



ABOVE: Steve Chappell's Ryder Cup seminar (part 2!)

BELOW: Dr Colin Mumford, Bayer's Technical Manager

BAYER'S BUZZWORD SETS THE RECORD STRAIGHT AT BTME

'Neonicotinoid' became something of a buzzword last year as a potential ban on products containing that chemistry loomed – and one of BIGGA's Continue to Learn seminars covered this very topical issue.

Pressure groups and activists latched onto research that suggested these chemicals were killing bees and were to blame for the decline in bee population. Consequently, products containing either Clothianidin, Imidacloprid or Thiamethoxam have been suspended for plant protection purposes for two years, at which point they'll face a review. Media hype and Chinese whispers across the industry has led to uncertainty about which products greenkeepers can now use. To clarify the situation, Bayer utilised the BTME seminar programme to help clear up any doubt.

"The first thing to point out is that the suspension

only applies to the use of imidacloprid on flowering crops, which obviously, managed amenity and sports turf isn't," explained Bayer's Technical Manager, Dr Colin Mumford. "The second thing is that Imidacloprid is still approved for professional amenity and sports turf use. This approval has been sustained as managed amenity and sports turf is non-flowering. Therefore our message is simple. Any product containing Imidacloprid is still fine for professional use on sports turf."

Colin went on to explain that while pesticides have been known to affect bees who come in to contact with them on flowering crops, they form a small part of a much broader spectrum that accounts for a possible decline in bee population. He added that interestingly, pesticides come relatively far down the list of primary causes.

"When asked what the main



risk was to bee health out of these eight primary causes, a survey of beekeepers and laboratories by the European Commission suggests that exposure to pesticides was actually one of the least likely causes; even deliberate poisoning was considered more of a hazard than unintentional contact with pesticides."

Bees play an important role around the vicinity of a golf course, but on the playing surfaces such as tees and fairways, products such as Bayer's Merit® Turf are vital. Colin concluded: "Merit® Turf is an essential weapon in the fight against Leatherjackets and Chafer grubs and maintains its approval for use on sports turf."

Jim Cook reviews BIGGA's inaugural Welcome Celebration, sponsored by Jacobsen



The first ever BIGGA Welcome Celebration, kindly sponsored by Jacobsen, took place in the magnificent Royal Hall at the Harrogate International Centre. It proved to be a memorable evening featuring well-deserved accolades for various greenkeeping achievements plus a warm and spontaneous speech from Peter Alliss.

The event began with Alan Prickett, Managing Director of Ransomes Jacobsen, highlighting the 'Hard Road to Harrogate' greenkeepers who were rapturously applauded for their achievement in successfully reaching Harrogate earlier in the day after a 200 mile charity trek.

The recently established BIGGA Greenkeepers Benevolent Fund was then given a major early boost as Alan presented BIGGA CEO Jim Croxton with a cheque for £2,500.

This, in tandem with steady sales of the green wristbands supporting the fund, ensured another BIGGA initiative got off to a strong start.

Next, Jonathan Barr, Head Greenkeeper at Lutterworth Golf Club, was honoured for becoming BIGGA's 63rd Master Greenkeeper by Tony Smith (attending his final official engagement as Chairman) and BIGGA President Sir Michael Bonallack.

CPD Diplomas was awarded to six recipients – Jamie Blake, Head Greenkeeper at Broadway Golf Club, Tony Gooch, Head Greenkeeper at Torrington Golf Club, Derek Grendowicz, Course Manager at Raevo Golf Developments, Gordon Moir, Course Manager at St Andrews Links Trust, Barry Neville, Course Manager at Stanmore Golf Club and Les Howkins MG, Course Manager at The Richmond Golf Club.

Nine CPD Milestone Achievers then filed up onto stage to receive their framed certificates.

They were Mike Boyle, Greenkeeper at Loch Lomond Golf Club, Craig Cameron, Deputy Course Manager at Aldeburgh Golf Club, Jack Davies, Greenkeeper at Five Lakes Hotel Golf and Country Club, Geoff Fenn, Course



Manager at Bedford and County Golf Club, Christopher McGhee, Greenkeeper at Tyrifjord Golf Club, Robert McDowell, Greenkeeper at Wishaw Golf Club, Andrew Reason, Deputy Course Manager at North Hants Golf Club, Steven Rowett, Groundsman at Stowe School and Greg Wellings, Deputy Head Greenkeeper at St Annes Old Links Golf Club.

The BIGGA Golf Photographic Competition 2013 was won by Joe Dormer, Assistant Greenkeeper at West Sussex Golf Club, for his stunning shot of the club's 14th green. He was presented with a framed picture of his photograph.

The Edwin Budding Award was then presented to Tom Hurst of Bernhard & Co.

This special recognition was created to acclaim technical professionals in the turf equipment sector whose actions have gone above and beyond the norm to help shape the golf industry.

American Tom has been in the industry all his life, working with a distributor in Phoenixville for 37 years, before continuing to work for Bernhard & Co after his official retirement.

After being presented with the impressively large trophy, he



said: "I've sold a lot of grinders in my time, so I was very pleased to be back in the business selling machines that I know so well to people I have worked with all my life. It doesn't feel much like work, so to win this award is the icing on the cake. I am humbled that I was even considered."

The Royal Hall offered a suitably grand setting for special guest Peter Alliss who was then invited to the stage.

"I have a special affection for greenkeepers," the voice of golf began.

He went on to give a fascinating account of his life, including childhood memories of greenkeepers on his local course.

He discussed the more "primitive" methods used by the earliest greenkeepers and how he was amazed at how technology and machinery has progressed.

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Welcome Celebration

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He said: "The greenkeeping world is a very different world now and I marvel at the technologies now used. It never crossed my mind your profession would grow as it has and even cutting the hole on the greens is very different now.

"I congratulate you all. It's a very worthy profession and your world is one which I still take an interest in. If you go to a golf club you can see if those in charge care and it's the little details that make a difference. At the end of the day it is the golf course itself that makes a club successful.

"I wish you well in all you do because the game of golf has been my world. It's been a wonderful life and you have helped create that. I hope it doesn't get too sophisticated, that everything is done with medicines.

"I still think there is room for the craftsman who knows a particular area and how it works."

After Peter concluded his speech, Tony Smith added: "You're not just the voice of golf but to us you are the voice of greenkeeping. You promote the working greenkeeper on television and I thank you for that."

Commenting on the evening, Steve Beverly, Course Manager at Immingham Golf Club, said:

"We couldn't stretch to an overnight stay in Harrogate so we thought we'd drive through for the day, and it was good to have an event to look forward to on the evening.

"I think these social events are a terrific idea as it means you get the most out of your visit to Harrogate, and I look forward to seeing what happens next year!"

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