

BIGGA SCOTTISH CONFERENCE ATTRACTS TOP SPEAKERS

The BIGGA Scottish Conference on Tuesday 5 March features an impressive and varied range of speakers from across the turf industry.

To be held at the Carnegie Conference Centre in Dunfermline, registration opens at 8.45am and the first speaker at 9.30am will be Ronnie Malcolm, Management Consultant with Malcolm International, who will be presenting on 'The Role of the Modern Greenkeeper'. This will include feedback from a UK survey of Course Managers.

Grant Frogley, Course Manager at The Roxburghe, follows by exploring how he moved from his role as Deputy at G West to his first Course Manager job and will look at the challenges he's already faced.

Next up will be Chris Haspell, Links Superintendent at Castle Stuart, with a fascinating presentation on the unprecedented landslide that hit the course in 2010. He'll also tell the audience in on his future plans at the site.

The afternoon will see Bill Lawlor from the Xact Group lead an interactive Q&A session on 'The Importance of Health & Safety for Greenkeepers' using examples which have been documented in the media. Dr Christian Spring from the STRI – a regular contributor to Greenkeeper International - will then look at the facts, root causes and possible corrective measures surrounding Worm Control plus other topical subjects.

A highly interesting day will be rounded off by John Bambury, Course Superintendent at Trump International Links at Balmedie in Aberdeenshire. John will look at the technical challenges experienced in getting this exciting new development up and running.

All in all, a day not to be missed. Places cost just £35 which includes lunch, and refreshments throughout. If you need any further information please contact BIGGA's Regional Administrator for Scotland John Young on 07776 242120 or johnyoung@bigga.co.uk

THE LONG AND THE SHORT OF IT

Our latest featured greenkeeper blog comes from Josh Lester at Longside Golf Club – an 18-hole parkland course in Aberdeenshire. He began writing the blog less than three years ago, and was able to display images of the terrible flooding which recently affected the course. He says the blog has helped communicate with members from his club – and other clubs.

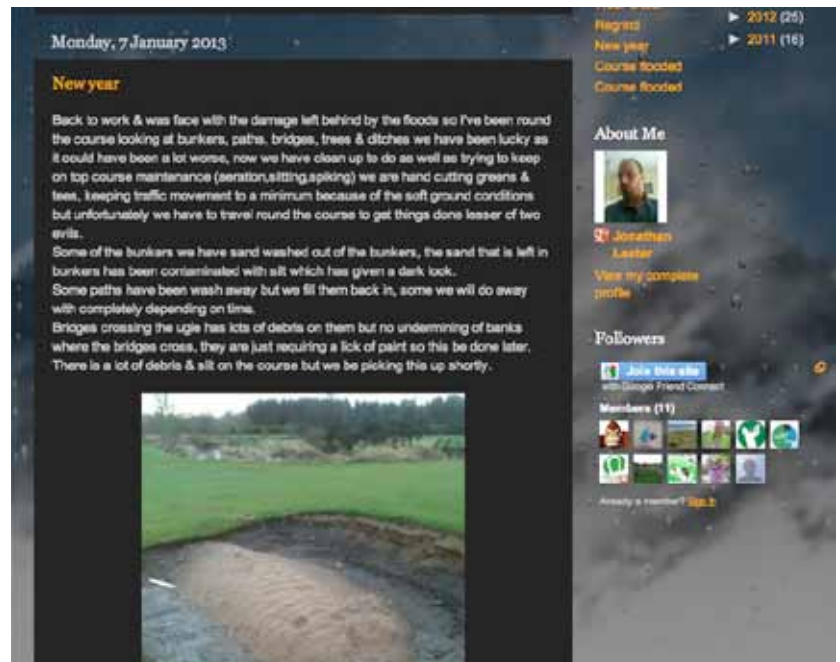
Head Greenkeeper Josh said: "The course is built on a flood plain with river running right through the middle but we managed to reopen five days later.

"We had sand washed out of bunkers, paths washed away and debris on the course. Loads of water came into the shed but everything was already up off of the ground in case there was a flood.

"I take photographs and post updates on my iPhone, so I can post on the blog while out on the course if necessary.

"The members tell me that they find my blog interesting as they like to know what's going on, ask questions or find out when I'm doing things. As well as the blog, I also use Twitter, which is also pretty helpful. I have a good number of followers including members from other clubs who have commented that they wish their greenkeepers would do similar work to what we've achieved here. In this day and age we need to be into social media and it's growing so quickly that we need to adapt. On a more personal note, I feel that a blog is great CV and most greenkeepers would benefit from keeping one."

Check out Josh's blog for yourself at <http://headgreenkeeperlongsidegolfclub.blogspot.co.uk/> - and remember to contact steve.castle@bigga.co.uk if you have a blog, or know of a greenkeepers' blog that has proved invaluable to you.



IT'S A WRAP

BIGGA have been speaking to the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) about the level of interest and debate among members about the use of compost on golf courses. As it happens, WRAP has been seeking information from a range of land managers about the use of compost & anaerobic digestate (biofertiliser). As part of this, they are keen to get the opinions of golf greenkeepers, so we have joined forces to set up a short online survey to

capture your opinions and experiences. We would really appreciate you spending five minutes completing this survey. Please visit <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/WRAPBIGGAsurvey> to complete a quick and simple questionnaire.

Once we've got your responses we will publish an article covering your views and some data from WRAP's technical team. WRAP will use the information to help them understand what needs to be done to provide information and support to the whole range of potential users of recycled organic material for land management.

If you have any queries about the survey you can contact Tricia Scott, in WRAP's Research & Evaluation team, on 01295 817887. For further information about WRAP's work, please visit: www.wrap.org.uk/category/sector/landscape-and-regeneration

