



Greenkeepers Training Committee

In a new series, the GTC has invited representatives from its Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers to discuss their particular specialism within the sports turf sector

BERNHARD TRAINING HAS BECOME SYNONYMOUS WITH CPD

This month, David Golding, GTC's Education Director, has invited Bernhard & Co, a GTC Quality Assured Training Provider and a wonderful global supporter of greenkeeper education and training for many years, to update readers on their passion for training to support their products.

We talked to Ben Taylor, Technical Training Manager of Bernhard Grinders, to find out more about his role and how it can benefit greenkeepers.

Ben spends most of his year flying around the world, training people on how to use their grinders correctly, but also on how they can get the most out of them.

Fortunately he loves his job. He said that everyone he teaches, including well-seasoned professionals, put their hands up at the end of the training session, when he asks if everyone has learned something new.

He said: "Some people are really surprised to find they've learnt as much as they have – but in every industry and profession people continue to train, be they pilots or salesmen, nurses or greenkeepers. We all need to keep fresh and up-to-date, and we all need reminding of best practice. I would not be alarmist if I said that 80% of people who have grinders are not using them to the best of their ability."

So what do greenkeepers, mechanics and groundsmen get out of these training sessions?

Ben says that everyone, however well intentioned, however long they have been in the business, however professional and diligent they are, can get into bad habits. "These creep in over the years,



or people just forget, or need a refresher, a reminder of how to do things properly. It has been my experience that everyone benefits from training on how to get the most out of their grinders.

"They also, without exception, say how much they enjoy training alongside other groundsmen and greenkeepers. It gives them all confidence to admit what they don't know, and learn and benefit from each other, as well as learn from me."

Alongside the college and on-site training and workshops, the Bernhard factory-based training

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The GTC will be at BTME, Stand B29, and we look forward to discussing your education and training requirements. Our independent advice helps you whether you are a greenkeeper, golf club employer, committee volunteer or manager



programme is growing by the month and they have had over 100 people through the doors in the first year of opening the centre.

The programme is open to anyone. At the next session they have one delegate coming from Dubai, but regularly get people from all over the UK, Ireland and Europe.

Ben added: "A lot of people want proper factory-based training, and one of the most valuable things about it is getting to see the machines being put together and talking to the people who built them.

"You'd be amazed at how much everyone learns from talking to the men who build their actual machines. Our factory staff are all very experienced engineers and mechanics – they know more about the grinders and the fine tuning of grinders than anyone I know – so to talk to them and see the machines being engineered all helps the process of understanding.

"It has been invaluable working alongside the GTC to build a regular biannual programme with their Quality Assured Centres, including colleges up and down the country, from the most basic Level 2, setting up mowers and grinders, to practical, hands-on instruction for Level 3 students.

"Alongside this, the GTC's QA Centres are acting as local venues for training workshops and with their strategic locations across the country, this is ideal for local course managers, groundsmen and greenkeepers to attend.

"Bernhard loan the machinery and supply expert training while the centres offer their classrooms. BIGGA and the GTC run the continued education standards programme, and what they hope to do together is promote best practice, better turf and better maintained, sharper cutting mowers.

"If everyone leaves these sessions with a deeper understanding of how mowers and turf and sharp

cutting edges work in unison, then we know we have done a good job.

"The students, some of whom haven't attended a formal training course for many years, comment on how this specialist workshop has opened their eyes to something they'd never thought about or given credibility to.

"Many delegates attending a training workshop do feel we are offering a valuable service to both today's and the next generation of greenkeepers."

Ben concluded "Other 'quiet' benefits with these training sessions and workshops are the invaluable relationships that are built up between the GTC's QA Centres, colleges, industry, student and manufacturer".

Happy New Year from all at The GTC.

Bernhard & Co will be attending BTME and you can find them on Stand B44.



The GTC is funded by:

