

# The trip of a lifetime



**Ten BIGGA Delegates - who we profiled in January's Greenkeeper International - travelled to San Diego just after BTME for the trip of a lifetime, in association with Bernhard & Company.**

The trip began with the them jetting from Heathrow to San Diego, and after a Golf Day at Encinitas Ranch Golf Course they enjoyed two superb course walks. The first was at La Costa Resort & Spa.

Their first educational seminar held at San Diego Convention Centre was 'Greens Aerification and Water Management by Numbers', and over the next two days they alternately explored the Golf Industry Show and joined BIGGA's Learning and Development Manager Sami Strutt on the BIGGA Stand. Another seminar - 'Sure Ways to Increase Plant Health' followed by the famous Torrey Pines course - a PGA Tour venue.

***Here's a selection of their comments and photographs from what proved to be an unforgettable week...***



"It was fascinating to see how the industry is run over there, and they're just as passionate as we are. Some of the differences were surprising. One of the courses we visited had a Superintendent who'd come to the club straight from university and he had a team mostly of labourers rather than turf professionals, so that was interesting.

"The GIS was on such a large scale it took two days for me to take it all in! Some of the education took place within the main halls of the exhibition which I also thought was a good idea.

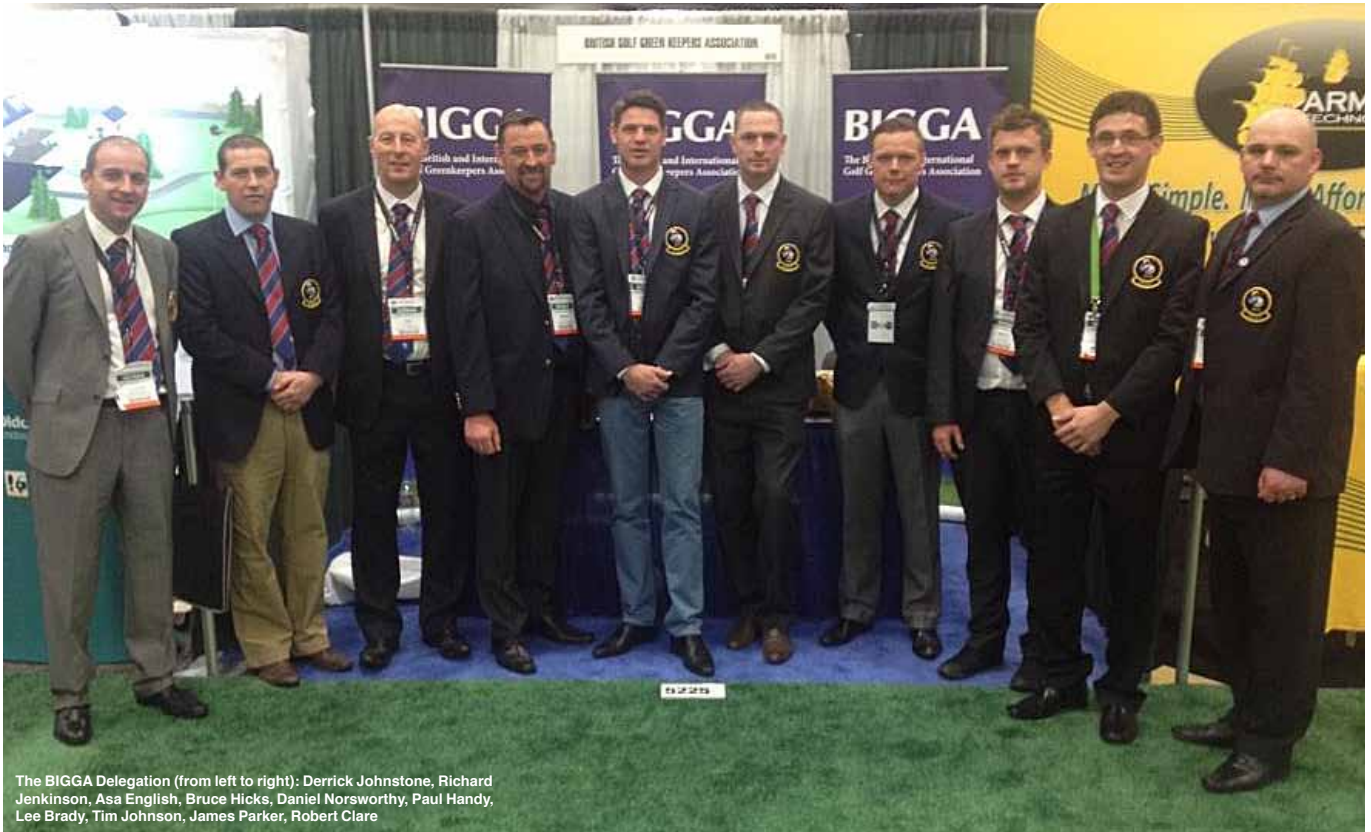
"The delegation were a really good range of ages, jobs and courses. My room mate was Derrick Johnstone from the Wentworth Club, and it was a great opportunity for us to compare the similarities and differences between his club and mine.

"I can't imagine why you wouldn't apply to be part of this. It was my first visit to America and it was superb - I'd urge you to apply for next year's delegation."

**Asa English, Deputy Course Manager, Rothley Park Golf Club**







The BIGGA Delegation (from left to right): Derrick Johnstone, Richard Jenkinson, Asa English, Bruce Hicks, Daniel Norworthy, Paul Handy, Lee Brady, Tim Johnson, James Parker, Robert Clare

## “It truly was the most unforgettable experience I have ever had in my career” Richard Jenkinson – Deputy Course Manager, G West

“It truly was the most unforgettable experience I have ever had in my career to date. To have the opportunity to attend and be part of such a friendly group is really very difficult to explain.

“I can safely say that I learned plenty of things I can apply to my current place of employment and I made new friends for life.

“It’s impossible to pick out one outstanding highlight as I enjoyed every single moment of the trip and can’t quite believe that it all went so quickly! However one of the obvious highlights were our tours around Torrey Pines and La Costa. One of the fascinating things for me was the difference between them even though they are just ten minutes’ drive apart. The management style is similar but the terrain and the composition of the courses are completely different. Torrey Pines is on a cliff and La Costa is closer to the riverside meaning totally contrasting styles of course. I now have an understanding of what previous delegates were talking about when they said it is a very tough but life changing week.”

**Richard Jenkinson – Deputy Course Manager, G West**

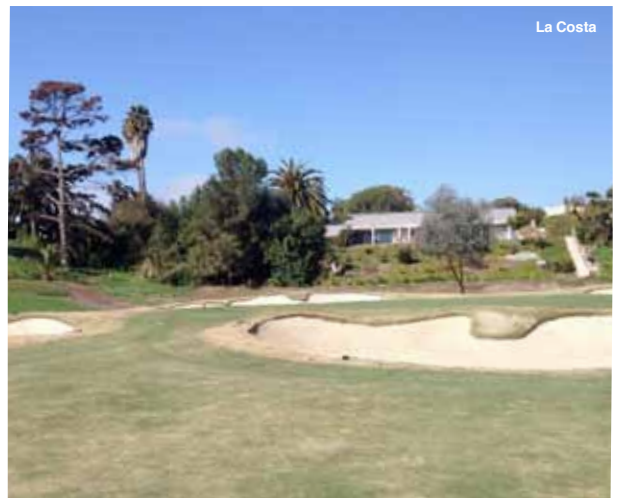
“All I can really say is thank you to Bernhard’s, BIGGA and the everyone who I went to San Diego with. I’ve made some very good friends for life, and you’ve made a normal greenkeeper who’s just starting out in the industry feel very welcome after one of the best weeks of my life!”

**Tim Johnson – Assistant Greenkeeper, The Wilmslow Golf Club**

“I would just like to thank Bernhard and BIGGA for the fantastic trip to GIS in San Diego. All those that attended had a career changing experience.

The way things are put together and run is a credit to both teams. The delegation successfully gave the best impression of our association. Thanks again to everyone involved. If you have not yet been part of the delegation give it some serious thought next year. This is a mind blowing opportunity. If you have applied before and missed out keep applying one day your time will come!”

**James Parker – Deputy Head Greenkeeper, Close House Golf & Country Club**



“Torrey Pines was just world-class, I got so much out of it.

“You dream about working somewhere like that and to get the chance to bounce ideas off some of the guys over there was terrific.

“The whole trip was fantastic, San Diego was such a vibrant city, and we all got on really well.

“We’ve swapped email addresses and phone numbers so if we have a greenkeeping related issue, we can share it with each other. I’ve already urged the guys at Wentworth to go for next year’s trip because it’s unmissable.

**Derrick Johnstone – Deputy Head Greenkeeper, The Wentworth Club**