware that this work had been carried out. This is a popular practice throughout the turfing world, whereby the amount of organic matter build-up is balanced and diluted by the application of top dressing every 7 to 14 days.

However, one aspect of renovation work that has been a challenge for many years is the filling of core holes with sand top dressing. A common issue is that core holes are not being filled leading to uneven and bumpy turf surfaces.

Not filling the core holes is also a lost opportunity for dealing with thatch accumulation, since the holes quickly close up again. It often appears that the holes are filled but when profile samples are taken, it indicates merely a 'bridged' cover-

ing whereby the wet sand lies above the hole with the void remaining. This is especially the case when this work is carried out before and after the main playing season when surfaces are damp and temperatures cooler.

### Options Available

Brushing very light applications or 'dustings' of sand dressing into the turf canopy can easily be achieved using a variety of methods that are quick and effective. Since only very small quantities of material are involved, this is a straightforward exercise, although it could be argued that some of the dressing is removed during the first two cuts.

Following hollow coring however, this is a different challenge. A typical 50x50mm (2 inch) tine pattern using 13mm (half inch) wide coring tines to a depth of 100mm (4 inches) requires around 3 tons of material per average sized green to completely fill the holes.

In warmer and drier climates this is perhaps less of an issue but in our cool temperate climate, this is harder to achieve, especially if the sand is wet or even just damp. Purchasing the more expensive kiln dried sand still requires a dry surface; by no means a guarantee



ABOVE: Brushing in top dressing using Greentek Multi-brush (Cotgrave Place)  
BELOW: Sweep n Fill brushing sand dressing into core holes (West Hill)





in the UK, particularly in western regions. Therefore what are the options available to course managers?

**Drag Matting**

This is a quick and low cost method whereby the drag mat can be towed behind an assortment of vehicles from a bunker rake to a golf cart. It is not suitable for working in larger quantities of material but ideal for light dustings and has been a common practice for decades.

**Drag Brushing**

A towed drag brush achieves similar results to the drag mat but has the same limitations. A brush mounted on the three point tractor linkage inserts more pressure but still has some limitations in what is achieved. However it is a useful ploy for producing more upright growth prior to being mown.

There are all sorts of mounted brushes available ranging from a Sisis 'Zig-Zag' brush to the Greentek 'Multi Brush' which can fold up to give a 'triple' action spread for top dressing, while dispersing dew or grass clippings on fairways when fully extended.

**Brush Attachments**

These range from the older rotary brushes that can be mounted on the front of a greens triplex or similar mowing unit, to more specialised brush units that are fitted in place of cutting units or verti-cutting reels.

**Blowers**

These are less common in the UK but the objective is to direct high volumes of air to blow the dressing into the core holes and turf canopy as opposed to dragging or brushing which can be abrasive to the turf.

The Buffalo Turbine Sand Devil blower is an American unit for this purpose with other models suitable for blowing cores to the sides of greens, tees or fairways for collection.

**Contra-Rotating Brushes**

These are more commonly referred to as 'Sweep and Fill' brushes, with two variations available: the original Sweep n' Fill brush from JSM or the TB220 from R&K Kensett Ltd.

The two rotating brushes have the ability to move larger volumes of sand into core holes in a few passes, even when the sand is damp.

Both types come complete with transport wheels which are raised when brushing and can be towed behind a basic vehicle.

For the first time it is possible to completely fill all core holes under reasonable conditions quickly and efficiently without requiring large numbers of staff.

These brushes are also useful for grooming greens surfaces and helping to increase green speed. It also gives Course Managers the option of using slightly smaller and less disruptive coring tines while still able to fill the holes.

TOP LEFT: Drag brushing green with home made unit after coring Kaskada

SECOND TOP LEFT: Grains keeper brushing in dressing South Essex

MAIN ABOVE: Drag matting dressing using astro turf mat upside down Hertfordshire

**In-house variations**

The use of an old upturned range mat which is towed behind any small vehicle gives a very satisfactory performance for working-in small amounts of dressing for next to no cash outlay.

When these mats become worn and unsuitable for use on the range or winter tees, they can still prove useful for this purpose.

Another variation is to use a metal frame and pallet and then cover this with astroturf or similar to form a small robust unit with additional weight.

**SUMMARY**

Course Managers are always looking at ways to improve efficiency and the quality of putting surfaces. There are brushes, mats and blowers available to meet these objectives and to suit all course budgets, some more capable than others.

For completely filling core holes, the most effective method to date is the use of one of the contra rotating brushes which overcomes an age old problem.

For courses that have little or no need for coring, then any of the other alternative methods will serve the purpose at a relatively modest cost.

Much depends on what you intend to achieve and also the timing, since working top dressing into the putting surface is better achieved when playing surfaces are dry and the grass is actively growing during warmer temperatures.

**about the author**



**Laurence Pithie MG**  
 Laurence Pithie MG runs his own training and consultancy company, Turf Master One Ltd. Previously he spent 17 years managing multi-site golf operations in the UK. With 42 years in the golf industry, Laurence has used his experience and knowledge to produce a number of recent 'case study' articles.

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# Double the power?

James de Haviland gives us his verdict on the ATT INFiNiSystem™ with a little help from his friends at Heythrop Park



**Manufactured by Advanced Turf Technology, the ATT INFiNiSystem is sold and marketed through The Grass Group. This is a clever bit of kit, but what is it exactly?**

As the INFiNiSystem concept is keen to shout about both its versatility and choice of battery or hybrid power, the basic message may well get lost. So rather than go into all the various options and cassette choices it is best to focus one simple point. Is this system based around a good pedestrian greens mower?

The short answer is a qualified yes. If you just want a conventional

dedicated pedestrian 22" greens mower, and nothing else, you may go for a proven mower from the likes of Baroness, John Deere, Toro or Jacobsen instead. But with this machine you have both its cassette system and alternative power options to consider.

Let's look at the INFiNiSystem traction unit in its wholly battery powered mode. Taking power via a 30kg lead acid battery pack, it does without fancy lithium ion power cells.

The downside is that the power pack will run out of puff after completing up to seven typical greens. You would need to buy another battery pack or two to complete an 18 hole course, swapping over exhausted packs as they run out of juice.

For most golf courses, this will be too much of a hassle to consider. So ATT has another solution in the form of 1.5kW Power Module which simply slots in place of the battery pack. This two-power option could mean you can carry out hushed early morning mowing for some of the holes on the battery and then switch to day-long hybrid stamina as the rest of the world wakes up. Seems like a good compromise.

None of this is of any relevance unless the traction unit itself is mated to a mowing 'cassette' that delivers a top-notch finish. If you are blessed with the healthy dose of cynicism that protects you from spurious claims, the chances are you will need some convincing.

Greens mowers are precision tools, and a cassette mower element could suggest versatility over cut quality. Well - be prepared to be pleasantly surprised. During our all too brief run with the INFiNiSystem in its mower role the finish it achieved was top notch.

"The way in which the mower follows contours is good," says Dave Capes, mechanic at Heythrop Park. "From a mechanic's point of view the cassette system has the attraction of making it easy to swap the mower for one with different settings quickly too."

A key advantage of the cassette system developed by ATT is that it was developed as a mower first. The mounting system incorporates a flexible mount that allows the cassette chassis to move in the lateral plain. In work, the cutting cylinder's freedom to follow contours ensures a good cut over undulations with a reduced risk of scalping. An added

BELOW: Swapping the SMART cassettes



**INFiNiSystem™ list prices and cassette choices**

Traction unit and chassis

INFiNiSystem™ 22" traction unit with chassis .....£5,420

Petrol Power Module .....£1,500

Battery Power Module .....£720

**SMART Cassettes**

SMARTCut 7, 11 or 14 blades .....£990

SMARTHatchmaster .....£995

SMARTVibe .....£1,150

SMARTUltraGroomer .....£1,260

SMARTScarifier .....£950

SMARTSarel .....£795

SMARTSpiker .....£704

SMARTPowerBrush .....£720

SMARTBrush .....£650

**Complete mower guide price .....£8,646**

(To include Traction unit with Petrol Power Module, SMARTCut mower cassette, Rear roller power brush, Transport kit and Grass bucket.

tweak on the cylinder is the ability to adjust its angle to the bottom blade. As the latter is worn back and reground, the way in which it acts against the cylinder blades alters. This can be adjusted on the ATT cutting head, enabling more of the bottom blade to be used before it needs to be replaced, with no need to compromise the quality of cut.

The cassette chassis itself is engineered to allow the cylinder, of either 7, 11 or 14 blades, to be popped out and replaced with a choice of turfcare tools – see left. In itself, the cassette chassis is an interesting part of the system as it comprises front and rear rolls, with the choice of ribbed or smooth front unit and with a gear driven brush option for the smooth roll at the back.

In fact it is the detailing of the mower that impresses. All the bearings are sealed units of a standard design. If you need a new one you can buy a replacement from pretty much any decent bearing supplier. Even the batteries in the battery power pack are replaceable with types available from a motorcycle dealer.

“I think the mower feels a bit heavy with the battery in place but it is just fine with the engine power pack,” says Mark Davies, greenkeeper at Heythrop. “We also ran the battery flat in just under seven greens. Even allowing for the quiet operation in battery mode, I would choose hybrid power.”

**Same cassettes fit ride-on triples**

The cassette chassis plus an adaptor kit will also fit John Deere, Toro, Jacobsen and Hustler Turf ride on-triples. The Grass Group has existing cassette users employing essentially the same units on their triples as used for the INFiNiSystem.

Of equal importance, a ride-on can be fitted with all-new cutting cylinders, so allowing triple users to keep an existing mower but economically rejuvenated with all-new cutting units.

Which brings us back to where we started.

The Grass Group has a lot to say about the ATT System and the INFiNiSystem pedestrian traction unit. So much so that the versatility almost gets in the way of the basics. Look at the INFiNiSystem traction unit as a mower that can be battery or hybrid powered first. Try it out as a greens mower.

In hybrid guise, the power unit will do what a ‘conventional’ greens

mower will do. It will also do the same on battery power, but will need a fresh power pack or recharge after seven holes.

If the unit impresses as a mower, then you can look at the full range of SMART cassette options that enable it to do more. Were we impressed? We did not have the machine long enough to come away with a concrete yes.

You can only give that when you have a machine for long enough to learn how to work with it and see how a swap to various SMART cassettes works on a repeated basis. Initial impressions suggest the INFiNiSystem is certainly a good mower and one those with an open mind should put on their demo list.

“I think we would need more time to really get to grips with what the INFiNiSystem offers,” says Course Manager Phil Helmn.

“The system is packed with some really good ideas and I can see the appeal of being able to swap cassettes and even use the same units on a ride-on triple. Electric drive and hybrid power is interesting but battery power is too short in our application”.

*Thanks to Phil Helmn, Dave Capes, Mark Davies, Heythrop Park Resort and Jon Proffitt at The Grass Group.*



## Section Notes

Please email your notes to  
[steve.castle@bigga.co.uk](mailto:steve.castle@bigga.co.uk)  
by the 10th  
of the month

All the latest news from your Section,  
in your new-look notes pages...



# Around the green

## Scotland

Contact your Section correspondent with news,  
events or anything else for Around the green...



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**WEST**  
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## Events Coming Up

**West** - The Norrie Whytock annual challenge will be taking place at Auchterarder with the qualifiers Gordon Sangster, Stuart Taylor, David McBride and John Barr, all winners of their classes at the spring outing. We hope they can achieve a victory as it's been a while since the West section has come near.

**West** - The Autumn outing is scheduled for 19 September at Eastwood GC and I hope there can be a few new faces turn up to enhance the numbers. Please remember to contact me if you have any information about retirements, births, illness, or just plain gossip that other folk might be interested in, I can be contacted on [stuart.taylor@glasgowgolfclub.com](mailto:stuart.taylor@glasgowgolfclub.com) or 07790 823914.

**North** - The Spring outing is now booked and we will be going up to Moray Golf Club in Lossiemouth on the 1 May 2014, we hope you can make the effort to attend what we are sure will be a great day. The team for the Norrie Whytock trophy has now been picked so further details will follow in the Sept issue, and please get in touch with any other news.

**North** - On a sad note the North Section would like to pass on their condolences to the family and friends of Greenkeeper Craig Smith. Craig worked at Royal Dornoch Golf Club before moving out to work in Australia where he was tragically killed following an accident.

**Central** - The next event in the Section will be the Autumn tournament on 4 September at Stirling Golf Club. Entry forms

should be with you any day if they haven't yet arrived. There will also be one posted on the website [www.biggacentralsection.org.uk](http://www.biggacentralsection.org.uk)

## News

**West** - Something I forgot to mention was the recent accident involving Gary Divers' son Christopher who was over in the states at university, unfortunately he was involved in an accident and passed away in hospital. The section would like to pass on our thoughts and condolences during this time.

**West** - John Clelland at Paisley Bushes GC suffered some severe damage to a few greens in recent months, we hope this will be the last of it and would wish him the best of luck trying to get things back to normal. Derek Duthie informs that he is celebrating 25 years service with Aitkens Seedman, Derek as everybody knows is the sales representative for the west of Scotland, originally he started as an apprentice at Cardross, and moved on the Head Greenkeeper at Cambuslang before shifting path onto the sales route, its nice to see he has made a full recovery from his car accident a couple of years ago.

**Central** - Over 25 people came along to Elmwood on 23 July to hear John Kaminski of Penn State give us the inside story of the recent US Open at Merion which given our own Open had just passed made for an interesting comparison. The pairs competition is progressing well with a couple of teams close to securing their places in the semi-finals. Please remember to email or text me your results as soon as possible.

## Welcome New Scotland Members

Robert Galloway, Greenkeeper, Turnberry Hotel & Golf Course, Ayrshire  
David Rieck, Student, SRUC (Elmwood), Central  
Robert Fraser, Assistant Greenkeeper, Castle Stuart Golf Links, North  
John Bambury, Course Manager, Trump Golf Scotland, North

## Welcome New Northern Members

David Barker, Groundsman, Micklehurst Cricket Club, North West  
Robert O'Hare, Groundsman, Maghull Town Council, North West  
Howard Lythgoe, AffiliateMember, Ashton & Lea Golf Club, North West  
Andrew Gilligan, Greenkeeper, Wilmslow Golf Club, North West  
Liam Bashford, Greenkeeper, Driffild Golf Club, Northern  
Charlie Pasco, Assistant Greenkeeper, Saltburn Golf Club, Cleveland  
Nicholas Scholes, Groundsman, Roundwood Golf Club, Sheffield  
Stephen Washbrook, Assistant Greenkeeper, Aberdovey Golf Club, North Wales



# Northern

Contact your Section correspondent with news, events or anything else for Around the green...



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## Events Coming Up

**North East** - Brand new summer comp which will become an annual event will be held on 21 August at Percy Wood Golf & Country Club, this will be a stableford, entry fee £10 to members and £15 to non members. Includes a bacon roll before play followed by buffet meal after, along with prize giving. Entries must be made by 14 August. Tee times between 1pm - 3pm.

**Cleveland** - A trip to the potash mine is going to be organised anyone interested in going can they get in touch with Pembo on 07791695768. Places are limited so get in quick!

**Sheffield** - We are planning a visit to St George Park to the FA National Football Centre at Burton-on-Trent on October 16, anybody wanting to go must email me at neilpeters66@gmail.com to reserve a place, there are only limited number places available.

**Northern** - Greenkeepers v trade match date not set yet but looking at October at Cookridge. 10 man team, anyone wanting to play please contact Andy Slingsby.

**North West** - The Willie Whitelaw bowl at Penrith golf club on September 11. Please phone Phil Dewhurst for details and booking.

**North Wales** - The autumn tournament is to take place at Royal St. David's Harlech on September 18 please return your entry form and payment to Carl as soon as possible as the starting sheet for this will fill very quickly.

## NEWS

**North East** - The recent match with the Cleveland section was a win to the Cleveland lads. Played at Durham City which by all accounts was in superb condition so credit must go to Stan and his team.

Just let the section know that myself Glen Baxter is now writing the news for the section as the committee felt I was best equipped to gather any news from my rounds when visiting you all.

**Cleveland** - Congratulations to Olly Shepard and his good lady who have had twins and Roger Mackerall and his good lady also celebrating the birth of a little bundle of joy. Unfortunately the Cleveland bongo drums didn't tell me the if they were boys or girls. Anyway congratulations all round.

Stressholme GC has merged with Blackwell Grange to become

Blackwell Grange GC with Dougie Avey becoming Course Manager. Good luck in the new role.

Well done to James Tock of Richmond GC for completing his NVQ Level 3.

**Northern** - Presidents day at Scarthingwell GC - a huge thank you to Ben and his staff for a very welcoming venue and also to John Waite and the boys for setting up a fantastic course, all the guys thoroughly enjoyed themselves and it was reflected in the scoring! Results below.

**North West** - I'm sorry to report the passing of larger than life global hygiene rep, Alan Sergeant who died in July and it is also my sad duty to report the passing of another part of sales history in our area as Graham Walker ex of Walker Brothers, St Martins also died in July our heartfelt wishes go to family and friends of both.

## Movers And Shakers

**North East** - Jon Watson has recently taken up the role of course manager at Parklands Golf Club so we wish him well in his new role.

## Results

**Cleveland** - Spring outing at Brancepeth Castle. Div 1: 1 Mark Brown 31pts, 2 Paul Legg 29, 3 Martin Woods 25. Div 2: 1 Adrian Partridge 32, 2 Barry Walker 29, 3 Tracey Maddison 27. Div 3: 1 Ian Pemberton 26, 2 Daniel Egan 17, 3 Aidan Coates 12. Nearest the pin: Ian Pemberton, best nett on the par 3's: Ian Pemberton, longest drive: Adrian Partridge, best trade: Chris Fidell.

**Northern** - Presidents Day. Winners : Div1 1 D Gosney; 2 R Harris 3 A Auterson, Div2 1 R Walker 2 B Gomersal 3 J Waite, Div3 1 R Armitage 2 R Smith 3 B Jackson Trade 1 G Baxter 2 T Arana Nearest the pin 1st P Fell 2nd N Blisit, President prize R Walker

**Sheffield** - A very good day was had and was well attended at Dore & Totley, the course is in good condition and thanks goes to John Goldthorpe and his staff. The day was won by A. Unwin with a score of 70 nett.

**North West** - The summer tournament at Ormskirk golf club was well attended and a great day was had by all. The course was in magnificent condition and I would like to thank Mike and his staff for a great day. The winner was Paul Pierce. Nearest the pin was Paul again and longest drive was Gary Burgess. The guest prize was won by Tony Kevadras.

## THANKS TO SPONSORS

**North East** - Thanks to TSL for sponsoring our match against the Cleveland section.

**Cleveland** - Thanks to Northern Lubricants, Aitkins, Rigby Taylor, Peter Marshall and Greenlay for sponsoring the spring outing.

**Northern** - Presidents day. Thanks to the sponsors : unfortunately Simon from Everris could not make it but the lovely Rebecca from Sheriff stood in for him, a great thank you to Everris for their continued support of our section.

**North West** - We thank Bathgates Leisure in the form of Nick Grey for sponsoring the cricket evening at Ashley cricket club.

## Midland

Contact your Section correspondent with news, events or anything else for Around the green...



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**EAST OF ENGLAND**  
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**EAST MIDLAND**  
Greg Skinner  
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## Events Coming Up

**East Midland** - Having had our trip to Kedleston Park at the beginning of August our next event is at Lutterworth Golf Club on 31 October (no I won't be wearing my Halloween mask), this is also our AGM so please think up some questions/suggestions to put to the committee. Or if you are interested in helping on the committee then put yourself forward for selection.

## News

**East Midland** - Nailcote Hall in Coventry on Wednesday 3 July played host to our annual par 3 competition. This year the committee decided to sponsor the event and we had a well supported day on a beautiful sunny afternoon. The course was, as ever, excellent. Results below

There is a suggestion within the section to get a five-a-Side football competition going.

Currently Scraftoft GC, with Player/Manager Nigel 'The Special One' White, seem to be hammering everyone.

So if anyone is interested in getting involved and taking out some of your frustrations on other greenkeepers then drop me an email/text or even phone me and lets see what can be arranged. My details are under the picture of the George Clooney lookalike above.

**Midland** - The section played their annual match vs The Presidents team at Handsworth Golf Club on Thursday 20 June. The match was played in the usual good spirit, with the Handsworth Golf Club Presidents Team coming out on top 3½ to 2½.

As usual a big thanks to Handsworth Golf Club for their hospitality, and the Midland section team for their continued support in this long running event.

**East of England** - Congratulations to Bruce Hicks (Boston GC) and Gary Salisbury (Burghley Park GC) for being part of the support team at The Open.

## Results

**East Midland** - Par 3 comp results 1 Beedles Lake 83pts, 2 Scraftoft GC 81, 3 the event sponsors The Committee team with 79. The barbecue was excellent and we were very well looked after by Nailcote Hall.

**Midland** - Results from the Summer Golf Day at Penn Golf Club on 10 July. 1 Simon White 33pts, 2 Ed Stant 33pts, 3 Adam Jones 33pts,

4 Karl Williams 32pts, Rhys Thomas 31pts. Nearest the pins were A Jones, Andy Brougham, L Swann & J Fox. Our thanks to Paul Mills and his fine team for presenting the course in such fantastic condition, and to the Club for allowing us courtesy of the course and clubhouse for the day.

**East of England** - Market Rasen May 22: 1 Simon Bossett, 2 Peter Allbine, 3 Bruce Hicks, 4 Robin Portess. Ian Collett from Rigby Taylor was Trade winner. Nearest the pins: Geoff Wand, Matt Haynes, Alex Clarricoates, Carl Chamberlain

## Movers & Shakers

**East Midland** - We would like to welcome Ken Harding to the Leicestershire area. Ken has taken on the reins at Willesley Park Golf Club for what looks like an exciting time for one of the county's most prestigious courses. Ken has immediately been involved in the section playing in Carl Chamberlain's Rigby Taylor team at Nailcote Hall.

## Sponsors

**Midland** - Our thanks to the sponsors for our last golf day at Penn on 10 July. The main prize table for the day was sponsored by Farmura. The 4 nearest the pin prizes were donated by Whitemoss, Sherriff Amenity, Countrywide and our President, John Hammond. Thanks also to Farols for the halfway house and all those who brought raffle prizes.

This month's calendar page is sponsored by Sherriff Amenity. Please consider them for your fertiliser, chemical, seed and dressing needs. Email: nigel.tyler@agrovista.co.uk. Tel: 07989 548058

**East of England** - Thank you to John Hewson and his staff at Market Rasen for providing a course in excellent condition. Also to all the clubhouse staff for making us welcome and providing an excellent meal afterwards.

Thanks also go to our sponsors on the day, LMS Lincoln Ltd for the main prizes, and T.A.S for the nearest the pins. T.A.S is the new business venture of Garry Poole, formerly Course Manager at Belton Park. His number is 07701 034100.

## Welcome New Midland Members

Liam King, Assistant Greenkeeper, Oakmere Park Golf Club, East Midlands

Joshua Rimington, Assistant Greenkeeper, Manor (Laceyby) Golf Club, East Midlands

Taylor Fox, Assistant Greenkeeper, Vale Golf and Country Club (The), Midlands

David Harding, Greenkeeper, Marriott Forest of Arden, Midlands

Mark Cleverley, Greenkeeper, Marriott Forest of Arden, Midlands

Adam Williams, Greenkeeper, Marriott Forest of Arden, Midlands

Stewart Weller, Greenkeeper 21 yrs & over, Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Club, East of England

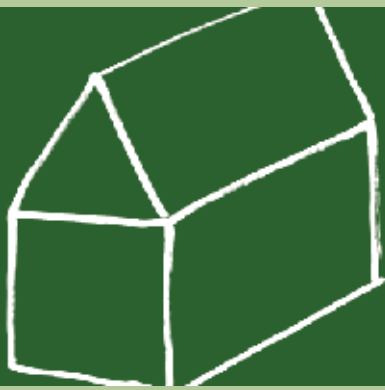
Steven Bushell, Assistant Greenkeeper, Claire's Court School, BB&O

Paul Sunman, Greenkeeper, Berkhamsted Golf Club, Mid Anglia

Jack Micans, Greenkeeper, Berkhamsted Golf Club, Mid Anglia

Jordan Evans, Greenkeeper, Trent Park Golf Club, Mid Anglia

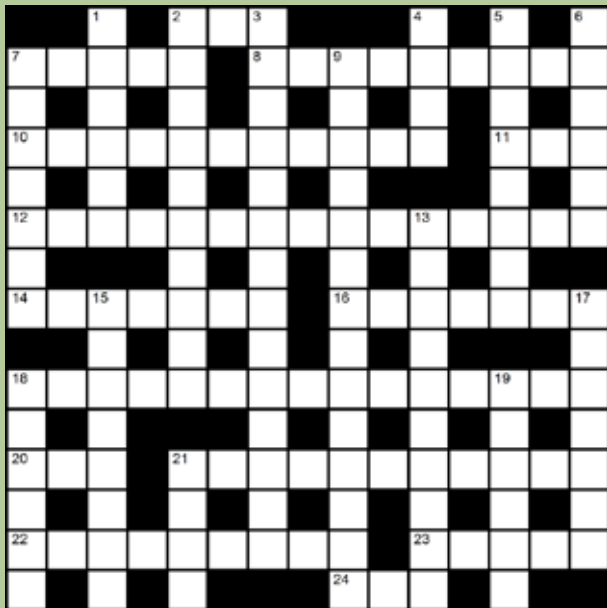
Iain Biggs, Assistant Greenkeeper, Trent Park Golf Club, Mid Anglia



# puzzlepage

Our monthly puzzle page to keep you entertained

## CROSSWORD



### Across

- 2 Follow closely (3)
- 7 Insects in passive development stage (5)
- 8 Alopex lagopus - mammal of icy northern regions (6,3)
- 10 Darts player known as The Crafty Cockney (4,7)
- 11 Trade name of Israeli submachine-gun (3)
- 12 1859 mystery novel by Wilkie Collins (3,5,2,5)
- 14 Deduce a person's words by watching the mouth (3-4)
- 16 Traditional French puppet (also Grand ---) (7)
- 18 Ballroom dance which uses pauses at intervals (10,5)
- 20 Emergency procedure used in e.g. cardiac arrest (3)
- 21 Bring into an improved or renewed state (11)
- 22 Eponymous hero of 1876 Mark Twain novel (3,6)
- 23 Throw with great effort (5)
- 24 A National Curriculum educational assessment (3)

### Down

- 1 Surname of American novelist noted for his Harry 'Rabbit' Angstrom works (6)

- 2 Plant also known as stinking cranesbill (4,6)
- 3 Central characters in a sitcom written by James Corden and Ruth Jones (5,3,6)
- 4 Opinion (4)
- 5 A pouring or streaming out (8)
- 6 Tax on home commodities, and on certain trade licences (6)
- 7 Interactive videotext service introduced in 1979 (7)
- 9 Doing something in the easiest or cheapest way (7,7)
- 13 Name associated with popular guides to the Lakeland Fells (10)
- 15 Seasoned cuts of smoked beef (8)
- 17 Diamond-shaped parallelogram or rhombus (7)
- 18 Goddess of witches referred to by Shakespeare and other writers (6)
- 19 Pertaining to non-ecclesiastic people (6)
- 21 Of a mobile phone, to operate on a different network when abroad (4)

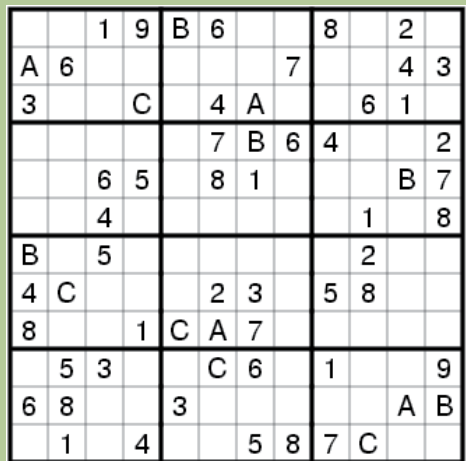
## QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ

This month's quiz simply has to focus on the Open Championship of 2013:

- 1) At Muirfield, which luckless Scot was in the hunt for the Claret Jug before hitting a quintuple bogey nine during his third round?
- 2) Which former Open champion missed Muirfield because of shoulder surgery?
- 3) Name the two amateurs who made the cut.
- 4) Name the Scottish player who drove home to Aberdeen thinking he had missed the cut only to

receive a text telling him he had made it?

- 5) Name the runner-up.
- 6) Name the two players who shot a 67 on the final day.
- 7) How many over par did Rory McIlroy finish for his two rounds?
- 8) Which golfing legend made the cut but finished +23?
- 9) Which South African player smashed his club on the 15th?



Monster Daily SuDoku: Tue 30-Jul-2013 easy

## MONSTER SUDOKU

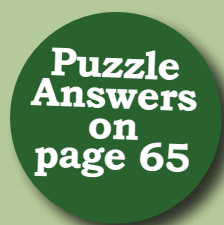
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 4x4 box contains the numbers 0 to 9 and the letters A to E.



Daily SuDoku: Tue 30-Jul-2013 hard

## SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 9 box shape contains the numbers 1 to 9.



## South East

Contact your Section correspondent with news, events or anything else for Around the green...



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## Events Coming Up

**Essex** – Next golf day Thursday 15 August at Channels Golf Club. Bacon roll and coffee from 11.00am, 18 hole Stableford (this event is the National Qualifier, two places up for grabs), plus a BBQ afterwards, £20 members/sponsors. £30 guests, cheques made payable to “BIGGA Essex” please!

This event was a great success last time around, so don't miss out on a fun day with good food and camaraderie.

Entries to Antony Kirwan: at “Play Golf Colchester” Bakers Lane, Colchester, Essex. CO3 4AU or antz16@btinternet.com by Saturday 10 August please.

Membership clarification will be required prior to your playing at all events this year please.

Details are on the website, under Competition Rules 2013 this is within the golf section of the section website.

We have also decided to sell our raffle tickets before you play, rather than badger you afterwards. This we hope will speed things along and allow you all to site down for your dinner quicker upon your return from the course.

Tickets will be on sale when you collect your scorecard. Enjoy your day at Channels.

“So you want to be promoted...?”

Ben Scrivener is still waiting to hear from you. We would like to arrange an evening with Murray Long and Matt Pledsted for all you young greenkeepers that are looking to make the leap to the next level.

There is more information about this event on our section website. Interested then contact Ben gingerpunky@hotmail.com

**Surrey** - Cresta Cup at Wimbledon Park GC on 24 September 2013

**Kent** - Our planned Foot Golf event has been temporarily postponed and will now take place in late August/early September. Our next golf event is to be held at Sene Valley Golf Club on 19 September. Email invitations with more details will be out soon.

## News

**Sussex** - A full field attended our sections away day to the fine links of Littlestone GC over the border in darkest Kent. Some members brought their passports and were surprised that these weren't needed to cross the Kent marshes.

A super day was had by all in the sunny and very warm conditions, so much so that some were seen wearing large sombreros to keep the

sun off, and which also saw one forgetful greenkeeper cover himself in sun lotion, and then try and play the next few shots with sun lotion over his hands and grips.

There was also a near emergency call out when John Shepard ventured into the long rough to retrieve a ball, only to find the rough taller than him and thus lose his way back to his team!

The course was in fine condition and a heartfelt thanks go to Malcolm and all of his team for allowing the section to play their prestigious course and for the condition in which it was presented, well done all.

I am sure that you will all join with me in wishing Neil Durant, Head Greenkeeper at Dale Hill Golf Club a speedy recovery following a serious illness that had left him hospitalised for some time.

**Surrey** - Seminars over the winter period are in the planning process, Date TBA, intention to have 5 or 6 educational events at Merrist Wood College.

## Results

**Sussex** – Away day: Longest drive, John Hill. Nearest the pin John Shepard. Nearest the pin in two was Matt Hutchinson.

Nearest the pin in 3 was Graham White. In the team competition 3 The “Seaford boys” with 86pts. 2 “Team Mitchell” with 88. 1 the “Tortillas” with an incredible 97 (with a blob!?) Once again thanks to all attendees for supporting the section on this away day.

**Surrey** - Results from Worplesdon GC: 1 Alan Crittendon 76 Gross Nett 69 2 Phill Beney Nett 72 3 Robin Cheney Nett 72 Best Gross Jason Hunt 7;

Nearest Pin Gavin Kyle, Long Drive Mark Davies. Alan Crittendon and Mark Davies qualify for the National Tournament at Frilford Heath.

## Thanks To Sponsors

**Sussex** – Thanks to away day sponsors Mitchells Groundscare and Pete Smith for organising.

**Kent** - Many thanks to Lister Wilder who have offered to join our very welcome group of kind sponsors.

We have just learned that one of our section's friends and most loyal sponsors has been taken ill with quite a serious medical condition.

On behalf of everyone in our group I would like to wish Stewart Clayton of Greensman Ltd a full a speedy recovery and look forward to seeing you again soon.

## Welcome New South East Members

Danny Perks, Greenkeeper, Wentworth Club (The), Surrey

Mark Ogden, Course Manager, Drift Golf Club, Surrey  
Neil Highgate, Assistant Greenkeeper, Cottesmore Golf Club, Surrey

Sean Blyth, Greenkeeper, Goodwood Club Ltd (The), Sussex

Simon Berry, Greenkeeper, Goodwood Club Ltd (The), Sussex

Christopher Ahier, Greenkeeper, Hassocks Golf Club, Sussex

Jamie Chapman, Assistant Greenkeeper, Hendon Golf Club, London

Louis Dunn-Allen, Assistant Greenkeeper, Hendon Golf Club, London

This year's BIGGA National Championship, sponsored by Charterhouse and Kubota, is at the superb Frilford Heath Golf Club on October 7-8, with the first prize of £500 worth of vouchers



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The entry fee of **£90** includes all golf fees, lunch both days and dinner on Monday evening. Please note that there is no accommodation provided.

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Address.....  
 .....  
 ..... Post Code.....

Mobile.....

E-mail.....

Membership No. ....

Handicap .....

BIGGA Section.....

Golf Club .....

### Payment method (please tick)

- I enclose my cheque made payable to 'BIGGA Ltd' value **£90**
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Card number.....  
 .....

Start Date ..... Expiry Date .....

Last 3 security digits.....

Issue No. (Switch/Delta only) .....

Signature.....

Date.....

Or E-mail your details to:  
**rachael@bigga.co.uk**  
 Ensure you receive confirmation of entry by return email.

### Deadline for entry is 6th September 2013.

Completed entry forms should be sent to:  
**BIGGA National Championship, BIGGA House, Aldwark, Alne, York YO61 1UF**



The main tournament for the Challenge Trophy will be played over 36 holes, medal play, with the best overall gross score producing the BIGGA National Champion, who must be a greenkeeper member. The greenkeeper player with the lowest nett score will be presented with the BIGGA Challenge Cup.

There will be prizes for the first five over 36 holes in the gross category. The top three in the nett competition will also receive prizes. After each day of 18 holes there will be prizes for winners of handicap divisions. The BIGGA Regional Team Cup and prize will be calculated from the 8 best nett scores over the first day of play. There will also be various nearest the pin and longest drive competitions, featuring prizes.

# South West & Wales

Contact your Section correspondent with news, events or anything else for Around the green...



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**SOUTH WALES**  
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## Events Coming Up

**South Wales** - Our AGM will now be held at Machynys Peninsular Golf Club on Wednesday 16 October and not Haverfordwest as first noted. We have a team match v the South West at Chipping Sodbury 16 August 1pm tee off team to be announced. The match v the North is to be rearranged for a suitable date in September.

**South West** - SW Section v South Wales at Chipping Sodbury GC 15 August. SW Section v South Coast at N Wilts GC 26 September. Enquiries to Wayne Vincent (07958 630590).

## News

**South Wales** - I would just like to say that the standard of the work of the greenkeepers in the South Wales Section is outstanding! Keep it going guys you're doing a great job.

**South West** - A strong delegation from the SW was in attendance at Muirfield as part of the BIGGA Open Support Team. A fantastic week was had by all involved and a huge thank you must go out to everyone at HQ for the seamless organisation.

The annual match between SW Section and The Secretaries at The Manor House GC ended in a 4 ½ - 5 ½ victory to the Secretaries. Well done to Adam and Paul for taking on the opposition single-handedly.

Congratulations to Lee Whyte of Bowood GC and Paul Garland of Lansdowne GC who will be representing SW Section at the BIGGA National Championships at Frilford Heath GC in October.

We are seeking interest in an excavator operation update training session to coincide with the five year cut off from the last certification programme, please keep an eye on the BIGGA Bulletin Boards for details or contact Paul Worster directly.

Once again the section will be sponsoring a place to attend BTME in January 2014 to include accommodation, transport and education. Please contact any of the committee members to express your interest in this fantastic opportunity.

## Results

**South Wales** - Thanks to all the Patrons who sponsored the inaugural golf tournament. 1 Gareth Hardisty (Burghill Valley) 2 John Knight (Llanishen gc) 3 Marc Anderton (Newport gc) Nearest the Pin Darryl Jones Longest Drive Ian Kinley

**South Coast** - South Coast Section summer tournament held at the Army Golf Club, 30 entrants and fine weather. Thanks firstly to the club for allowing us courtesy of the course which was presented in outstanding condition. Well done to Phil Wentworth and his team on achieving such high standards a great test of golf. 1 39 points Colin Hutt from Basingstoke GC. 2 37pts on count back Chris Bitten (who rarely plays golf these days) 3 37 pts Jamie Pender from Blue Mountain GC. Longest drive John Say from Test Valley GC. Nearest the pin Mark Ogelsby from Test Valley

## Movers and Shakers

**South Wales** - Andy Roach has left Haverfordwest GC after 28 year of loyal service we wish him every success in his new venture. Malcolm Davies has Left Cradoc GC After 35 years of loyal service, when he said to me he started in 1979 I said that was the year I was born! Good luck both.

## Thanks to Sponsors

**South West** - Special thanks to all of our Section Patrons for their ongoing support: EcoSol, Greensman, Irritech, Headland Amenity, Countrywide and Farmura.

**South Coast** - Thanks to our Summer Comp sponsors Tacit and Mark Day for presenting the prizes.

## Welcome New South West & Wales Members

James Carash, Assistant Greenkeeper, Cricklade Hotel Golf Club, South West

George Briggs, Assistant Greenkeeper, Brokenhurst Manor Golf Club, South Coast

Thomas Cunningham, Greenkeeper 21 yrs & over, Corhampton Golf Club, South Coast

Daniel Jeffries, Assistant Greenkeeper, Alresford Golf Club, South Coast

## Welcome New International Members

David Colley, Rosslare Golf Club, International, Republic of Ireland  
Sergio Baselgia, Golfpark Nuolen AG, Switzerland

## A new look

Based on feedback from the recent GI survey, we've refreshed and improved this section of the magazine.

Please send your news and photos in to your section correspondent or Steve Castle (steve.castle@bigga.co.uk) by the 10th of each month



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# How well do you know your greens?

When you miss a short putt is it always your fault? Leaving aside the putter, the wind and the jangling of coins in your opponent's pocket, what else comes to mind? Could it be the surface of the green, which so often gets the blame for those three putts?

Yes it could, and more often than you might think, as Malcolm Peake tries out the Greenstester



**From six feet, four out of ten putts can miss the hole on a poor surface. But until recently, there has been no way of quantifying the problem in an objective fashion. However, a new tool has been launched which helps to monitor the surface performance of greens throughout the year.**

The Greenstester is an exciting and affordable new measuring tool which is supported by The R&A, and used for assessing objectively the reliability of putting surfaces. This will be of help to agronomists, Course Managers or any Golf Club officials to measure the consistency of their greens and for recording the information.

The idea for the Greenstester evolved because Nick Park, a long term member of The R&A Golf Course Committee, felt there was a requirement for an affordable tool which could regularly measure the trueness of golf greens. When golfers stand over a putt, if they stroke it on the right line and at the right pace they expect to have every chance of holing the putt.

The search then led back to an idea first used over a century ago. In 1908 Sir Ralph Payne-Gallwey used a ramp on a snooker table to prove that most golf balls at that time had a centre of gravity that was not centred. He did this by aiming a succession of balls at a thimble placed on the black spot, released down the ramp from the

## CAUSES OF POOR SURFACE PERFORMANCE

1. Variable growth of sward
2. Seeding Poa annua
3. Disease scars
4. Pitch marks
5. Moss/weeds
6. Foot printing on the green in swards with high organic content or thatch
7. Aeration and remedial work

'D'. The equivalent of an 8 foot putt, some of the balls ended up in the corner pocket! The Greenstester was gradually developed after tests using the Stimpmeter.

Fintan Brennan, Course Manager at Portmarnock Hotel and Golf Links, had 15 years' experience in the steel industry, and with his engineer brother Ray immediately grasped the potential of the Holing Out test, and developed a special curved ramp.

The testing on the exceptional true fescue dominant greens of Waterville and Portmarnock Links produced excellent results, but it was felt the ramp needed to be trialed on a wider variety of playing surfaces. It was agreed that testing should be undertaken on my home





#### THE BENEFITS OF THE TEST ARE

1. Monitoring reliability on a year-on-year comparison
2. Checking reliability after disruptive remedial greenkeeping work. Useful to reassure members and visitors
3. Checking reliability in advance of major club events
4. Saving costs by only mowing or rolling when necessary, especially off season

course of Temple, and I was soon invited to use other local courses such as Beaconsfield, Bearwood Lakes, The Berkshire, Hennerton, Maidenhead, and Stoke Park.

The Course Managers became involved in the tests, contributing with suggestions and comments on the performance of the prototypes, which helped define the final model.

The testing in Ireland was on a links course dominated by fescue grasses, while in the Thames Valley the testing was on downland, heathland and parkland with fescue, bent dominant or nearly pure Annual meadow grass (*Poa annua*) greens.

With some of the courses having push up greens over 100 years old,

and others modern USGA type specification, we felt that nearly ever type of golf green in Northern Europe would be covered.

For over a year, with Temple's Course Manager Martin Gunn, we tested the reliability and speed of the their greens, and over the trial period we collected an immense amount of data.

It became clear from our anecdotal evidence that the dominant fescue/bent greens provided the most reliable putting surface for year round golf. As an aside: the fescue/bent greens suffered much less disease, required less fertiliser, pesticide and water applications, in fact were more economical to manage in every way.

At Temple this type of surface allows the golfer to play the course as the architect (Willie Park Jnr) intended, giving the golfer more options and more challenges.

The Club is using the information gathered and now micro managing the different greens to bring them to a similar high fescue/bent standard.

Recently I saw a piece in the Golf Course Architects magazine written by Dr David Greenshields - the R&D Manager at Barenbrug - describing the 4 year trials at the STRI which states that they strongly indicate that the preferred grass composition for golf greens under year-round play in the UK is a combination of fescue and bent. This has endorsed our anecdotal evidence using the Greenstester.

**“It became clear from our anecdotal evidence that the dominant fescue/bent greens provided the most reliable putting surface for year round golf”**

Keith Adderley, Secretary at Temple, said: “Having been a fascinated observer during the process which saw the Greenstester conceived, tested and manufactured, I can see nothing but benefit from its use.

A simple and cost effective tool that, if used on a regular basis, will create a bank of meaningful and, more importantly, useful, statistical information relating to the performance of putting greens.

From where I sit the golf industry is onto a winner and what's more golfers seem genuinely interested in finding out more when they see the Greenstester being used on the course. It will benefit Course Managers, Secretary/Managers, Green Committees, and golfers.

This is one of the most exciting and affordable developments to hit the course maintenance market for many years.”

Interpretation of results should be kept in context as even surfaces which record 10/10 from any given distance are only true and reliable on that day, and only on the line of the putt.

On one course used regularly for testing the Course Manager has found that he can reduce the mowing and/or rolling and still attain the required green speed and reliability, which has yielded savings in a number of areas.

All of these causes of poor surface performance are preventable on a well-built and well-maintained putting green except, perhaps, during periods of extreme weather.

The test is an aid to monitoring the reliability of putting surface, and should be used in conjunction with firmness and speed data.

The R&A will be reviewing the protocol and updating it as necessary. See [www.randa.org/thegolfcourse](http://www.randa.org/thegolfcourse) for more detailed information.

The Greenstester is already gaining recognition around the world and one of the earliest agronomists to appreciate its benefits is Dr Micah Woods, Chief Scientist at the Asian Turf Centre, who took delivery of a Greenstester earlier this year and trialed it in Japan, India, the Philippines and Thailand.

He said “The R&A Holing Out Test is an important addition to the evaluation of putting green per-

formance, because it allows us to measure something that is closely related to the game.

If we make a perfect stroke, is the green reliable enough that the ball will go in the hole?

Putting greens that are reliable, meaning that the ball goes where it is intended, are sure to reward good putters with more birdies. I, for one, am excited about that prospect.”

So there we have it, an affordable tool which will assist Greenkeepers working to produce quality putting surfaces, whilst also providing golfers with more reliable greens for year round golf.

Those short putts might get a bit easier in the next year or two!

For more details see [www.greenstester.com](http://www.greenstester.com)

# Merion to Muirfield, who would be a Greenkeeper?



Donald Steel, GTC Chairman, Golf Course Architect and Golf writer, on the ongoing challenges facing greenkeepers

**It was a timely reminder of the distance the modern ball travels that Merion had a par 4 finishing hole that could have played 530 yards for the US Open in June.**

Justin Rose's glorious victory was completed with a classic drive and 4-iron when the 18th tee was moved forward to measure 511 yards but one interesting factor was the neat comparison with an equally epic climax from the past.

Rose's drive, blind over the hill, finished alongside the plaque marking the spot in 1950 from which Ben Hogan hit his famous 1-iron but the hole for that Open measured 448 yards; and Hogan was the best driver of his generation even though his appearance after a near fatal car smash the previous year was nothing short of miraculous. What is more, Rose's second shot finished at the back of a large green, Hogan's at the front left.

If the ball isn't going any further, as some suggest, an intriguing

question is why nearly every championship and tournament course in the world has sought extra yardage to shore up its defences? Merion, one of the shorter courses for a major championship, found itself back in favour after a spell of 32 years on the sidelines simply because it could be lengthened by 450 yards.

That, in itself, was some achievement although, equally remarkably, 135 of those yards came on three par 3s. The 3rd, 9th and 17th played 256, 236 and 246 yards, the fourth par 3, the 13th, no more than a chip and a putt. Incidentally, Merion's two par 5s, the 4th at 628 yards, come in the first four holes followed by two par 4s of 504 and 487 yards after which it was all downhill.

Well almost! For all that the layout included five par 4s under 368 yards, nearly every hole took its prisoners.

Nevertheless, Merion's reinstatement was a cause for rejoicing, a



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triumph for Matt Shaffer, Director of Golf Course Operations, whose brief was to set up Merion so that nobody broke par. Nobody did. Merion is a classic course of welcome variety that has contributed more than its share of glory to America's golfing history. One of its favourite features is a first tee right outside the locker room, its Englishness accentuated by its original title of Merion Cricket Club in the outskirts of Philadelphia. However, as Shaffer states, "Merion isn't European and it isn't American in design. It is Merion".

He added crucially, "there was so much at stake for this championship but the question was whether change could be made fairly and who decides? It would have been far easier to move greens but we established early on that that, more than anything, would ruin the integrity of Merion". The weather is always the mitigating factor and greenkeepers everywhere will have spared a thought for Matt who had to contend with a very wet build up



to his preparations and a tornado on the first morning.

By contrast, Muirfield, firm and fast, was bathed in sunshine. It is impossible not to make comparisons with Merion if only to underline that the Gods invariably have the last word. A year ago, they were pumping water out of bunkers at Lytham. Matt is a huge advocate of "firm and fast" but, as all greenkeepers recognise, he had to accept what came and deal with it.

Nevertheless, Merion is the latest example of almost obligatory course adjustment to suit current needs. Previously, in 1981, "the US Open was played with a soft ball, true temper shafts and persimmon woods". To my mind, one general guideline for any course set-up is encouragement of good driving, a point picked up by Paul Lawrie in Golf World recently. "The ball and the size of the driver head have changed the game the most. The ball goes further and doesn't move as much in the air, which isn't a good thing. A lot of mediocre to



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decent players are winning a lot of money. Before, you had to be really talented to do that. The art of driving has been lost".

On the eve of Muirfield, talk inevitably centred on irons off the tee, one leading player asking "when you hit a 2-iron 350 yards, why take a driver?" However, a precedent for irons was set in 1987 when, in the third round in terrible conditions of wind and rain, also at Muirfield, Sandy Lyle went round in 71 without hitting a single wooden club for any shot. 26 years on, players either couldn't, didn't want to or didn't need to, take a driver - one solution for a 379 yard par four being a 7-iron and a sand wedge.

Most courses were never designed to suffer some of the indignities

and battle lines have to be drawn early but a particular pet hate is encircling greens with collars of clinging rough and remote pin positions that can be virtually inaccessible even from the shortest range. Does anybody really applaud the need for a full swing to dislodge a ball within a few feet of the pin, knowing that, if they do, it will roll off the other side into somewhere just as unsavoury?

Green speed also comes more into the equation, today's sophisticated mowing machines achieving lower heights of cut, making selection of sympathetic pin positions even more problematic particularly with varying wind strengths. Greenkeepers need no reminding that playing conditions can vary

## "Merion's reinstatement was a cause for rejoicing, a triumph for Matt Shaffer, Director of Golf Course Operations, whose brief was to set up Merion so that nobody broke par"

inflicted on them nowadays even if it is acknowledged that width of fairways and pin positions are key ingredients in course presentation. Long ago, it was said that "without fast greens and thick rough, Merion, for all the strategic niceties of the holes, couldn't hope to stand up to the present professional brigade". But narrow fairways and thick rough can curb aggression which isn't always what people pay to see although, happily, links golf should never respond purely to muscle power. Subtlety, touch, feel and judgement are greater requirements.

When limits are exceeded on any course, conditions quickly become undesirable not to say impossible. Rough cannot be grown to order

significantly between six o'clock in the morning and six in the evening never mind from week to week. Things are rarely easy. Less than a month after the US Open, Matt, back in Merion, faced 95 degree heat and insufferable humidity. Who'd be a greenkeeper?!

And somewhere in the back of my mind, I seem to remember Phil Mickelson fearing on the first evening that some parts of some of the greens at Muirfield might be dead. Happily, Colin Irvine and his gallant band of helpers quickly showed they were alive and kicking, Mickelson, a Links convert (even without a driver in his bag) responding with the round of his life to gain the oldest title in the game. Another happy ending for all.

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Hole	Par	Yards	Eagles	Birdies	Pars	Bogeys	Double Bogeys	Other	Rank *	Average		
1	4	350	1	81	308	58	8	1	16	3.987		
2	5	556	3	96	266	71	15	6	14	5.042		
3	3	256	0	27	266	151	13	0	8	3.328		
4	5	628	0	54	279	99	17	8	10	5.230		
5	4	504	0	12	169	220	51	4	2	4.706		
6	4	487	0	23	235	171	26	1	4	4.445		
7	4	360	0	62	300	90	10	4	13	4.110		
8	4	359	2	83	287	77	6	1	15	4.011		
9	3	236	0	23	273	129	28	3	6	3.375		
Out	36	3736	6	461	2383	1056	174	28		38.237		
10	4	303	4	124	257	56	12	3	17	3.906		
11	4	367	0	70	258	102	21	6	11	4.206		
12	4	403	0	58	298	85	14	2	12	4.133		
13	3	115	0	126	291	39	1	0	18	2.814		
14	4	411	0	30	243	147	28	9	5	4.444		
15	4	464	0	42	239	129	29	18	3	4.455		
16	4	430	0	33	285	116	20	3	9	4.291		
17	3	246	1	22	270	141	20	3	7	3.363		
18	4	521	0	11	178	208	54	6	1	4.707		
In	34	3260	5	516	2319	1023	199	50		36.309		
Total	70	6996	11	977	4702	2079	373	78		74.546		

Stats courtesy of the USGA

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# Visit the BIGGA Stand at SALTEX, Stand G98





# BIGGA Seminars at SALTEX 2013

The Grandstand, Royal Windsor Race Course

Wednesday 4 September 2013

BIGGA is delighted to have once again, been invited by the IOG to present a series of seminars at SALTEX 2013.

**10.15 am – 11.15 pm**  
**Greens Drainage - Mission Possible**

A workable solution - Transforming soil based greens with Deep Thatch and Black Layer at Robin Hood Golf Club. Discover the methods used and the solution to draining troublesome greens.

*Presented by Andy Wood, Course Manager, Robin Hood GC.*

**11.30 am – 12.30 pm**  
**Sand Traps and Money Pits**

This session will look at managing and constructing golf course bunkers on limited budgets, whilst revisiting the past to shape our future. It will also include the art of compost creation and it's role in modern traditional greenkeeping.

*Presented by Stuart Yarwood MG, Golf Course Manager, Lymm Golf Club.*

**1.00 pm – 2.00 pm**  
**Go in Green.....Come Out Clean**

Winter disease on golf greens is particularly problematic since there is little turf growth to allow recovery and for scars to heal. This can impact the playability of greens right through into the spring period leading to the dissatisfaction of golfers. An integrated approach to disease management can reduce the disease pressure, improve turf health and enhance the performance of fungicide applications. New findings on disease management will be presented along with practical advice for how to deliver smooth, disease free greens right through the high risk autumn and winter periods.

*Presented by Dr Simon Watson, Syngenta Technical Manager, EAME Turf and Landscape.*

**BIGGA CPD Credits**

- 1 CPD credit is available for each seminar.  
A CPD register will be available at the end of each seminar.



## puzzlepage answers

**QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ ANSWERS:**

- 1) Martin Laird
- 2) John Daly
- 3) Matt Fitzpatrick and Jimmy Mullen
- 4) Paul Lawrie
- 5) Henrik Stenson
- 6) Ian Poulter and Jason Dufner
- 7) +12
- 8) Sandy Lyle
- 9) Charl Schwartzl

**CROSSWORD**

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**MONSTER SUDOKU**

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3			C		4	A			6
				7	B	6	4		2
		6	5		8	1			B
		4						1	8
B	5							2	
4	C			2	3		5	8	
8			1	C	A	7			
	5	3			C	6		1	9
6	8			3					A
	1		4			5	8	7	C

**SQUIGGLY SUDOKU**

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5	4	8	2	9	1	6	3	7	
9	2	6	7	3	5	1	4	8	

Monster Daily SuDoku: Tue 30-Jul-2013 easy

Daily SuDoku: Tue 30-Jul-2013 hard

# The Back Nine

A column for writers and members to air and share their views on golf greenkeeping topics

Sean Sullivan, Golf Course Superintendent at The Briarwood Golf Course in Montana, USA, marked his Open Support Team debut last year by having the tournament's logo tattooed on his arm! Here he tells us how the bulletin boards and BIGGA members' superb hospitality set him up for Muirfield

**For me, my Open experience begins before I even apply for the Support Team. This year our annual members' meeting was the same week I was told I had been selected, so I had the opportunity to explain to the membership the honour, for me, and the benefits for them, and also ensure my time in the UK would not clash with any tournaments at Briarwood.**

From March to July I was on the course working every day just to have the privilege of working the Open. I wanted to experience Scotland so booked a flight for Friday 12 July – nearly a week before the tournament started properly. I was “shooting from the hip” – other than the team's official accommodation in Edinburgh I had not booked any hotels. But through a thread I started on BIGGA bulletin boards, several greenkeepers had made very kind offers of accommodation. This shows again what a great industry we are involved in.

Once in Edinburgh I got on a train and headed for Dunblane. I called Chris Pearson, Course Manager of Dunblane New GC, to let him know I was in town. Chris took me on a tour of the golf course, which was in great shape. As it was too hot for a round of golf, he gathered up his family and we went for a drive to St Andrews. You can never go wrong with a trip to St Andrews! We walked the Old Course watching the golfers and helping to locate errant shots while his family enjoyed the beach.

I then headed to Dundee, but because of poor planning

on my part, I missed out on another course tour and decided to head towards Inverness. While changing trains in Perth, I actually ran into someone I knew - Lee Strutt was on his way to Inverness, to help Chris Haspell at Castle Stuart for the Scottish Open. It was good to catch up with him and enjoy the journey through the Scottish countryside, and he gave me tips on places to stay that night.

The next day I met Iain Macleod, from Tain Golf Club, and I played my first round of golf in the UK at Tain. I'm going to claim a lack of course knowledge, jet lag, and borrowed clubs for the poor display of golf that Iain had to witness but I had a great time, despite the high score. Iain was kind enough to put me up at his house for the night and the next day we were off to Castle Stuart for the last day of the Scottish Open.

While walking around the course, we happened upon several greenkeepers, who I had only known from the BIGGA forum. It was great to meet them in person and put a face to the names. Thanks to Andy Campbell and Jacobsen for providing me with a ticket, to see the venue and have lunch with other greenkeepers. These types of opportunities are unbelievable considering the distance between Montana and Scotland.

Later that day I met Andy again and headed back to St Andrews, and he and his family were generous enough to offer me a place to stay at their house. Although a busy man, as were the others who took me around,



## Several greenkeepers had made very kind offers of accommodation

### about the author



Sean Sullivan is Golf Course Superintendent at the Briarwood Golf Course in Montana in Western USA. It is an 18-hole Championship course with hills, creeks and open rangeland, and is particularly notable for its coal slag black bunkers.

Sean has added many personal touches such as painting the flags of the nations in the UK on the club's ball washers, and has now twice been a member of BIGGA's Open Support Team.

he made sure I visited The Duke's Course Golf Club, with Derek Robson, and Carnoustie, where we ran into Craig Boath. Two more names that I was able to put faces to. I was dropped off at the Leuchars train station and headed back to Edinburgh to meet the whole Open Support Team.

## Next month

Will Sean's Muirfield experience be memorable enough to justify another tattoo?

Will he be able to cram all his souvenirs into his case? And how will he cope with 48 hours without sleep during his marathon journey home? Find out in GI September...

The views expressed within this column are not necessarily those of Greenkeeper International

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