

MY BTME 2014



Many turf professionals travelled vast distances to attend BTME. One delegate who made a long trip was Ben Blampied-Smyth, Course Manager at Royal Jersey GC. Here's his diary of a frenetic but hugely worthwhile week...

I'm sure most greenkeepers look forward to the annual BTME show as a chance to view new products, meet up with suppliers, possibly attend some seminars and of course catch up with friends whilst enjoying a beer in the evening. This is exactly what I did during my flying visit.

Catching the last flight out of Jersey and only arriving very late on the Sunday night I'll admit to being pleased that the Turf Managers' Conference I had signed up for allowed me a little lie in (in greenkeeper terms!). It was an all-day conference with five very different speakers covering subjects from water resources, to communicating change in the workplace. For me the speaker of the day was Karl Morris, a leading sports psychologist who gave an insight into the power of your mind to notice and appreciate the little things you have which make you, your team and even your golf course stand out from others.

After a hard days' work, some nourishment was in order in the form of a fantastic steak at the Bar

& Grill in the centre of Harrogate with some friends. It's almost impossible to go anywhere without bumping into someone you know. It's a very sociable place.

The exhibition opened the next day so I spent the morning going through my list of products to look at and suppliers to meet up with. It was a fantastic opportunity to view all the major suppliers together to compare for a potential fleet deal that we are looking to do this year. It was also interesting to see the launch of Everris's new greens trueness meter.

I then had a lunch meeting with a product supplier which was a welcome chance for a sit down. You definitely work up an appetite walking round the show! Henry Bechelet presented a 30 minute seminar later that afternoon on Soil Moisture Management which was my final point of call for the day. I've seen him speak a few times before and as always he was really informative and entertaining.

My evening was spent at the Cardamom Black restaurant where I had been lucky enough



to be invited for a meal and where I bumped into my old tutor from Myerscough College. As I said, you're never far from someone you know in Harrogate! I also said that I was going to have an early night - that wasn't the case! It was however a really good night and great to have been introduced to some new greenkeepers and grounds managers and get an insight into their working day.

That was my whirlwind visit to Harrogate this year. Hopefully next year my winter works will allow for a little more time at the show as there is so much to see and some very good seminars on offer. Sadly my late night caught up with me at 5am heading home, but I'm already looking forward to BTME 2015!

ABOVE: Henry Bechelet
BELOW: Karl Morris

