

WELCOME FROM BIGGA

BIGGA



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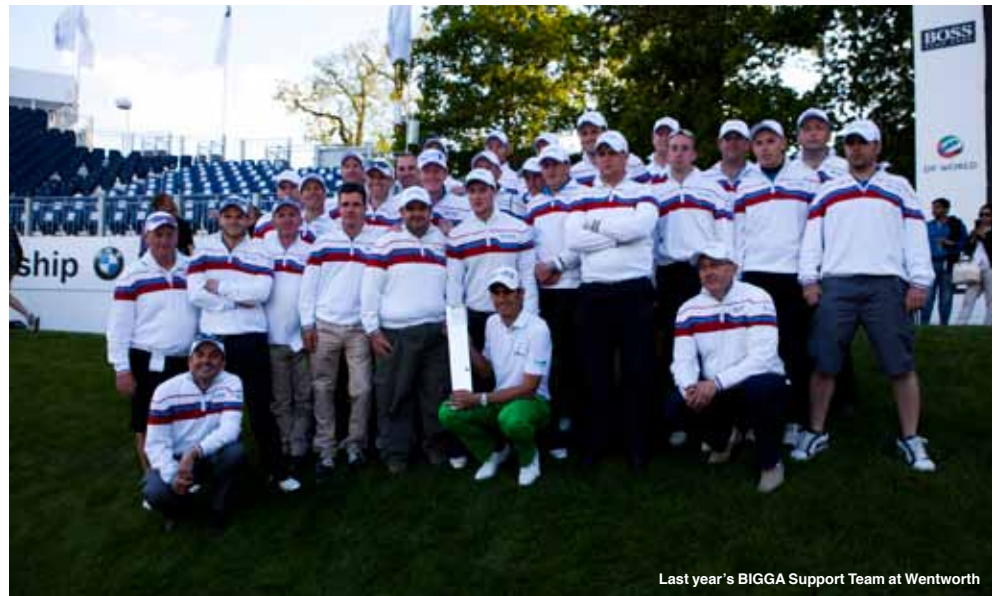


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Last year's BIGGA Support Team at Wentworth

Xtra incentives for BIGGA members

A priority for the Association in recent years has been increasing the amount and range of benefits that BIGGA membership brings. Whilst the mission statement of the Association focuses on Continuing Professional Development and raising standards of golf course management, it is important that membership must represent value to each individual member.

The recent launch of the BIGGA Xtra Benefits Scheme has been a welcome addition in this regard as it provides our members with best in market deals on household and personal spending. Uptake is increasing and many of our members are now benefitting from discounts and offers specifically due to their membership of BIGGA. Additionally, we continue to provide a number of helplines, insurances and the recently launched BIGGA Greenkeepers Benevolent Fund.

Gratifying that this undoubtedly is, the benefits we offer aimed at career development are far more important in the grand scheme of things and I'm delighted that this area is also very strong. This edition contains a report from the 25th Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year, Luke Turner, on his intense but rewarding trip to America. A glance down the list of former winners gives a clear indication of what a great career development opportunity the Toro award is and I'm really looking forward to meeting up with all of the previous winners later in the year at the 25th anniversary celebration.

BIGGA offers a variety of benefits aimed squarely at the early years of a greenkeeper's career.

Complementing the Toro award we have scholarships provided by both Ransomes Jacobsen and Baroness, a refund of educational fees programme supported by our own Learning and Development Fund and the Future Turf Managers Initiative made possible by Jacobsen. Our commercial partners are all

highly committed to supporting the Association in its ambitions to provide educational and career development opportunities to its members and I am confident we will add to our provision in the future.

We also offer opportunities to widen greenkeeping experience at tournaments through Support Teams for both the Open Championship and the BMW PGA Championship.

This year we have been asked to provide a larger team at Wentworth and I'm pleased but not surprised that we have been able to find sufficient willing and able volunteers. Also this month we preview the forthcoming Open Championship to be held at Royal Liverpool and hear how Links Manager Craig Gilholm and his team have been preparing. This year the BIGGA Open Support Team was again massively oversubscribed with volunteers wanting to play their part at Hoylake.

I was saddened to learn of the passing of a stalwart of the Toro award, David Blackmur, who guided a number of multiple overall winners through his sterling work at Plumpton College.

A real character and a hugely knowledgeable lecturer and mentor, he will be sadly missed.



Enjoy the read.

Jim Croxton, Chief Executive