

RECORD BREAKERS!



A record-breaking BTME 2014 saw over eight and a half thousand visitors from across the globe packing into the Harrogate International Centre.

Over the next 20 or so pages, we'll attempt to capture a frenetic, enjoyable, buoyant and successful week for the Association as the turf management industry converged on Harrogate. We've got reviews of the Continue to Learn programme, The Turf Managers' Conference, the new Welcome Celebration and feedback from some of the 123 exhibitors, as well as showcasing as many of the new products launched as we could fit in one issue!

Feedback from delegates, presenters and exhibitors has been hugely positive with many describing it as the best show for years with "a real buzz" being one of the key phrases during the week.

There was plenty of news at BTME 2014, none more important than the confirmation of BIGGA's new Chairman and Vice Chairman at the Association's AGM. Past Chairman Tony Smith, who has served the Association with distinction during his 18 months in the post, was nominated for Life Membership of the Association, a nomination that was passed unanimously.

Speaking at the AGM, Tony said: "There's been some very good moments during my time as chairman. I've met some great people and travelled to some fantastic places I would probably never have visited.

"I've enjoyed visiting all the Regions attending their AGMs, Conferences and the roadshows.

He went on to thank companies who have supported the Association during his chairmanship, the

National Board of Management and the team at BIGGA House.

He concluded: "Last but not least is a big thank you to all the membership for having the confidence in me and giving me the wonderful opportunity to serve you as your chairman over the last 18 months.

"When I started greenkeeping all those years ago I would never have thought that I would serve the membership as chairman, so there must be a message to you all out there. If you feel you'd like to serve on the board of directors or even chair it, get involved in your sections and regional committees and help to promote the Association.

"Now I wish my successor Chris Sealey all the very best for his term of office. I know he is very passionate about the Association and will take this great Association forward."

Chris and Tony then completed the ceremonial badge swap before





Chris, Course Manager at Chippenham Golf Club, presented Tony with a commemorative plaque to mark his outstanding work as Chairman.

Tony's nomination of Life Membership came from the Cleveland Section and was approved by the Northern Region and the National Board of Management.

In his first speech as Chairman, Chris said: "I'm honoured to take on this role and I will endeavour to continue to promote the Association's goal of raising the profile and professionalism of greenkeeping."

"It has been a privilege to work with Tony who has carried out his role with skill, dedication and good humour. I would also like to

express my personal thanks to Chippenham Golf Club for their support during my many years of involvement at Section, Region and National level.

"In my view, one of the Association's most important functions is the opportunity it gives all of our members to share and develop experience and knowledge at all levels.

"Although times remain difficult for the golfing industry, BIGGA goes from strength to strength. Evidence of this can be seen at this very successful BTME."

Chris then officially welcomed Les Howkins MG, Course Manager at The Richmond Golf Club, as the Association's Vice Chairman.



BTME 2014 Visitor Figures



Continue to Learn – 2,764 (new record)
Tuesday – 3,205 // Wednesday – 3,940 // Thursday – 1,606



@BIGGALtd

TWITTER REACTION

In common with BTME itself, Twitter was buzzing during BTME 2014. Here's a selection of your comments...

Dave Collins @greenkeeperdave

@ SkySportsGolf guys can you give a shout out to the thousands of golf greenkeepers at Harrogate this week for #BTME2014(they did!)

Grant Peters @LinlithgowGDept

Back to work today after an excellent BTME 2014... Learnt lots and loads of turf chat!! Great job @BIGGALtd

Nathan O'Sullivan @nathosully

Long drive to Cornwall begins, very interesting and productive week at #btme @BIGGALtd

greenkeeping @Lancastergc

Good day @BIGGALtd#btme2014new contacts and old friends. Some new products look interesting too.

Graham Pickin @graham_pickin

@BIGGALtdbest BTME ever, very helpful exhibitors and superb education

Jack Davies @jackdavies_turf

had an absolutely awesome 2 days at #BTME2014 !! been such a thrilling experience! thanks a lot @BIGGALtd!see you next year!!



TURFKEEPER DRAW

Many of the exhibitors at BTME offered prize draws and giveaways to visitors – and just one of these was Turfkeeper. BIGGA Chief Executive Jim Croxton conducted the prize draw on their stand.

First prize of an iPad Mini went to Ian Smith, Assistant Greenkeeper at Hurlston Hall Golf & Country Club. The second prize, which was a six month subscription to Turfkeeper, went to Adam Moss, Deputy Course Manager at Blackwell Golf Club. For more on Turfkeeper please visit www.turfkeeper.com