



ALLISS HEADLINES BTME WELCOME CELEBRATION

Golfing legend Peter Alliss will be guest of honour at BIGGA's inaugural Welcome Celebration, kindly sponsored by Jacobsen, to be held straight after the first day of BTME in January.

Not only is Peter one of the most recognisable and authoritative voices in all sport, he is a fascinating and amusing speaker with over half a century of anecdotes and opinions – and you can catch a typically humorous keynote speech from Peter on Tuesday 21 January. Entry is free.

Beginning straight after the

first day of Europe's biggest turf management exhibition, the evening will be a true celebration of some of the industry's finest moments during the past 12 months.

We'll be acknowledging the superb achievements of some of our members during 2013, honouring greenkeepers who have excelled in educational, professional and golfing capacities and toasting success in the wider turf management industry.

All you have to do to attend

what's sure to be a memorable evening is head to the Royal Hall at the Harrogate International Centre at 5.30pm.

BIGGA Chief Executive Jim Croxton will introduce proceedings and there will be a series of announcements and awards before Peter takes to the stage, and drinks and nibbles will be served afterwards with the event expected to close at around 7.30pm.

Don't miss out on what is sure to be not just one of the highlights of BTME, but one of the highlights of 2014 in the industry.

EASTERN PROMISE FOR WHITEMOSS COMP

The Whitemoss Eco Ltd BIGGA Midland Region Inter Section Competition took place at Ashridge Golf Club on 25 September. The day started with fog to delay the start of things, although watching the Ashridge course reveal itself on a beautiful sunny afternoon wasn't a problem.

The three quarter stableford competition was won by the East of England Section with 107 points, congratulations to Graeme Macdonald with a great score of 40 points, Rob Bemment with 34 points and Rob Welford with 33 points.

East Midland Section were second with 99 points, 2012 winners Midland Section were third with 92 points, BB&O fourth with 91 points and supporting the rest were Mid Anglia Section with 81 points.

Grateful thanks to Whitemoss Eco Ltd for sponsoring this competition that allows like-minded sports turf professionals from around the region to network and enjoy a great game of golf, to James Camfield and his team for a superb course and to catering staff for their attentions throughout the day. Finally, thanks to all the Section Members who travelled and made the day a thoroughly enjoyable experience.

Sandra Raper

HOW YOU CAN HELP THE MAD MOWER MEN



Hopefully you've spotted adverts in the last two magazines advertising an amazing charity challenge – a team of BIGGA members pushing mowers from Ransomes Jacobsen's Ipswich HQ to BTME in January – a total of 177 gruelling miles.

It's all in aid of Scotty's Little Soldiers – a charity which supports the families of men and women killed in action while serving with the British Armed Forces.

Tim Johnson, greenkeeper at Wilmslow Golf Club, joined several other greenkeepers to push the mowers from Liverpool to Hull last year, so why are they doing it again, this time in the depths of winter?



How did it all start, and how can you help?

GI spoke to Tim, who is currently in training for this latest gruelling challenge.

Pushing mowers hundreds of miles?! How did this all start?

Lots of people these days do marathons, cycles and other endurance challenges. I wanted to do something very unusual that really stands out from the crowd, that people remember and that's also tied in with the sports turf industry.

One morning last year I was cutting all 21 greens at Wilmslow and I thought I could somehow incorporate a mower in a charity challenge, so I looked at places in the country that could be used as start and finishing points. I spotted that Liverpool and Hull both have an Albert Dock and that created the Port To Port Challenge, it was really that simple. A few friends and family agreed to support us and it was on!

Do you think this will be tougher than last year's challenge which you completed in August?

Yes very much so, this challenge is 80 miles longer with less hours of daylight to

play with, along the east coast of England in January.

We are expecting snow, sleet, gales and a lot of sideways rain. Ransomes Jacobsen are supporting us which we're extremely grateful for, and we're also hoping to secure other support too. Something like this is so tough physically and emotionally but the camaraderie of the team gets you through, and the feeling of achievement at the end is incredible.

Why have you chosen to support Scotty's Little Soldiers?

A lot of emphasis is put on the soldiers on the front line, and injured soldiers going through rehabilitation, and some amazing work is done in that area. But not enough attention is given to the families that are left behind if the worst happens.

Scotty's Little Soldiers was set up by Nikki Scott after her husband Corporal Lee Scott was tragically killed in an explosion in Afghanistan in

July 2009, leaving behind her and their two young children, so it's a hugely worthwhile cause.

How are you preparing for it?

At Wilmslow we do a lot of hand mowing so that helps massively for training. Plus I've joined a triathlon club which is going a long way towards helping me getting prepared for this challenge.

Last year we raised well over £2,000 for Help for Heroes and we're hoping to beat that this time round.

How can people donate?

Visit www.bmycharity.com/HardRoadToHarrogate - that's our dedicated website. We leave Ipswich on Thursday 16 January and hope to arrive in Harrogate on Tuesday 21 January for the opening of BTME.

After that we will be on the Ransomes Jacobsen stand to chat to people (if we make it!) and you will also be able to donate then. See you in January!

ESSEX WIN TRI TOURNAMENT

Upminster Golf Club was the venue for the annual South East Region Tri-Tournament between Essex, Surrey and Sussex.

This event rotates around the sections and has become one of the highlights of the South East regions' fixture list, along with the Golf and Dinner day at Walton Heath and the BMW Championship at Wentworth, plus our annual regional conference.

A full quota of 10 players per team took to the fairways at 10am and enjoyed a beautiful sunny day for a round of golf on a testing course set out by Upminster's Course Manager, Dougie Fernie. After a well-deserved late afternoon dinner Essex Team Captain Antony Kirwan announced the results: Essex 245, Sussex 242 and Surrey 225.

Essex (only the second time they had won in the event's seven year existence) would like to thank all the players from Surrey and Sussex for helping to make it such a great day, the camaraderie was fantastic and it was good to again be able to meet up with friends made over the years.

Our thanks to Upminster Golf Club for allowing us the courtesy of the course for the day and to Dougie and his team, and the club's catering team. All those playing would also like to thank Andy Turbin and Ernest Doe and Sons for their sponsorship of the day, and we look forward to next year's event somewhere in Sussex.

Arnold Phipps-Jones



CHIPPENHAM WORK NEARING COMPLETION

The Chippenham Golf Club in Wiltshire has gone through many changes since it was founded in 1896 and its latest chapter of redevelopment is nearing completion.

This has involved remodelling several existing holes to allow the integration of four newly constructed ones.

Course architect Matt Maryon has overseen the project from start to finish, and has been assisted by the outstanding shaping skills of Mike Smith from 1st Golf Ltd.

Several new tees have been constructed, while one hole has been completely redesigned to incorporate two existing holes.

Course Manager and BIGGA Vice Chairman Chris Sealey said: "Several years of hard work are

finally coming to fruition, and the members, committee, and staff can't wait to see the course open in its completed state in May 2014.

"We're really excited about the design of the new holes, and a couple of them promise to be particularly memorable. This, combined with the new clubhouse opening only 10 months ago, means it's a great time to be a member here at Chippenham Golf Club, and I'm sure we'll serve as a model going forward for Clubs looking to enhance their facilities."

The redevelopment is already having a positive effect on Club finances, with a noticeable growth across membership, green fee revenue, and food and beverages.



BIGGA SPONSORS

Charterhouse Turf Machinery were once again delighted to be co-sponsors of the BIGGA National Championship, a good opportunity to catch up with friends and colleagues at this prestigious event which attracts players from all around the country.

It's been a busy year for Charterhouse with the launch of new products including their new three point linkage mounted Turf Cutter, and our eagerly awaited Double Disc seeder with 30mm spacings to be launched shortly.

The Verti-Drain line up continues to make waves with the latest high speed models performing well both as a 1.6 metre unit and a 2m unit, these have been well received by those who need greater productivity and wanting to cover the ground quickly.

Charterhouse General Manager Nick Darking added: "Our new website www.charterhouse-tm.co.uk was launched recently. You are able to link through to our YouTube site showing the very latest machinery in use, it also gives our customers updates on our activity through out the year and allowing them to access detailed information about all of our product lines. We have even learned to Tweet and can be followed @ctmTURF giving the very latest information."



The winning Essex team: Simon Hartley, Paul O'Kane, Liam Springett, Campbell Murdoch, Antony Kirwan, Sam Cook, Stuart Rogers, Dougie Fernie, Ross Bennett. Lee Masters is missing



BIGGA members come together at Rockliffe

A **News Special** on the call to arms for the recent PGA English Seniors Open, held at Rockliffe Hall



BIGGA members from across the country came together recently to help out as Rockliffe Hall hosted the successful PGA English Seniors Open.

The team at the County Durham course was given just six weeks to prepare for the tournament and Head Greenkeeper Pete Newton knew he would need a support team to maintain the huge course which measures a staggering 7,897 yards from the back tees.

Together with Course Manager Davy Cuthbertson and Cleveland Section secretary Ian Pemberton, they appealed for greenkeepers to travel north for the week of the tournament and were delighted to receive offers from across the country.

Greenkeepers from Forest Hill, Forest of Arden and The RAC Club joined others from Matfen Hall, Close House plus other

local courses – and the team couldn't have done without them as Pete explained.

He said: "Obviously we were on a tight timescale, but I wasn't worried about the course quality as it's always at a high standard at any time of the year.

"The main issue was the amount of daylight we had to prepare the course.

"We started at around 6.30am for 9:30am tee times, and they were finishing around 4.30pm so we only had a total of five hours' light a day to work with.

"We were double cutting in the mornings and rolling to get the greens up to 10.5ft so there was a lot of work to do, but all the guys threw themselves into it.

"They were full of enthusiasm - we had rain on the Friday and I've never seen so many greenkeepers volunteer to grab a squeegee!

"The tournament was a huge success

with great feedback from the players and the PGA, and this just wouldn't have been possible without the volunteers assisting our full-time team here.

"They also gained valuable tournament experience, and I truly believe this is another example of the great industry that we're part of."

As well as help from various BIGGA members, Rockliffe enjoyed wider industry support. Reps from Tacit and Turfcare helped out as did the club's local Toro dealer Lloyds who supplied a mechanic, plus Gary Woodward from Bernhard Grinders who reground their machines prior to the Seniors Open.

Pete added: "Thanks to everyone who helped out and keep an eye out for more volunteering opportunities when the tournament returns here next August."