



Third BIGGA Turf Managers' Conference a huge success

An increasingly important focus of BTME is the varied Continue to Learn programme – and it's no exaggeration to say 2013 boasted one of the finest ever line-ups; beginning with the third Turf Managers' Conference.

We attracted some of the leading experts and most informative and knowledgeable presenters from the turf industry and beyond to make this Conference unmissable for sports turf managers keen to advance their education.

The Conference made its first appearance outside the halls of the Harrogate International Centre,

taking place at the nearby Crown Hotel.

We attracted some terrific presenters with the colourful Dr Thom Nikolai kicking things off with a passionate and highly interesting presentation on 'The Top 10 Reasons to Lightweight Roll'. A worldwide authority on turf matters, Thom is Turfgrass Academic Specialist at Michigan State University and is author of the book 'The Superintendents Guide to Controlling Putting Green Speed'.

Adam McColl, Head Greenkeeper at Crews Hill Golf Club said: "Thom was very informative and engaging. I never fail to be impressed at

BIGGA's efforts in securing the best speakers from around the world and this presentation was no exception."

As for Thom himself, he simply said: "I have never enjoyed myself more at a conference, I have never been in a friendlier place in my life".

He was followed by Lorna Sheldon's 'Professional Presentations'. A qualified public speaker, Lorna has coached thousands of people across the world in the art of presenting with confidence and credibility included celebrities and cabinet ministers.

She covered everything from body language to technical tips on what

TOP LEFT: Dr Thom Nikolai

ABOVE TOP: Adam McColl, Head Greenkeeper at Crews Hill Golf Club

ABOVE LEFT: Kate Entwistle

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to say and how to say it to become a more professional presenter.

Lee Sayers, Course Manager at Mid Kent Golf Club, said: “Motivational speakers such as Lorna will always be well-received at a conference but she was particularly professional. It’s really increased my knowledge of that area and has made me re-think some of my practices.”

After an excellent lunch David Bancroft-Turner looked at Managing Politics in Golf Clubs. David is an expert on workplace politics and has worked with the world’s leading organisations, and gave an engaging 90-minute seminar - including introducing the audience to the four

different political animals which certainly caught the imagination.

Ian Semple, Course Manager at Old Fold Manor Golf Club, said: “David used animals to look at different personality traits and also looked at improving your day-to-day focus. I found it very interesting and beneficial to me and I know my colleagues I attended with did too.”

Thom Nikolai then returned with ‘60 Minutes on Surfactants’ – looking at the impact surfactants can have on different putting green root zones and different irrigation schemes.

Rounding off an unrivalled day of advanced education, Kate Entwistle, Turf Pathologist at The Turf

Disease Centre, gave the attendees a ‘New Disease Update’. She’s worked on turfgrass disease since 1990 and this presentation looked at the occurrence and distribution of new turf diseases and results of the Turf Disease Centre’s research.

Crucially, each presentation was concluded with an interactive question and answer session giving delegates the chance to ask reasoned and topical questions of the experts. The whole day was summed up well by David Everett from Lyme Regis Golf Club who commented: “ This Conference gives all turf managers the opportunity to improve their knowledge which will undoubtedly help you hugely in your job.”



ABOVE LEFT: David Bancroft-Turner addresses the delegates

ABOVE RIGHT: Lorna Sheldon during her ‘Professional Presentations’ seminar