



FULL HOUSE FOR BTME 2014

BIGGA are delighted to announce that all the planned stand space for BTME 2014 next January has been sold – however there are still possibilities for anyone interested in exhibiting.

We've had a superb response from both returning clients and new companies keen to join the unmissable turf event of the year meaning all of the halls we opened last year are now full.

In fact, we're very pleased to announce several new companies making their BTME debuts including: Amenity Sales, County Turf, Etesia, Hunter Industries, JK Sonics, JUB, Mansfield Sand, Sports Metals and Toms Locker.

However, if you are interested in showcasing your products to thousands of movers and shakers across the whole range of the turf industry please get in touch as we are considering opening another hall at the Harrogate International Centre to meet demand.

To add your name to the list or register your interest please call our Business Development Manager Jill Rodham on 01347 833800 or email jill@bigga.co.uk.

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

Registration for BTME 2014 is now open – and it's still free! Simply visit our dedicated website at btme.org.uk and click on the 'Register Now' icon.

NORTH WALES WIN CRICKET BATTLE



The Annual BIGGA cricket challenge match between North West and North Wales, sponsored by Bathgate Silica Sand, was held on 24 July at Ashley Cricket Club.

The North West innings of 154 from 20 overs seemed enough to secure a victory.

However, North Wales battled to victory in a thrilling final over. Captain Paul Morton hit 53, ably supported by our very own Steve Wragg on 33. Steve also scored 6.2 for his dramatic dive to safety to avoid a run out! Man of the match: Steve Hemsley. Thanks to all who attended.

Sandra Raper

NEW FACES AT BIGGA



BIGGA HOUSE CHARITY RUN

Four BIGGA HQ staff have raised hundreds of pounds for charity after pounding the pavements of York on a 10k run.

From left, Membership Executive Elaine Jones joined Business Development Manager Jill Rodham, General Manager Tracey Maddison and L&D Executive Rachael Duffy in a 10k challenge in the city last month.

The quartet had undergone several weeks of training – clocking up the miles in the countryside around Aldwark Manor.

They then had to brave the summer heat on a glorious Sunday morning for the charity run, but managed to cross the line together in an impressive time of 1 hour 7 minutes. They've currently raised just under £700 for Macmillan Cancer Support. It was quite an achievement for the team and you can still donate to this extremely worthwhile cause at www.justgiving.com/TraceyMaddison

GCMA CONFERENCE

The GCMA Conference 2013 will take place between 11-13 November at the Hinckley Island Hotel in Leicestershire.

It will feature all manner of seminars, presentations and debates as well as the new 'Ideas Fair' where attendees can display their words of wisdom on a visual board. Keynote speakers include trained psychologist Philip Hesketh, Steve Otto – Director of Research and Testing at the R&A – and legendary British athlete Steve Backley OBE.

For much more detail and a booking form visit the GCMA's website – www.gcma.org.uk



The Association is pleased to announce the appointment of a new Regional Administrator for the South West/South Wales Region to replace Jane Jones. Tracey Harvey has been appointed on a full time contract. Tracey is a skilled administrator with a strong track record in event organisation.

Originally from Bristol, Tracey spent eight years at Thornbury Golf club as events coordinator, then moved on to have a spell in event management in the hotel industry specialising in weddings. Her previous role prior

to joining BIGGA was a PA for an environmental consultancy.

She said: "I've immersed myself in golf ever since the role at Thornbury. My partner and son are both very keen low handicap golfers, and as a family golf is a major part of our lives.

"Everyone is so welcoming in the industry, and very passionate about what they do, and I can't wait to get to know members in the South West and South Wales. It's terrific to be involved in the sport again and I'm looking forward to the challenge."



We're also pleased to welcome James Whittaker to the team at BIGGA House as Business Development Executive.

James, who completes our Sales and Administration team alongside Jill Rodham and Susannah Williams, has a wealth of business development and sales experience including working within the health club and cleaning industries as well as a spell working for Mercedes Benz.

He's a keen AFC Wimbledon fan and has followed them throughout their journey from the lower leagues back to their rightful place

in the Football League. He's also part of the commentary team for Radio Wimbledon covering some away games and is also a talented amateur footballer.

James said: "I'm delighted to join the team at BIGGA and am already getting to know our client base. I'm confident I can transfer my skills and experience from my previous field-based roles into the turf management industry.

I'm really looking forward to working closely with Jill, the rest of the team, our clients and our members across the country and beyond."

Beetle mania

Last month the Forestry Commission (FC) sent out a press release begging the public to help find populations of the Asian Longhorn beetle/ALB (*Anoplophora glabripennis*) and its close cousin the Citrus Longhorn beetle/CLB (*Anoplophora chinensis*).

Several outbreaks of CLB having arrived on infested Acers (maples), probably imported from plant nurseries in the Netherlands and originally sourced from China, have thankfully been eradicated over the last few years. ALB was found in spring 2012 at Paddock Wood in Kent (Greenkeeper International July 2012), having arrived in wooden crates from China, and was responsible for the precautionary felling of virtually all trees across eight hectares.

Hopefully this single ALB outbreak has also been eradicated since FC and FERA have said virtually nothing on the subject since autumn 2012. However, they are clearly concerned that more beetles could arrive in the country.

Martin Ward, the UK Government's Chief Plant Health Officer, said "Government plant health services cannot do this work alone, and we need the public to act as our eyes and ears in gardens, parks, woodlands and workplaces to help us spot threats quickly before they become a serious problem."

Fat chance, according to a recent Woodland Trust survey 80 per cent of the UK population can't even distinguish a huge ash tree from a huge oak tree and 50 per cent can't even identify an English oak tree – in England!

FC and FERA have finally



woken up to the traitorous activities of the native oak jewel beetle, a buprestid bark boring beetle called *Agrilus biguttatus*. In cahoots with a couple of plant pathogenic bacteria, this beetle is currently killing mature English oaks in their thousands across East Anglia and the Midlands by causing acute oak decline (Greenkeeper International March 2013).

Plant health authorities in North America are keeping a watchful eye on *Agrilus biguttatus* and have already marked it down as a 'quarantine pest'.

And with good reason since a close cousin called the emerald ash borer (*Agrilus plannipennis*) arrived from Asia and is currently destroying all species of native and exotic ash across a swathe of 18 contiguous mid-west, Appalachian and North East states and into adjoining areas of Canada (Ontario and Quebec).

If emerald ash borer ever gets into the UK it will destroy our native common ash (*Fraxinea excelsior*)

before even *Chalara fraxinea* (chalara ash dieback) has a chance to.

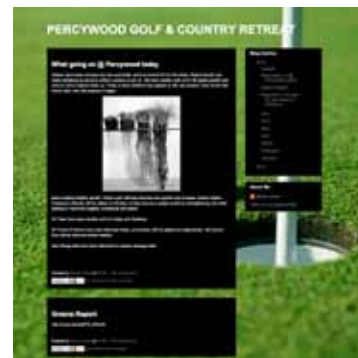
The United States has another *Agrilus* beetle this time a native species called the bronze birch borer (*Agrilus anxius*) which as the common name suggests attacks birch trees.

Native European species of birch have absolutely no resistance to this insect pest which will wipe out our native silver birch (*Betula pendula*) and downy birch (*Betula pubescens*) if it ever becomes established in the British Isles.

And now there is a British, native ambrosia beetle called oak pin-hole borer. Having been given a new lease of life in oak trees flattened by the 1987 Hurricane, the beetle has graduated over the years from a relatively rare insect of British oak woodland into a huge pest problem for the oak timber trade.

This beetle will make a mess of your club's new designer oak wood kitchen before it has even been made.

Dr Terry Mabbett



BLOGGING AT PERCY WOOD

This month's featured blog comes from Simon Olver, Course Manager at Percy Wood Golf & Country Retreat in Northumberland. We've had a great response to this so far with greenkeepers really embracing blogging as a superb tool for communicating with members and visitors alike and helping to remove some of the myths surrounding the greenkeeping profession.

Keep your blogs coming to steve.castle@bigga.co.uk.

Simon explained: "Our blog gives members a detailed up to date diary of what's going on around the course, allowing the team to carry out efficient maintenance work seamlessly and alert our membership to important information. Feedback has been fantastic showing that clear and concise communication is a must for any successful business."

"There has been unanimous appreciation for all the time put aside to keep everyone informed, resulting in greater respect for myself and the team. Since our blog began committee meetings have halved in time as most questions have already been answered."

"Our advice to any greenkeeper thinking about creating a blog is to build up your social network connections first, this will allow you to spread your blog further than you could ever imagine. Also to remember your Blog can enhance your CV, so make sure it showcases your ability."

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

NORRIE WHYTOCK TROPHY TRIUMPH FOR THE WEST

The Scottish Region's annual Norrie Whytock tournament sponsored by Bayer CropScience was held at Auchterarder Golf Club on 15 August. A strong field assembled to compete for the honour of winning this prestigious title for their respective sections.

Although the weather forecast prior to the day was pretty dismal, the competitors were provided with warm and breezy conditions with a few light showers along the way. Indeed the weather was a distinct improvement on last year's event that was plagued by heavy showers with play eventually stopping at the 15th following thunder and lightning.

As expected the course was in fabulous condition and praised very highly by all players. Our sincere congratulations to Archie Dunn and his team for providing an excellent playing venue for this competition. The fairways were immaculate, the rough fair and the greens true and firm, what more could the players want!

There were some excellent individual scores returned on the day with 2 players reaching the 36 point mark and a further 3 scoring 35 points. Indeed 2 players returned 3 over par gross scores of 72, Phil Butler (Murrayfield) had one to go along with his 36 points.



Reigning champions the North Section could not replicate the form from the previous 2 years and failed to collect the prize this year. In the end only 2 points separated the winners and runners up with Ayrshire putting up a valiant effort of 96 points - Iain Barr the main contributor.

However, the honours were reserved for the West Section with an excellent total of 98 points. Dougie McIntosh from Cathkin Braes led the team with 35 points and grossed the other 3 over par score. He was ably assisted by Alistair Read (Williamwood) with 31 points and our former Regional Administrator, Peter Boyd who posted a great score of 32 points. Former Regional Chairman Stuart Taylor (Glasgow) made up the team on the day and I know he would not want me to mention his points tally!

Andy O'Hara, Scottish Chairman, thanked all competitors for taking part and

their continued support of the association. The chairman thanked Bayer CropScience for their sponsorship and Auchterarder Golf Club for hosting the event and providing the courtesy of the course and use of the excellent clubhouse facilities.

Our partnership with the competition sponsors, Bayer CropScience is essential to the success of the Norrie Whytock competition. Dave Orchard, National Accounts Manager was on hand to present the prizes and to thank all for attending.

Winning team captain, Dougie McIntosh, concluded the proceedings by accepting the Norrie Whytock Trophy and passed on his teams thanks to all concerned with running the event, to Bayer, to Auchterarder Golf Club and especially Archie Dunn and his team for presenting an excellent golf course for the competition.

John Young

GOLF DAY SUCCESS AT BRISTOL AND CLIFTON



The inaugural H Curtis and Sons, Reco and Baroness golf day was recently held at the superbly presented Bristol and Clifton Golf Club - huge credit to Matt Hawker and his team for producing such a fantastic golf course.

The competition was played as a Texas Scramble with 8 teams of 4 taking part. It presented a showcase for the massive strides Curtis's have taken in the short time they have been in the grounds care industry.

Reco had an impressive display

of tractors and utility vehicles for golf courses on show. It was also an opportunity to present the new Baroness 315 Greens Triple which was unveiled for the first time at BTME.

Andrew Curtis, Managing Director of Curtis's, said he was delighted with the day and the support it received from the greenkeepers in the area and was already looking forward to building on its success next year.

Pictured are the winning team of Matt Curtis, Craig Fudge, James Leitch and George Bidney.