

# GI NEWSDESK

The latest news from around the globe



## SCOTTISH PATRONS AWARD

The Scottish Region has relaunched its Patrons Award Lunch which was held at The Dormy Clubhouse Gleneagles. This event enables the region to thank our Patrons for their generous support of the association in Scotland during the course of the year and at the same time recognise the five section winners of the Patrons Award.

Through the support of our Patrons, the Scottish Region is able to provide the winners with a prize of attending BTME. The prize fund of £500 per member entitles each to accommodation for three days, a contribution to their travel expenses and most importantly, the region will pay for seminars of the members choosing from the Continue to Learn programme.

The section winners for 2013 were:

- Ayrshire Section – Gregor Wilson, Greenkeeper at the Turnberry Resort
- Central Section – Craig Boath, Head Greenkeeper at Carnoustie Golf Links
- East Section – Alan Campbell, Greenkeeper with Edinburgh Leisure
- North Section – Dennis Green, Head Greenkeeper at Huntly Golf Club
- West Section – Bryan Ramsey, Greenkeeper at Glasgow Golf Club

Scottish Chairman Andy O'Hara hosted the lunch and welcomed the guests, introduced the award winners and also our presenters Scott Fenwick, Courses and Estates Manager for Gleneagles and Sami Strutt, Learning and Development Manager from BIGGA. Scott providing an excellent and detailed presentation on the preparations for that small tournament to be held in Scotland during September called the Ryder Cup. Sami then followed, providing key details on BIGGA's future education programme and objectives.

Without the patronage scheme in Scotland, the region would not be in a position to target its main objectives:

- Fully recognising greenkeeping as a profession in clubs
- Increasing education opportunities for all members
- Improving networking opportunities
- The promotion of BIGGA as a professional association

The association would like to place on record their appreciation of the support the patrons give the Scottish Region. Your support is invaluable in providing a service to the members through the various events that have been mentioned. Our thanks

to you and on behalf of BIGGA Scottish Region we look forward to continuing our relationship.

Scottish Chairman Andy O'Hara said: "I am sure that the Patrons Award will become a prestigious award in Scottish greenkeeping circles over time. Our patrons generously provide funds to the region and it is vital that we use these funds to promote education among our members.

"Previous winners have included greenkeepers from various types of courses and trainees. This fits in with the aim that BIGGA is all-inclusive and that greenkeepers from all backgrounds should be encouraged to involve themselves."

Over to the winners! How did they gain from the award? Alan Campbell said: "The awards lunch at Gleneagles was a fabulous start to the whole process, delicious lunch followed by an entertaining and educational afternoon of awards and presentations. It was good to meet some of our Patrons and award winners from other areas and really interesting to learn about the big build up to the Ryder Cup. I would highly recommend that greenkeepers are active in their local section activities and sign up for BIGGA's CPD programme."



Craig Boath added: “BTME encompasses every product in the industry including course furniture, drainage, fertilisers, grounds care machinery and equipment, irrigation, mowers, soil biology, spraying, turf and seeds, water, lake and pond management, wetting agents and so much more. If you have never been to BTME or even thought about going, for me the opportunity to not only catch up on advancements in machinery and agronomic technology at the exhibition but also to meet a lot of professional people is invaluable.”

Gregor Wilson added: “Having been nominated by my colleagues in the Ayrshire Section to receive the 2014 Patron’s Award, I was delighted to be recognised by the Association and receive the funding towards education and development.”

Bryan Ramsey said: “I managed to do a bit of networking at BTME, seeing some old and new faces. It was great to get some ideas from guys who are higher up the ladder, also just getting my name out there should help me in my career. Hopefully I will get the chance to visit BTME again as I love my job, and hope I can work my way up the ladder to be a head man someday.”

Dennis Grant commented: “I chose to attend lectures on grass identification and dealing with conflict at BTME which I found very interesting and useful. The grass identification lecture was a great opportunity to brush up on my basics from college. Dealing with conflict was very interesting and showed me how I can improve my interactions with people using better body language and word choice.”

“It has made me feel like I am more prepared to deal with certain difficult situations.”

“After attending BTME and considering how beneficial I found the seminars and classes, I am keen to learn as much as possible to improve my knowledge as best I can.”

“I feel that receiving the patrons award has been a big boost to my confidence in my own abilities and hope this could potentially lead to bigger opportunities down the line in my career.”

*John Young*

*Anyone reading this article should feel free to offer any comment on this award to either their section committee, regional board, or to John (Regional Administrator).*



TOP LEFT: Craig Boath. TOP RIGHT: Dennis Grant with Scott Fenwick. ABOVE LEFT: Gregor Wilson. ABOVE RIGHT: Bryan Ramsey





# FANTASTIC TURNOUT AGAIN FOR SCOTTISH CONFERENCE

Yet again the Scottish Conference had a fantastic turnout with over 200 delegates coming along to the Carnegie Conference Centre on Tuesday 4 March. Scotland Regional Administrator John Young reports...

Delegates were treated to presentations covering a diverse range of topics throughout the day with the double act of Paul Miller from SRUC Elmwood and St Andrews' own Gordon Moir kicking off proceedings with the tale of Kingarrock Golf Club in Fife. This little known course is dedicated to tradition with players using 'Hickory' clubs and a mix of techniques employed. David Anderson, proprietor of the course, attended the day as a guest of the Region and commented that he thoroughly enjoyed all presentations as well as being thankful for the promotion of Kingarrock to our members.

Alistair Eccles from Germinal Seeds GB then had the unenviable task of following on from Paul and Gordon by delving into a subject that permeates across the country - 'To overseed or not to overseed, that is the question?'. Alistair performed extremely well on the day considering that this was the largest audience he has faced and left our delegates to ponder the methods used at their own courses.

Cameron McMillan from Queenwood Golf Club in Surrey provided a presentation on this prestigious club and the maintenance issues that he has faced over the years. Included in his presentation was the remarkable story of having to redesign 22 greens in 10 days! I'm sure all in attendance were left in awe at the job required and other maintenance required to meet member expectations at Queenwood.

During the split lunch break, Stuart Green, Learning & Development Executive (Technical) from BIGGA House provided delegates with an overview of the CPD programme



that should help them understand the benefits of this greatly improved system.

Once everyone was fed and watered, Scottish Chairman Andy O'Hara took to the stage to reflect on his first 12 months in office and his hopes for the year ahead, paying particular attention to the development of a regional website to improve links between members and patrons while also enhancing links between sections, regions and the national association. Andy then introduced the National Chairman Chris Sealey. He began by thanking the region for inviting him to attend the conference and he expressed his hopes for the association in the future, including adding members and providing further education opportunities for all.

The afternoon session then kicked into full gear with Mark Hunt from Headland Amenity providing a talk on climatology and other issues that all greenkeepers must take into account when managing their course. Mark is well known among the greenkeeping community and his talks always hit the mark

as they are so interesting and thought provoking. A number of delegates will no doubt be joining his blog at [weather.headlandamenity.com](http://weather.headlandamenity.com)

Scotland has always had a great tradition in all things golf especially through the number of major tournaments that are held in the country. This year of course, a small competition called The Ryder Cup returns to Scotland for the first time since Muirfield in 1973.

Steve Chappell completed our presentation line up by providing delegates with an insight into the changes required to the course prior to the event. He also explored all the peripheral work required in staging one of the biggest sporting events on the calendar. Good luck to Steve and all at Gleneagles with the event, everyone in the association are right behind you guys!

Delegate Robert Patterson, Course Manager at Royal Aberdeen Golf Club, spoke for many when he said: "What an excellent conference with very informative speakers passing on a wide range of knowledge. It was a credit to the Scottish region.

Special thanks to my colleagues for assisting on the day. This was a true team effort with Sami Strutt monitoring the timings of the presentations and my fellow Regional Administrators Tracey Harvey (South West & South Wales) and Sandra Raper (Northern and Midlands) for being there to provide an exceptionally welcoming reception desk.

Planning for next year's conference is well under way and indeed all five presentation spaces have been taken already including Steve Chappell returning to let us know his experience of the Ryder Cup.

Thanks to our patrons: Aitkens, Amenity Sales, Bayer, Brysons Tractors, Double A, Everris, Fairways, Farmura, Franklin Soil, Germinal Seeds, Greentech, Hamilton Bros, Hendersons, Hugh King, Indigrow, MacGregors, McNab Sport, Nairn Brown, Oakland Amenity, Rigby Taylor, Scotlube, SGM Contracts, Sheriff Amenity, Souters, Sports Turf Services, Stewart Plant Sales, Symbio, Terra Firma, Thomas Sheriff, Thorntrees, Turf Irrigation Services, Turftec Amenity.



## SOUTH EAST GOLF DAY

The South East Region's hugely popular Annual Golf and Dinner Day took place on the Old Course at Walton Heath Golf Club on the Old Course – with Michael Buck from Rushmere Golf Club emerging as the overall winner.

Michael clinched the Ray Day Memorial Trophy with a 71. Full results:

Ray Day (Memorial): Michael Buck (71) – Rushmere Golf Club

0-10 handicap 1st: Gavin Kyle – Knole Park Golf Club  
2nd David Langheim MG – Wimbledon Park Golf Club

11-24 handicap 1st: Mark Ogden – Drift Golf Club  
2nd: Graham Hurren – St Clements Golf Club

Guests: 1st Jon Douglass – Liphook Golf Club

2nd Rocco Cippiolone  
Greenkeeper/Club Official: Ian McMillan Trophy

1st: Antony Kirwan and Paddy Hanvey – Playgolf Colchester

2nd: Phil Barton and Phil Bastion

Team Challenge Salver (best 3 scores make a section team)

East Anglia: Graham Hurren, Andy Baker, Michael Buck (1.11)

Trade: Dale Searles – Golf & Turf (37)

Longest Drive: Richard Hall – West Surrey

Nearest the Pin: Eddy Oliver – Liphook Golf Club



## FEGGA IN SUNNY SPAIN

The Annual FEGGA Conference and AGM took place in Spain recently. 24 Greenkeeper Associations were represented by some 80 delegates and Patrons, included Chris Sealey and Jim Croxton, as well as Rhett Evans, CEO of the GCSAA.

The first day of the two-day conference was held at PGA de Catalunya which is Spain's premier golf complex comprising 36 holes of Championship golf set within a secluded location 15 minutes from the historic city of Girona.

The Superintendent David Bataller gave an enthusiastic account of the establishment of the club, whose business mantra is "ski in the morning, play championship golf in the afternoon", and took us through fascinating maintenance plans and future development plans.

Ransomes Jacobsen gave

us a full tour of the course and ecology work, John Deere challenged us to look at the industry and answer some searching questions, Syngenta took us through sprayer maintenance and calibration while Campey and Toro brought along some of the latest golf course aeration and mowing equipment.

PGA Catalunya boasts the finest practice facility in Europe with a 2000 square metre chipping and pitching facility which incorporates recreations of some of the world's most famous bunkers such as the Road Hole bunker, an Augusta bunker and even a volcanic sand bunker.

Day two saw a classroom type conference which included a real "I Was There" session when Rhett Evans, CEO of the GCSAA defined exactly what it is we should be striving for as Associations:

1 Work out an achievable coherent Vision and then clearly communicate it

2 Meet/exceed your customers or stakeholders needs through 'superior operational execution'

3) Make your organisation easy to work with and in

These tenets are so simple and we can apply them in all our various Associations - and even back in our Sections e.g. clear communication with our members, meeting our members' needs, and making it as simple as possible for a member to be involved in Section events.

It was a really positive and useful couple of days. FEGGA would like to thank PGA Catalunya, and major partners Ransomes-Jacobsen, Toro, John Deere, Syngenta, and Campey.

*Paul Worster*

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**Golf competition? Course walk? New appointment? Charity cycle?**

**Drop Steve Castle a line, with all your news - [steve.castle@bigga.co.uk](mailto:steve.castle@bigga.co.uk)**





**DEVON AND CORNWALL AWAY DAY**

Mike Ellis, Deputy Head Greenkeeper at The Point at Polzeath, reports on a section visit to Ealing Golf Club, The Richmond Golf Club and Twickenham.

Our section was lucky enough to visit two golf clubs and a rugby stadium in two days this month. Firstly we went to Ealing where we met Course Manager Greg Evans. He gave us a presentation on why he cuts his Poa greens at 2mm. Only a few courses in our section can cut greens that close, but as Greg explained there are nine courses within five miles of Ealing. He must make his course stand out from others and producing quick greens is necessary to attract golfers.

Next, Keith Kent gave us an insight of his role at Twickenham, where alongside being Head Groundsman he also visits other rugby clubs up and down the country from grass roots up, giving them advice on how to improve their pitches within the clubs budgets.

He looks after a Desso pitch which is 3% artificial - but it's 100m long and 70m wide and has 48000km of Desso grass master fibres. It has a total of 35 pop-ups, 15 on the pitch and 20 along the sides.

Keith told us he feeds often and yearly puts down 800kg of N and 1200kg of K.

The next visit was to Richmond Golf Club and met Course Manager Les Howkins MG.

He gave a presentation on the bunker renovation the club has been working on. All bunkers were worked on, either filled in, moved to different locations on the same hole or new ones constructed. With 660 tons of sand and a lot of man hours, Les and his team have done a great job.

A big thank you to Greg, Keith and Les for their time and effort. Also a big thank you to Colin Webber who made the trip possible. We look forward to doing this all again sometime soon.



**SUPPORT THE ENGLISH**

Asa English, greenkeeper at Rothley Park Golf Club, is putting on his running shoes again to compete in the Brighton Marathon in April.

Amazingly, it will be Asa's fifth Brighton Marathon and he will again be running for charity - this time in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support.

He will be hoping things go more smoothly than last year when he tore a thigh muscle with 12 miles still to go.

To sponsor Asa please go to his Just Giving page: [www.justgiving.com/asa\\_english](http://www.justgiving.com/asa_english).

**NEW LOOK IOG INDUSTRY AWARDS**

The date and venue has been announced for the first IOG Industry Awards to take place in partnership with BIGGA.

The 2014 event will take place on Thursday 4 December at MK Dons FC Stadium in Milton Keynes, and after IOG and BIGGA recently agreed to cooperate three new greenkeeping categories have been introduced.

The new awards are expected to recognise the achievements of greenkeepers the length and breadth of the UK, whether they are employed at large multi-course facilities or smaller venues.

BIGGA CEO Jim Croxton said: "The IOG Conference and Awards event has developed into a fantastic occasion during which we celebrate great achievement in the Groundsman-ship industry. I'm delighted that we are partnering with the IOG to bring Greenkeeping awards into the fold.

"The sponsors and supporters of the event see great value in the opportunity to bring the entire Turf Management Industry together to reward the remarkable achievements of its practitioners."



## DRONES TARGET OAK PROCESSIONARY MOTH IN GERMANY



You can always bank on Germany to come up with innovative ideas and new strategies like the use of drones to target oak processionary moth in areas unsuitable for use of full size helicopters.

This is clearly something for UK plant health authorities to chew on, especially since virtually all current oak tree infestation with OPM is in urban and suburban areas which includes an increasing number of golf courses. What's more the German government actually pays for OPM control, unlike here where central government leaves local authorities, golf courses and householders to pick up the bill even though it was government incompetence which allowed the OPM to enter the UK in the first place.

This latest German initiative involves aerial application of insecticide by small unmanned remote controlled helicopters to closely target individual infested oak trees in towns and cities.

OPM shows no distinction in the oak trees attacked, which means many are in urban and suburban areas and thus unsuitable for standard aerial spraying.

The Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR), the Julius Kühn Institute (JKI) and the BAM Federal Institute for Materials Research and Testing have initiated a joint research project which started with an OPM infested tree near Paplitz in southern Brandenburg. If the trials prove successful, OPM control can be closely targeted on individual oak trees especially in

built up areas.

With such high degrees of accuracy more potent and broad spectrum chemical insecticides, not normally permitted for use in aerial spraying, could be used.

Scientists selected a solitary oak tree with no buildings within a radius of 300 metres and used a UAV (unmanned aerial vehicle) to spray a coloured dye dissolved in water and of proven safety for humans, animals and the environment. This was used to identify the distribution of spray deposit over the tree crown and to see how far spray droplets had spread out beyond the actual oak tree target as spray drift.

They captured data on how natural air movement (wind) and the air current generated by the rotor blades had influenced the spread of the water droplets away from the target tree. Whether these small helicopters can better meet the health and safety requirements for operators, passers by and residents, compared to large manned helicopters will be the focus of this research. In addition, their effectiveness will be compared to ground spraying techniques and others carried from a MEWP (cherry picker).

The scientists say that small and maneuverable UAVs can be used to fight OPM in more targeted ways and can therefore be used safely and effectively even in densely populated urban areas. The small helicopter used weighs 65 kg and can carry up to 24 litres of spray liquid.

*Dr Terry Mabbett*

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