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GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

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WELCOME FROM BIGGA



Leadership essential to grow the game

Last month saw the third staging of the Future Turf Managers Initiative (FTMI) made possible by Jacobsen.

Many of the delegates from the previous editions have progressed significantly in their careers already, so I'm sure the 20 ambitious greenkeepers who were thrown together for three intense days at Jacobsen's Ipswich headquarters all have excellent careers in the industry ahead of them. Thanks to Jacobsen for their continued support of this wonderful Initiative.

The opening session this year was led by Eddie Bullock, who was such a success at the Turf Managers conference this year. He focused on the skills required to become a leader, and the delegates and mentors were fascinated as Eddie shared tips and strategies to build and improve their leadership qualities. As the golf industry attempts to stabilise and grow the game, leadership is absolutely what it requires from both its greenkeepers and our Association.

The role of the modern course manager is undoubtedly to work closely with the golf club management or ownership to fully understand the business goals.

Then it's a case of providing leadership and direction to ensure the course is maintained to the highest standard so that customer expectation is satisfied or exceeded. No one else in a golf club is as well placed to provide guidance on what is possible, what resources are needed and what long term plans are required to future-proof the club's main asset, the golf course.

However, often club committees or managers do not seek this insight, which is where leadership has to come to the fore. Communication skills, strategic planning and enthusiasm are all essential to playing this part.

BIGGA also has an important leadership role to play. We work closely with a number of industry partners and that activity increases every year as we endeavour to ensure our highly skilled members have a voice within their clubs. As an example of this, there have been many regulatory changes in recent times around the use of chemicals, water, emissions and other resources that could have significant impacts on the way clubs and courses are managed. We have to ensure those challenges are communicated effectively to the golf industry and we will be engaged in a major project this year to do so.

The tragic death of Ollie Floyd last month was felt very deeply by everyone involved in greenkeeping.

It was incredible how quickly the news travelled, particularly via social media, around the industry. Our thoughts remain very much with Ollie's family and friends, and the team at Celtic Manor.

At times like these it is really important that we reach out to those who are have been so dramatically affected and offer our support rather than wait to be asked.

Enjoy the read.



Jim Croxton
BIGGA CEO

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Chafer grubs

and how to combat them

BASIS

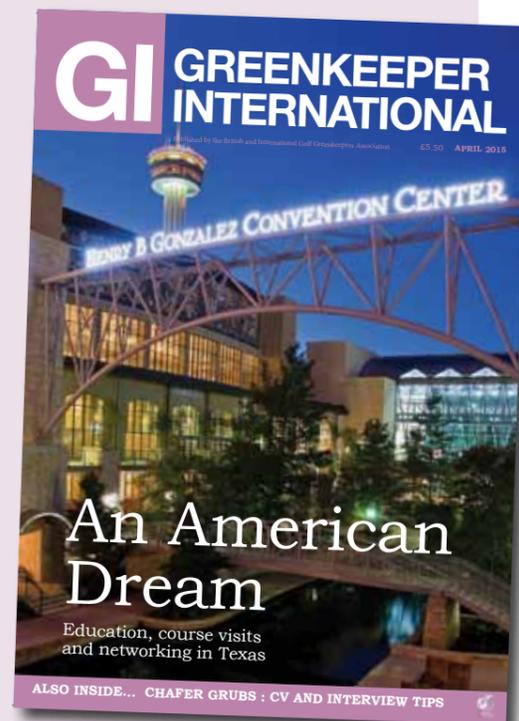
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British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association



Chairman's Word

BIGGA National Chairman 2015, Les Howkins MG, gives his thoughts for the month

San Antonio, York and Ipswich

I couldn't start this month's column without mentioning the very sad news from Celtic Manor. The tragic accident that occurred is a reminder to us all that accidents can happen at any time. The thoughts of an entire industry go out to the family and friends of Ollie Floyd.

On to the GIS in San Antonio. The Monday in the Texan city was their coldest day since 1986, playing golf really wasn't the best idea, but the opportunity for the CEO and myself to make Dave Langheim MG and Tim Lobb pay for lunch was too good to miss.

The real work started on the Tuesday with several meetings.

Working closely together with the GCSAA and other Associations around the world was top of the agenda, and we quickly discovered that the issues facing us in the UK are common all over the world.

Several issues were put on the agenda for the biennial world summit in January 2016, where it is intended BIGGA will be a key participant.

The relationships that have been built by Chris Sealey were further cemented, and new ones were created, and it all bodes well for the future.

The journey home was interesting but at least we got home on the day we were meant to. Several Brits had an extra 24 hours stateside due to a few snowflakes in Dallas!

The spring Board of Management meeting at BIGGA House was my first as Chairman. I must admit to being a little nervous before it, but I had no need.

There was a good mix of board members and other regional representation and there were plenty of enthusiastic discussions.

We were joined by Miles Todd from the newly formed Young Greenkeeper Committee (YGC), he presented a brief report on their first meeting. This was both interesting and thought provoking and I am sure some of these issues will form part of the ongoing strategic review.

The strategic plan is now gathering pace and it is the intention of the Board to have it completed by January 2016. For this to be achieved we need member input and feedback.



"Previous FTMI delegates are already securing their first management roles which is testament to its success"

There will be a series of surveys coming out to the membership over the coming months and it is vastly important that you take the few minutes required to complete the survey. This is your chance to be heard and help shape the future of our Association.

After returning home from America, I had a precious few hours at home to see the wife and kids before heading to Ipswich for the Future Turf Managers Initiative made possible by Jacobsen.

Previous FTMI delegates are already securing their first management roles which is testament to its success. A massive thank you to all the speakers, mentors and especially Jacobsen for making this happen.

The weather continues to play games with greenkeepers. While my team and I were basking in warm spring sun, a few miles away it was raining heavily and snow was reported in Hampshire. I know there has been a lot of rain up in the north of the country, yet at the same time a London-based Course Manager reported greens soil moisture levels as low as 9%.

It's amazing we are all trying to do the same job with varying weather challenges.

Our ability to deal with the weather and other issues proves how successful greenkeeper education has been over the years to equip us with the skills and knowledge to deal with almost every eventuality.

We now have our 1000th active CPD member which is a fantastic achievement, but I am an ambitious character and like to have measurable aims.

So, our next target should be to reach 100,000 CPD Credits claimed.

The job market is starting to see the benefits of the CPD system and it will become the norm for job adverts to require members to be CPD Active or Approved or maybe even have achieved a Milestone.

It's so easy to become active and claim Credits but if you are not sure call HQ and speak to either Stuart or Deb, or email cpd@bigga.co.uk

See you soon, and don't forget

#takeleswithyou!

Les

Contact details

Les Howkins MG
Email: chairman@bigga.co.uk

Funding your future

The funding and assistance provided by BIGGA Partners and BIGGA Education Supporters underpins the Association's considerable investment in Continuing Professional Development and all our educational activity. They are investing in the future of BIGGA members, we are hugely grateful and urge you to show them your support



JOHN DEERE



Bayer CropScience



Individual Contributors: Steven Tierney MG, Chris Lomas MG, Andrew Campbell MG CGCS, W J Rogers, Espen Bergmann, Nick Gray, Steve Dixon, Richard McGlynn, Douglas Duguid, Jaey Goodchild, Michael Beaton, David Barker, Greg Evans, Frank Newberry



RECORD TURNOUT FOR SCOTTISH CONFERENCE

The record attendance for the BIGGA Scottish Conference was broken for the third year running with over 220 delegates coming along to the Carnegie Conference Centre on Tuesday 3 March.

Delegates were provided with a varied mix of presentations starting with Gordon Irvine MG describing that amazing find of a golf course on the island of South Uist called Askernish.

The course, designed by "Old" Tom Morris, was lost for a number of years but in 2005 during a trip to the island Gordon was able to distinguish the features of the hidden course and indeed the quality of the soil. Through his instigation and with the support of the island community, the course has risen out of the dunes. Delegates were both amazed and enthralled by this fantastic story.

Unfortunately one of our guest speakers from America could not make it across the pond. However, a last minute excellent substitution Richard Windows from STRI took on the next presentation focusing on the science around soil content and organic matter. The region is extremely grateful to Richard for coming to our rescue on the day.

After a short break in which our delegates could catch up with colleagues and our patrons, Robert Patterson from Royal Aberdeen GC provided a presentation on the greenkeeping effort before, during and after the 2014 Scottish Open.

The audience could tell that Robert and his team thoroughly enjoyed the experience of hosting this prestigious event. Robert also paid a glowing



2014 Scottish Student of the year Daire Higgins with Les Howkins MG and Jim Paton

tribute to the contribution of the many greenkeeping volunteers from the local area who helped make the event a success.

After lunch, our chairman Jim Paton took to the stage to provide a short talk on his hopes and aims during his tenure, and recommended some of the amazing opportunities to members of the association including the GIS Trip sponsored by Bernhards and the TPC Sawgrass opportunity provided by John Deere. Jim also confirmed to the audience that the Patrons Award Nomination period will open up on 1 April and close on 30 June. He stressed the importance of this award and thanked our patrons for

allowing the region to provide the excellent trip to BTME for 5 section winners.

Jim then had the pleasure of announcing the 2014 Scottish Student of the Year, Daire Higgins, and asked Les Howkins MG (National Chairman) to present the Harry Diamond Award to Daire.

Jim formally introduced Les to the audience, enabling him to provide a brief update on the association. Les talked about the new 'Articles of Association' with the next stage looking at creating a strategic. Les concluded by thanking the region for extending an invitation for him to attend the conference.

The afternoon session

kicked off with Dr Stan Kostka from Aquatrols providing a presentation on 'Getting the Balance Right'.

Stan is well recognised on the speaker circuit having previously presented at BTME and the Golf Industry Show, further elevating the importance of the Scottish Conference.

I would like to thank Graham O'Connor from Farmura Environmental for helping to arrange Stan's participation in the conference.

Our final speaker was Steve Chappell, Head Greenkeeper on the PGA Course at the Gleneagles resort. Steve followed up his presentation at last year's conference by



Jim and Les with the day's speakers

reviewing his experiences of the course hosting the Ryder Cup in 2014. The delegates were all taken back to September as Steve spoke about the running of the team and the daily preparation undertaken. Steve concluded by thanking all of the team for their efforts and provided a short video that had been produced by James Bledge during the week.

Jim Paton drew the conference to a close by thanking our speakers and indeed the delegates for making the day extremely successful.

A special thanks to my colleagues for assisting on the day. This was a true team effort with Tracey Maddison providing updates via social media, Roger Butler (Midlands) doing his best impression of David Bailey, Tracey Harvey (South West & South Wales) and Sandra Raper (Northern and Midlands) working not only on the registration desk but also handling the timings for presentations.

Last but certainly not least, Elaine Jones our fellow Scot from BIGGA HQ was on hand to man the registration desk and answer any and all

membership enquiries.

This year, the Scottish Region has arranged a Highland Conference in November with some excellent speakers taking part including both Richard Windows and Steve Chappell agreeing to come on tour to Inverness.

In addition, both Chris Haspell (Castle Stuart) and Gordon McKie from the Old Course at St Andrews have agreed to provide talks.

Look out for further details on the websites and in the magazine.

The pressure is on of course for the 2016 Conference but I am pleased to confirm that all five presentation slots are already filled. Our guest speakers include Dr David Greenshields from Barenbrug and Henry Bechelet from Everris. In addition we have David Langheim MG from Wimbledon Park GC coming up to Scotland to provide us with an insight into the work required before, during and after the Wimbledon Tennis Championship.

We look forward to seeing you there.

John Young

"Excellent day, good presentations by all speakers and great to see so much support from greenkeepers and the trade" – Archie Dunn (Auchterarder)

Other quotes from the day...

"I thoroughly enjoyed it and all great speakers, I will definitely make myself available to go to the next one or any other event upcoming" – Simon Dexter (Student at Elmwood)

"A big thanks to all the speakers and organisers who helped make it into a fantastic day" – Alister Matheson (Cruden Bay)

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OBITUARIES

Everyone at the British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association was saddened to hear of the deaths of Mike Firman and Ollie Floyd, both well known and popular figures in the industry. Condolences from everyone at BIGGA go to their families and friends at this time.



MIKE FIRMAN

As many of you may know, Mike Firman, Course Manager at Olton for some 30 years, sadly passed away on 8 February 2015, only five years after he retired.

Having worked with Mike for six years this was a massive shock not only to me, but to all the staff at Olton, former colleagues and of course friends.

I remember Mike best for his attention to detail, second best was not an option, he would mow those surrounds one way, then the other, and then back again until the finish he desired was achieved, no matter how long it would take.

That was Mike and he did everything in life in this manner. Some would say he was a perfectionist, and it certainly paid off. On the eve of a major tournament, or just for a normal weekend's golf his attitude was always the same, and he wouldn't leave until things were how they should be.

As a friend Mike was loyal to the end and always had your best interests at heart, he would do anything for anyone. His love of antiques, especially Grandfather clocks, was often up for discussion. Once or twice we would strike up a conversation on this subject if we wanted an extended break, knowing the conversation could last a while!

His long speeches and bad jokes at dinner parties and GC dinners were legendary, long, sometimes completely irrelevant to the event, but nonetheless entertaining and would be remembered forever.

Mike Firman – a husband, father, greenkeeper and friend. RIP Mike.

Tribute from Andy Lane on behalf of all current and previous members of the greenkeeping team at Olton GC.



OLLIE FLOYD

The greenkeeping industry has been shocked and saddened by the tragic death of Ollie Floyd on the morning of March 3 at Celtic Manor Resort.

Ollie was working as an operative for Complete Weed Control when a vehicle he was in, believed to be an agricultural sprayer, rolled into a lake on the Twenty Ten course. Ollie was taken to hospital but later died. His father suffered minor injuries in the incident.

Both father and son are well-known, popular figures in the greenkeeping industry and the news has affected many BIGGA members and friends.

Robin Cheney, Head Greenkeeper at Cradoc GC is a former rugby team mate and said: "It's shocking news and it's devastating for Ollie's family, his local community and the greenkeeping industry."

"He was very much in the same mould as his father, very well-liked and he was cheeky. Since this happened I've seen so many photos of Ollie on Facebook and there isn't one where he doesn't have a massive smile, that sums him up. It's just a massive loss for everybody."

Complete Weed Control released a statement which read: "It is with great regret that we can confirm one of our operatives, Ollie Floyd, died at the Celtic Manor resort following an incident which saw a spraying vehicle roll into a lake on the Twenty Ten Course."

"The incident is clearly subject to an ongoing investigation which Complete Weed Control and Celtic Manor are co-operating with fully."

"Our thoughts are with the family at this extremely sad and very difficult time."

BIGGA CEO Jim Croxton said: "Everyone at BIGGA was shocked to hear of the tragic accident and our thoughts go out to all of Ollie's family, friends and colleagues as well as all those at Celtic Manor who will be so profoundly affected by the incident."

"Coming only just over a year since a similarly tragic accident at Hinckley GC

this serves as a stark reminder that there are risks involved in working with machinery and Mother Nature. Golf courses are beautiful environments in which to work but we must make every effort to ensure they are safe environments also, for greenkeepers and golfers alike. The duty of care for our employees and customers must be our primary concern and we must all devote both the time and the resources to keep it so."

An inquest was opened in Newport on 10 March. It was then adjourned for two months to allow police and Health and Safety Executive investigations to continue.

OAKLANDS COLLEGE STUDENT GREENKEEPER OF THE YEAR WINNER ANNOUNCED

Danny Morten, Apprentice Greenkeeper at Stoke Park GC has won the Oaklands College Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award.

He was presented with his trophy at the London Section Seminar. The college started the prize this year to recognise students who have performed above expectation. Danny was nominated by his assessor Mick Bithell for his dedication to his studies and completing his work based diploma, despite suffering from dyslexia.

Mick said: "Danny never missed a target, made a huge effort and showed a high level of practical ability".



AMANDA INTERVIEWS... IAIN BARR

Following on from her previous two interviews, Amanda Dorans from Dundonald Links recently caught up with South West of Scotland's Board Member Iain Barr Head Greenkeeper of Largs GC in Ayrshire.

Amanda is also one of the South West of Scotland correspondents in the Around the Green section of Greenkeeper International.

AD: Great to see you Iain, and congratulations on being nominated to represent the Section.

IB: Thanks Amanda you too, always a pleasure to do my bit for the Association.

AD: Has the Association changed much over the years?

IB: It's definitely moving forward, particularly in education, and it's great to see our Section creating lots more opportunities for learning and development.

AD: What is your daily routine?

IB: Firstly a cup of tea and check the weather forecast before the cogs turn! Normally I have a chat with

my Deputy George Morrison travelling over to Largs and finalise plans to start the day, then I meet all the team and sort out all the tasks and get to it, we all usually catch up at 9.30 tea-break and 12.30 lunch.

This works well as I have a talented and dedicated team who don't require much supervision.

AD: What do you enjoy the most and the least of greenkeeping?

IB: I enjoy nothing more than getting out with the team, being hands on and taking satisfaction from the end product.

Subsequently, I detest bureaucracy or red tape jobsworths.

AD: What has been your career highlight to date?

IB: With BIGGA it was my term as Scottish Chairman 2004-06, I had a tremendous few years with the then RA Peter Boyd getting around the country.

On the course the 2009 Scottish Boys and Girls Championships, the 2013 BIGGA Scottish

Tournament and last year's resurrected Pro-Am were all challenging and rewarding events.



AD: Do you play golf or have any other sporting pastimes?

IB: I'm a summer season golfer off 10 and still trying to get to that single figure goal! And I'm a lifelong supporter of my local football team Kilbirnie Ladeside where for my sins I get to assist with pitch maintenance.

AD: What would your advice be to someone beginning their greenkeeping career?

IB: It's more than just a job, it's a career journey of with lots of peaks and troughs along the way which can be very rewarding or in some cases of extreme nature it can be brutal. You get out of life what you put in! Work hard for your rewards.

SE ANNUAL GOLF AND DINNER DAY

Members and their guests were blessed with good weather at Walton Heath GC for the South East Regions Annual Golf and Dinner Day.

It was very evident that Alan Strachan and his team had been really busy with some excellent work on the heath throughout the winter months.

Competitors enjoyed the refreshments kindly provided out on the course by Johnny Beck and James Watson of Sherriff Amenity.

Vice-Chairman of the South East Region Roger Tydeman thanked the host Club for, as always, their first-class hospitality and for making us so welcome on the day. National Chairman Les Howkins MG then proposed a toast to Walton Heath GC and guests.

The Captain of Walton Heath GC Roger Grover presented the prizes to the many different category winning competitors.

The Ray Day Memorial Trophy was won by Mike Buck from Rushmere GC with some great golf to get round the new course in a gross score of 70.

This year the Team Challenge was won by the Sussex Section whose top three players had the best combined score to receive the Silver Salver.

The evening was concluded with the presentation of the Ian McMillan Trophy to the winners of the members and guests, Simon Wells and Gary Hahn from Pyecombe GC who had a combined score of 78 points.

A cheque for £500 was presented by the Regional Vice-Chairman to Jim Croxton towards the BIGGA Greenkeepers Benevolent Fund.

The South East Region of BIGGA is most grateful to the following companies for their most generous sponsorship and help with this, and many other events in the Region:

AVONCROP AMENITY PRODUCTS, BRITRISK SAFETY, CMW, ERNEST DOE POWER, GRASS ROOTS TRADING COMPANY, INDIGROW LTD, JSM, P TUCKWELL LTD, RIGBY TAYLOR, SHERRIFF AMENITY, SPEEDCUT CONTRACTORS LTD, TACIT GOLF.

Clive Osgood

KEY CHALARA OUTBREAKS NOT ON THE MAP

The Forestry Commission (FC) has designed a new 'interactive' map to plot the UK distribution of ash trees infected by Chalara fraxinea (chalara ash dieback disease). The is divided into 10 m x 10 m squares each with an Ordnance Survey Reference and has been in use since autumn 2014.

By clicking on a square the public can see the number and dates (from 2012 onwards) of wider environment outbreaks within that 100 km2. This replaces the old style map which used coloured dots, yellow dots for 'recently' planted ash trees and red dots for ash trees in the wider environment. Perversely, outbreaks affecting 'recently' planted ash trees no longer appear on the new-style map.

As well as eliminating all those outbreaks in 'recently' planted ash which appeared on the old style map, FC's new policy has already failed to identify and notify at least two key, first-time outbreaks on 'recently' planted ash trees both within the Midlands' amenity and landscape sectors during autumn 2014.

In October 2014 Nottinghamshire County Council announced the first ever confirmed outbreak of chalarash ash dieback in Nottinghamshire on ash trees which had been planted along the Colwick Loop Road near Nottingham.

A council spokesman said the disease was discovered in August 2014 and confirmed after samples were sent to FC, adding how 80 per cent of the 5000+ trees would have to go immediately to prevent disease spread with considerably more to follow. Dave Simpkin the council's forestry manager told BBC Nottingham: "In total over the next three to five years the county council might have to cut down up to 30,000 to 40,000 trees."

The first recorded outbreak of chalarash ash dieback in Birmingham was announced in late November 2014. Birmingham City Council told



the Birmingham Mail how the disease was identified on young, recently planted trees inside a city park. "Following an inspection by the Forestry Commission (FC) we will remove all infected ash trees from this area, and continue to monitor other ash trees within the city, said a spokesman for the council.

Nearest previous confirmed outbreak, also on recently planted ash trees, was at Nuneaton in Warwickshire. Neither this outbreak nor those in Birmingham and Nottinghamshire appear on the new-style map and as far as the public are concerned never happened.

Why the UK plant health authorities are choosing to withhold information from the public domain is unclear. Chalara ash dieback is proving to be rapidly evolving and difficult to unravel. Well over 1000 (reported) outbreaks have now been recorded since 2012 and the UK plant health authorities are nowhere near a solution.

FC says: "We no longer indicate recently planted sites [infected] with Chalara.

The distinction has become less important because the diseased plants at many such sites have been removed and replaced, thereby eliminating the disease from the area, or the disease is present in the local wider environment anyway."

But not if the disease has already escaped from 'recently' planted trees and into the wider environment but has not yet been found. No attempt has been made by FC to explain the difference (in years) between a 'recently' planted ash tree and one growing in the wider environment.

Failure by FC to report outbreaks of disease on 'recently' planted ash trees is mainly affecting the knowledge base of this tree disease in the amenity and landscape sectors. As such it will impact most heavily on the ability of greenkeepers, groundsman and local authority managers to keep up to date and to deal with the problem. We simply do not know how many new outbreaks are going unreported.

Dr Terry Mabbett



VIVA LAS VEGAS

A BIGGA member is looking to strike it lucky this summer as he bids to win the World Senior Tenpin Bowling Championship for England in Las Vegas.

Barry Walker, Head Greenkeeper at City of Newcastle GC took up bowling when he retired from other sports (including volleyball and rugby) and picked it up remarkably quickly.

Now, after getting through a series of qualifying events, he has been selected to represent his country at the forthcoming Triple Crown event in Ireland before heading to the States in August.

He said: "My wife and I were looking to try a new sport and tenpin bowling was suggested. We gave it a go, and within a short period of time my game improved and I was really enjoying it.

"I've now had three perfect scores of 300 and I'm very proud to have been picked to represent England.

"It's not an Olympic sport, but the prestige of playing in the World Championship competing for gold, silver and bronze medals makes it feel like you are in the Olympics.

"It's also worked out really well because the trip to Vegas coincides with my wife's 50th!"

At the start of 2014, an invitation was sent to all Senior Tenpin Bowlers (over 50 years old) to compete in Senior England Team Trials. This featured three weekends of intense competition with 42 male bowlers entering.

The top ten qualified for Team England selection. Barry finished 3rd overall and qualified to attend the Team Training/Selection held in Gibraltar in January, prior to his qualification for both the Triple Crown and the World Championship. His home bowling club is in Sunderland.



THANK YOU TO CHIPPENHAM

BIGGA CEO Jim Croxton recently headed to Chippenham GC to present the club with a plaque to mark their excellent support of their Course Manager Chris Sealey during his year as BIGGA Chairman.

From left to right are Chippenham Chairman Les Sharpe, General Manager Leighton Walker, President Tuppence Hale, Course Manager Chris Sealey, Club Captain Stuart Bridgewater and BIGGA CEO Jim Croxton.



BIGGA LONDON SECTION SEMINAR

On 17 February Oaklands College once again played host to the BIGGA London section/Oaklands college annual Education seminar. This year the theme was the 4 'V's Seminar (Vibration, Volunteering, Vision and Variations). This has become one of the largest BIGGA regional events in the UK.

Over 150 greenkeepers and members of the trade attended. This year's speakers were Stella Rixon (STRI) on technology and climate, Steve Chappell on

how volunteering led him on the path to the Ryder cup and the challenges involved in running one of the golfing world's most prestigious events. John Ross MG then presented on vibration and noise at work and Laurence Pitthie MG concluded proceedings on the importance of vision in golf course management.

Feedback has been excellent and the 2016 seminar is planned to take place in the same February half term week at Oaklands College next year.

NEW PULL-OUT POSTER FROM JACOBSEN

This month's GI mailing includes the second of four posters we're urging you to place prominently at your GC.

This latest poster, by BIGGA Partner Jacobsen, looks at why greenkeepers aerate and topdress, and is designed to catch the eyes of members and visitors alike as it's pinned up on notice boards.

Both this poster and the previous poster (which focused on repairing pitchmarks) can be downloaded via the BIGGA website, clicking on the 'Education' tab and clicking on the 'Information Posters' tab on the left hand side.

If you have any questions or feedback about the posters please contact steve.castle@bigga.co.uk



GREENKEEPER POPMASTER

Congratulations to David Fellows, Head Greenkeeper at Cocks Moors Woods GC who scored a maximum 39 points on BBC Radio 2's Pop Master quiz! The popular show, which has millions of listeners, invites members of the public to call in and test their musical knowledge.

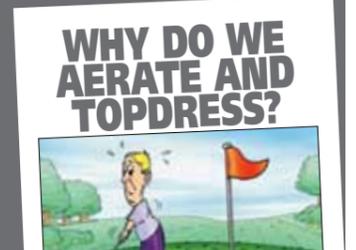
And David wowed the nation by getting every single question right despite a wide range of teasers covering a range of artists from The Who to Roxette. Impressively, he also managed to sneak in a 'shout out' to all greenkeepers listening up and down the country!

He now qualifies for the Pop Master 'Champions League' event later in the year where he will be up against other callers who racked up high scores.

David said: "It's the third time I've managed to get through and appear on Pop Master, but that doesn't mean I was any less nervous! You call up, answer a couple of quite easy qualifying questions and then see if the call back.

"Of course, you don't expect them to so I was halfway through some breakfast when they called back! I had a bit of luck because I guessed a couple of answers, but I suppose you need that."

Keep your eyes on social media for details of David's next appearance...



Membership News

The latest news from BIGGA

L&D News

The latest from the Learning and Development department at BIGGA

Membership News - the section which updates you on the countless benefits of being a BIGGA member. We're on hand to help.

You can contact BIGGA House, our Regional Offices, our Personal Accident Helpline, Legal Assistance and our Lifestyle Counselling Helpline.

You can also save money with our BIGGA Xtra Benefits scheme. More information can be found in the Members' Area of the BIGGA website.



REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR Q&A

Have you ever needed help but been unsure whether to turn to one of BIGGA's five Regional Administrators (RAs)?

Clive, John, Tracey, Sandra and Roger are your representatives in the Regions, but it's important to note that although they are always on hand to be contacted, there are some issues you may experience that other areas of the Association can help you with.

GI spoke to BIGGA's General Manager Tracey Maddison to find out more.

What is the role of an RA?

They are the 'on the road' face of the Association, and work in partnership with the Regional Chairmen and Section committees. They organise and prepare meetings, conferences, networking events, work closely with our partner organisations,

sponsors and patrons and also administer Regional financial affairs.

You will see other members of the BIGGA House team at various events, but the RAs are always out and about. They are the key communicators between BIGGA House and the membership, so they circulate information directly from BIGGA House to the membership and vice versa.

They are also vital for our communications in that they provide the HQ team, in particular our Communications Executive Steve Castle, with details of potential stories, news and significant achievements from our members which can be publicised through GI, the website and social media.

So if you've done something worth shouting about, or one of your colleagues or friends has,

then let your know! Their contact details are on the right hand side of this page.

Now we have a full complement of five RAs after Roger joined last year, we're confident our Sections and Regions are covered more extensively than ever.

Can they help with any legal or employment matters?

No, this is the key point. While they will always be on hand to provide guidance on what benefits BIGGA membership offers, and promote best practice, they are not legally trained. Therefore they cannot attend employment meetings or act on your behalf in any matters of a legal nature.

Instead, please call the Greenkeepers Legal Advice Line on 0800 177 7891 to speak to advisors who are fully trained in employment law.



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OTHER USEFUL NUMBERS
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Lifestyle Counselling Helpline
0844 770 1036
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Learning & Development News has the latest updates on CPD and everything related to greenkeeper education

and training, supported by our BIGGA Partners, BIGGA Education Supporters and Individual Contributors -

funding your future. Contact the Learning & Development team at BIGGA House for more information.

CASE STUDY: BARONESS SCHOLARSHIPS



Thanks to generous support from Baroness, Scholarships for BIGGA members undertaking their Level 3 qualification in Sportsturf are now available.

Designed to help greenkeeper members of BIGGA to gain their technical and supervisory qualification, the scholarships may be awarded to those studying for the following qualifications:

- Level 3 Diploma in Work-based Horticulture (Sportsturf - Greenkeeper)
- SVQ Level 3 Sports Turf Management

The fund may award scholarships of up to 50% of the cost of the course however, it will be typically capped at £1000.

All Full members of BIGGA, who hold a Level 2 qualification (or equivalent) can apply for a Level 3 Sportsturf scholarship.

To be eligible for a scholarship, applicants must meet the following:

1. Be a Full Member of BIGGA
2. Have been a BIGGA Member for a minimum of 2 years
3. Be employed as a full-time greenkeeper

4. Hold a Level 2 or equivalent qualification in Sportsturf
5. Must not already be funded through the Apprenticeship scheme
6. In a position where they supervise colleagues within the workplace
7. Provide confirmation from the training provider that you have been accepted on the course and showing the total cost of the qualification

If you are awarded a Baroness Level 3 Scholarship your name will be included on the BIGGA website and in Greenkeeper International. Your details will also be shared with Baroness.

To apply for a Level 3 Scholarship, download an application form from the Members Resources section of the Members Area.

One member who has already applied and been awarded a Scholarship is James Wilkinson (above), Greenkeeper at Gerrards Cross GC, who will be studying a Level 3 in Sportsturf Management.

He said: "I'm hoping the



scholarship will lead me on to bigger things, I really want to have a long and successful career in the industry and it should help me along the way. It's really building my confidence too as I'm learning loads of new skills which I am able to apply in my current role.

"I really enjoy passing knowledge and understanding on, so this course is brilliant because I'm passing on these new skills to upcoming greenkeepers, educating them, helping to improve the way they do things and helping them progress in their own careers.

"Level 3 obviously paves the way for Level 4 which would be a brilliant achievement and will help me reach my career goals.

"I hope this, combined with all of my past experience and knowledge of golf course and workshop operations, will help me reach my goal of becoming a Course Manager."

CPD APPROVED MEMBERS THIS MONTH

Members who gained CPD Approved status:

Craig Boath - Carnoustie Golf Links
Jim Brown - The Carrick GC on Loch Lomond
Gordon McKie - St Andrews Links Trust
Ashley Allpress - West Surrey GC

Leigh Powell - Hockley GC
Anthony Sunney - West Middlesex GC
John Grey - Middlesbrough Municipal GC
Paul Worster - Minchinhampton GC
Alexander Reid - Carnoustie Golf Links
Craig Berry - St Andrews Links Trust
Sean Brocklehurst - Harpenden Common GC

Gavin Kinsella MG - Royal Mid-Surry GC
Josh Dunn - Bramcote Waters GC
Oliver Hemblen - Kirtlington GC
Les Howkins MG - Richmond GC

Approved and Milestone Achieved
Matt Plested - Muswell Hill GC



Individual Contributors: Steven Tierney MG, Chris Lomas MG, Andrew Campbell MG CGCS, W J Rogers, Espen Bergmann, Nick Gray, Steve Dixon, Richard McGlynn, Douglas Duguid, Jaey Goodchild, Michael Beaton, David Barker, Greg Evans, Frank Newberry

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An American Dream



25-year-old Sean Brocklehurst is an Assistant Greenkeeper at Harpenden Common Golf Club and was the youngest member of this year's BIGGA Delegation sponsored by Bernhard & Company travelling to America for the Golf Industry Show. Read on for how he was blown away by the education, course visits and Stateside hospitality

Day One

As I was unwell at BTME, I finally met the other nine delegates at the airport, it was great to finally meet them all. We boarded our flight and arrived at JFK Airport in New York to see four inches of snow on the ground.

This led to the beginning of our epic 50-hour journey to San Antonio which involved us travelling to multiple airports and taking a coach from Houston to San Antonio. However, this did not dampen spirits and the journey actually brought us closer together as a group!

Day Two

After navigating our way around the huge Henry B Gonzalez Convention Center we arrived at our first seminar 'The Benefits of Oxygen and How to Maintain Oxygen Levels in our Root Zone' hosted by David Doherty, President of the International Sports Turf Research Center in Kansas.

He spoke about the soil, the pore spaces within and how vital it is for aeration to introduce oxygen into the soil, before moving on to talk about drainage.

The seminar after lunch was 'Optimise Soil Health to Enhance Turf Growth and Quality' hosted by Cale Bigelow, Professor of Agronomy at Purdue University, and Dara Park, Assistant Professor at Clemson University. They spoke about soil exchange and amendments used and the pros and cons of the various materials we all use. They also went into some detail regarding organic and inorganic products and the concept of a more biological approach with the use of compost teas, and other products that increase the microbiology within the soil.

I found this very interesting as I am currently seeing a lot more from companies within the industry developing natural, biological products that are applied to increase the microbiology within the soil to actively control soil problems and disorders.

After our day of education we joined the team from Bernhards and headed to a sports bar. Three of the Delegates embarked on the 2lb Burger Challenge. This challenge consisted of a monster plate of fries, a 32oz burger, bun and a plate of onion rings. You had an hour to try and eat it all, and anyone succeeding would receive a t-shirt and be placed on the wall of fame. No-one managed it, but an honourable mention to Leigh Powell who came the closest!

Day Three

Today was an all-day seminar called 'Greens Aeration and Water Management by the Numbers'.

This was hosted by Erik Ervin, a Crop, Soil and Environmental Services Professor, Nelson Caron, Director of Golf Course Maintenance at The Ford Plantation and Troy Fink CGCS, Superintendent at the Country Club of Virginia.

They were so impressive. Both Nelson and Troy showed us how they carried out greens maintenance, and it was clear their resources allow them to take greens maintenance to a whole new level.

They also went on to talk about their duties on the course and that they spend their time measuring moisture levels and monitoring the greens constantly so they can communicate the work needed to be done to their staff.

I left the seminar admiring their communication work, their efficiency and their attention to detail.

A busy night involved a BIGGA drinks reception, a breathtaking 750-foot trip up to the Tower of Americas to see the view across San Antonio and a Rodeo party hosted by Jacobsen.

We enjoyed watching some of the rodeo outside, even though it was bitterly cold that night. It was a great event that gave us an insight into the local culture.

Day Four

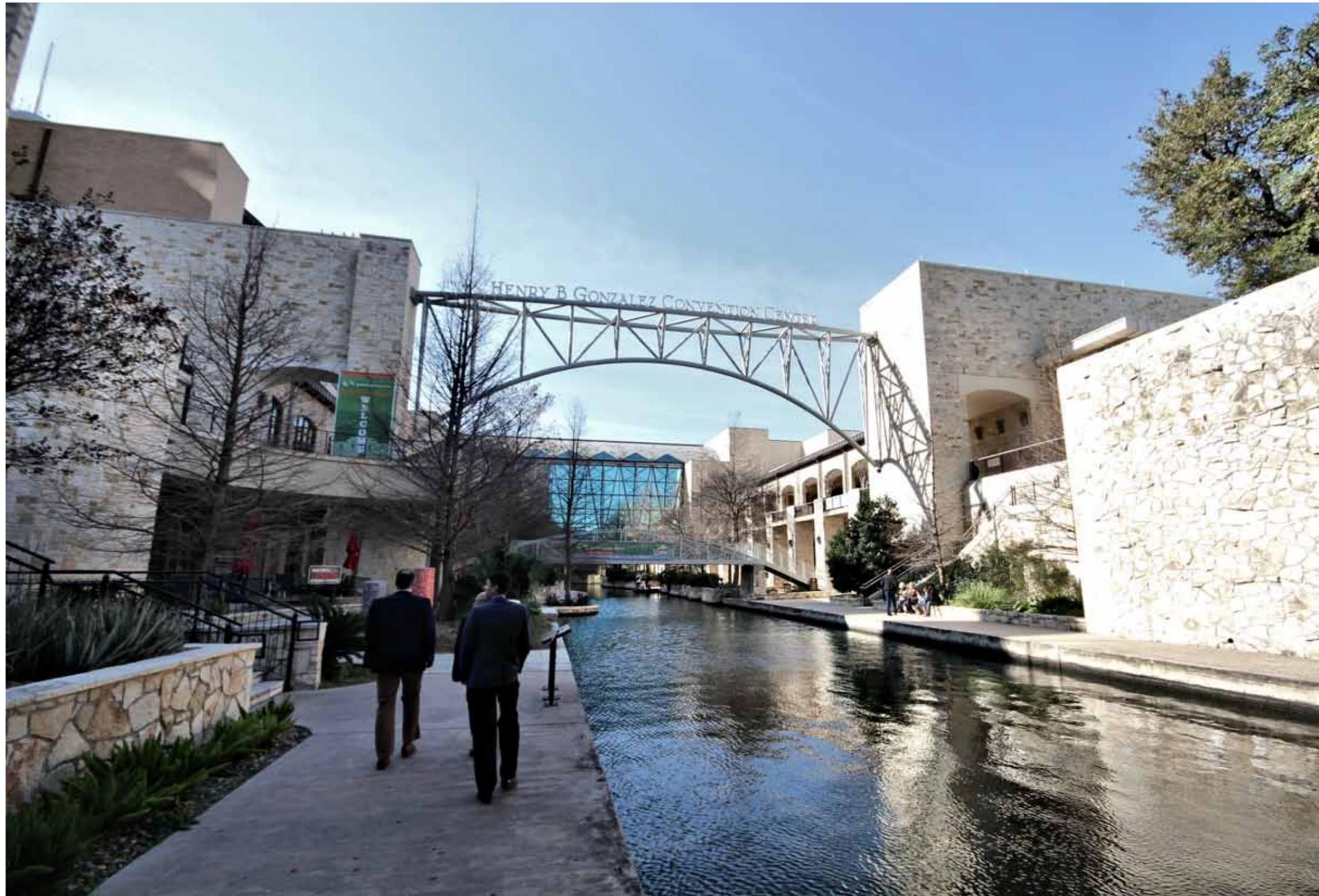
Time to head to the GIS. I don't think any of us were truly prepared for the grand scale of this event. We tracked down the BIGGA stand and created a plan for who would be manning the stand at what times. I manned the stand at around 4pm having the last shift of the day.

I felt proud to be representing BIGGA, and felt I was giving something back for all the support I have received since becoming a member in 2008.

After the show we attended a drinks reception hosted by Bernhard & Co. Again at this event we met many golf course Superintendents from across America and networked with other figures within the golf industry.

Afterwards, we found ourselves at a karaoke restaurant with the BIGGA and Bernhard teams.

Sam Evans was first to grab the mic and by the end of the night we were all up on the stage with Sam still singing and deafening the poor Americans in the bar. It was a fantastic night and everyone really enjoyed themselves.



Education seminar at the GIS

Day Five

The scale of the GIS meant I used today to try and spot everything I didn't see yesterday!

The closing show we then attended resembled the BRITS or the BAFTAS!

It also introduced us to more important members of the GCSAA and golfing industry within America.

The final word was a hilarious performance from David Feherty.

Day Six

After visiting a local golf club we headed to TPC San Antonio. Nothing could prepare us for what we would see.

The staff car park was larger than most of our clubs' main car parks. The Maintenance Facility was absolutely huge and looked more like an army base!

The workshops were clean enough to eat your dinner of the floor with all the kit at hand to keep

every bit of machinery maintained to the highest standard.

We then made our way across the yard, which again was vast, to the main machinery storage building. Inside was a giant fleet of John Deere, including around 25 Gators. Everything was immaculate.

The last building we entered was the chemical/spraying building which had state of the art sprayers and a professional wash down area.

We all then were shown around



the course. We were lucky enough to get pictures on the 18th Green with our own flag on the pole - #takeleswithyou! The course was like nothing I had ever seen. It was beautifully presented and was being prepared for the Valero Texas Open. The greens were a dream, the sward was just perfect in every way and there were absolutely no imperfections of any kind anywhere.

After our tour we took a look around the Pro Shop and had some lunch together in the clubhouse. It was a real treat to see TPC and we greatly appreciate the day being organised for us, and for Steve and Kim's wonderful driving.

Arriving back at the hotel we had time to begin packing and to change for our dinner together. The ten of us went out for dinner and we had a great time looking back at the week in photos and sharing all of our best bits. It was fantastic to see how close we had all become.

Final Day

Time to leave...the trip was everything I wanted it to be and more. It opened my eyes to greenkeeping in America and the standards they work towards. It has also left me with a lot more contacts and connections within the industry.

Due to this trip being my first time properly in America I was so impressed by the hospitality I

received where ever I went. Everyone was friendly and would take the time to chat to you. I'm still at the beginning of my career so it was great to share the journey with some Course Managers. I found it invaluable to talk to them, learn about their career journeys and what they've achieved.

Thank you

To BIGGA, for the work they do for greenkeepers and the services they provide to us that allow us to be a part of events and experiences such as this. I urge anybody who reads this article that is not already a BIGGA member to join immediately and begin involving yourself with these opportunities.

To Bernhard & Co for the making this trip happen for the ten Delegates. I speak for all when I say how grateful we are and that the trip is one of the highlights of our careers and we look forward to seeing you all within the future at events such as BTME.

Special thanks go to Kim Furnell, who was fantastic throughout the whole trip.

Thanks to Steven, Lee (Dad!), Richard, Graeme, Sam, Simon, Kevin, Leigh and Miles for their friendship during the week and for making it such a memorable week for me. I now have nine great friends who helped make the week unforgettable.



Quotes from the delegates

"When we were on the BIGGA stand we met dozens of Superintendents from all round the globe and they were fascinated that I worked on the Old Course at St. Andrews so that led to a lot of conversations - everyone was so nice and generous spirited."
Simon Connah, Deputy Course Manager on the Old Course at St Andrews

"From this trip I have made nine friends for life, and I strongly recommend everyone to apply for this life changing experience. The benefits are huge!"
Sam Evans, Course Manager at Oakland Park Golf Club

"Thanks to everyone involved in the process and for making it such a successful trip. It has definitely given me more confidence in my career. After talking to Lee, I now feel that the Master Greenkeeper qualification is more accessible, and I want to do it!"
Miles Todd, Course Manager, Llandudno (Maesdu) Golf Club

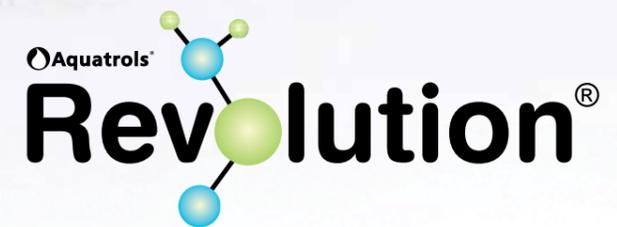
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When the going gets tough

Adrian Mortram explains the importance of setting up irrigation units correctly at the beginning of the season, and correcting minor faults

With a reasonably mild winter now behind us, what are the expectations, weather-wise, for 2015? The answer to this rhetorical question as the pattern of regional rainfall is now difficult to predict, and without a crystal ball is, we just don't know.

The fully automated irrigation system sitting there, much of it beneath the ground, often unloved and unused for much of the year, cannot just perform at its best without some planning, preparation and maintenance for the forthcoming season.

A typical greens and tees system will consist of a water source and

storage reservoir, a pump house and pump station, approximately seven kilometres of mainline pipe work and five kilometres of greens and tees pipework, sixty valve boxes, three hundred plus sprinkler heads, and an electronic control system.

It is therefore time to be thinking about setting up and configuring the irrigation system.

However, I do not want this article to be solely a check list with a series of Do's and Don'ts, but to explain why correcting some of these potentially minor faults can help dramatically in the management of the sward both ecologically and financially.

Water Sourcing and Storage

If the water source is under licence from the Environmental Agency, Scottish Environmental Protection Agency or local Water Authority ensure that the water meter is read at the start of the season and that the meter is fully functional.

Maintain readings monthly (as a minimum) during the season to ensure the particulars of the licence are not exceeded and as a possible telltale monitor of leakage. A detailed record of water usage will also assist in justification of water needs should the authorities look to restrict supplies during periods of dry weather when it is needed most.

Ensure the water source and storage is free from contamination such as sediment, algae, and weed debris which may have developed during the period since the irrigation system was last used.

Clean out the storage reservoir as required to remove sediment and biofilm and check for signs of leaks or winter damage from weather. Check that all water transfer systems are full operational or if potable water is used the incoming supply is operational and meets with local water authority regulations for backflow prevention or contamination. Check for signage which will comply with current Health and Safety Legislation, Deep Water for example.

Pump House and Pump Station

Check the pump house for security and ensure that it is clean, dry and that all thermostatically controlled heating and more importantly ventilation is operational to reduce any build-up of moisture on electrical and mechanical components. Do not use the pump house as a secondary store room, other than for irrigation spares, the pump station is the heart of your irrigation system without which no water will flow and therefore needs to be

treated, maintained and serviced accordingly.

The pump station should be set up, configured and tested for the coming season and employing the services of a specialist irrigation contracting company with a detailed working knowledge of pump stations and their manufacturing is extremely worthwhile.

Irrigation System

Once the pump station is functional then water should be allowed to flow into the pipe work at a slow rate and low pressure. Too often the pump station is allowed to operate immediately at full capacity i.e. flow and operational pressure, and water enters the system too quickly causing water hammer through compressed air which may damage pipe work, valves and sprinkler heads.

Many operators do not realise that air under pressure exerts a force far greater than that of water. This is why fully pressurised irrigation systems, where water under constant pressure remains in the irrigation system throughout the season, are less prone to damage caused by air (water hammer) and why in older non-pressurised irrigation systems, which are only pressurised with water during irrigation operation, the damage caused by compressed air will increase with increased system usage, particularly if the pipe work is old and already leaking.

Once the pipe work is pressurised the system should be assessed for leaks which are most likely to occur around areas where there is a high number of fittings and valves or sprinklers.

Leakage in the system can be detected by a number of ways; increased water usage, drop in pressure, continued or frequent operation at the pump station or at the sprinkler head, and unexplained patches or wet areas on the golf course.





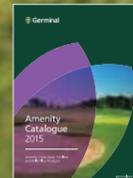
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Sprinklers and Valves

All valves whether isolation valves, solenoid valves or manual watering points should be checked for the successful operation of all components and maintenance undertaken where necessary. Valve boxes are notorious sites for overwintering vermin, mice for example can wreak havoc with control cabling, joints and splices.

All sprinkler heads should be checked for trimming round, levelness, pop up, arc setting, nozzle, rotation, operational pressure within manufacturer's recommendations and none should be too deep in the ground which will affect the water exiting the nozzle.

Each of these individual points can add up to considerable economic savings, by affecting the prescribed delivery and saving of water.

Poorly maintained trimming or depth of the sprinklers will affect the overall distance of throw from the sprinkler head perhaps preventing head to head delivery.

Incorrect nozzles in sprinklers can effect overall coverage and distribution uniformity and incorrect arc settings may cause under irrigated or over irrigated areas of

the green or tee with full circle (360 degree) set sprinklers using twice the amount of water as part circle (180 degree) or applying water to areas where it is not required.

Poor pressure at the nozzle can indicate leakage in the pipework, insufficient pipework sizing or incorrect pump system operational pressure and prevent accurate and efficient coverage. Where sprinklers are weeping or damaged these should be replaced or component parts replaced.

Control System

There are many types of control system, however, without doubt the modern trend is towards those of a computerised nature.

At the beginning of the season it is imperative that all electrical stations on the controller, both valve in head sprinklers and solenoids, are operated from the controller and a visual check is performed to ensure these are operating correctly in the field.

This is why a full walkthrough from the first tee to the 18th green is extremely important at the beginning of every season.

Anything less will be leaving what, at the end of the day, is your



most expensive maintenance asset potentially vulnerable to catastrophic failure at a time when you may need it most. Where control system failures are identified these should be repaired as a matter of priority.

An irrigation system is without question the most expensive item of maintenance equipment on the golf course.

It therefore deserves the correct amount of time, a minimum one full day for a greens and tees system and longer for a fairway system, and due diligence to be setup and configured correctly at the beginning of each season.

Some may employ the services of a specialist irrigation contracting company to ensure the irrigation system is configured correctly and as part of this procedure to setup an irrigation system for the forthcoming season a full system walk through, electrically and mechanically, is a must.

With most of the irrigation infrastructure out of sight it is often out of mind and therein often lies the problem with many irrigation systems.

Irrigation systems are no different to any item of general golf course

machinery and for sure these will be serviced and maintained regularly if not only to protect the capital invested in them.

The irrigation system should be no different particularly with our supplemental irrigation regimes within the UK which often dictate the requirement for the irrigation system to perform perfectly when soil moisture levels are diminished, to ensure consistently firm and true surfaces expected by members and player alike.

Many irrigation systems have been installed for a long time, maybe it is time to seek independent advice and a full comprehensive audit from a specialist designer with no financial ties to any manufacturer.

Yes, it will take considerable time to carry out a full audit, and much of the work will be repetitive and tedious checking all the sprinkler heads and all the valve boxes.

Enlisting the help and support of an apprentice in conjunction with an independent designer may be one way of improving and disseminating knowledge of the irrigation system and educating for the future.

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TORO TOP CHOICE FOR NEW BEAVERBROOK GC



Toro irrigation and turf maintenance machinery has been chosen by Beaverbrook GC for its brand new course, currently under construction as part of a new £90m luxury hotel and private members club at Cherkley Court in Leatherhead, Surrey.

The scheme will see the grade II-listed building, famous for being the former residence of press baron Lord Beaverbrook, converted into a luxury hotel, health club and spa.

This will be complemented by a private members club 18-hole golf course co-designed by David McLay and Tom Watson, opening in summer 2016.

Development is moving apace at the site, where a new, state-of-the-art Toro irrigation system is currently being installed on the 400-acre site. This uses Toro's innovative Lynx central control system with its intuitive interface that will allow Beaverbrook's greenkeepers to precisely customise the system to their own course conditions and requirements to ensure efficient, controlled use of water at all times.

Added to this are Toro's latest

sprinklers – the new Infinity Series with Smart Access. Infinity sprinklers deliver all the Toro quality features of increased efficiency, enhanced course appearance and improved playing conditions, but with the added benefit of Smart Access.

This feature is a boon to course managers as every serviceable element can be accessed from the top of the unit. It means sprinkler repairs and maintenance can be done without the need to dig up the unit with consequent damage to turf and loss of time and money. The sprinkler is also future-proof, designed to accept new and improved parts whatever the future holds.

Tim Edwards, a director of developers Longshot Cherkley Court, said: "We aim to become the most exclusive private GC in the UK and have chosen Toro to be a big part of our future plans. Everything about this project is about finding and using the best of the best – and that includes Toro. In my opinion they are the best in the industry; the highest quality."

He sees it as a big benefit that the club will be 100 per cent Toro and that the irrigation will be complemented in

the future by the arrival of a Toro turf equipment fleet to cut and maintain the prestigious Beaverbrook course. Distributor Lely UK's Toro sales manager Jeff Anguige says this will comprise the full range of mowers for cutting all areas of the course, as well as Workman utility vehicles, sprayers and top-dressers. TYM compact tractors will also be part of the deal.

The project is expected to create around 300 jobs, with staff being recruited from the local community as far as possible. Tim Edwards said this includes bringing together the best greenkeeping team available – "the most skilled staff, ideally those who already know and like Toro and enjoy using Toro equipment".

Meanwhile, Lely will be providing support throughout the grow-in phase and into the long-term.

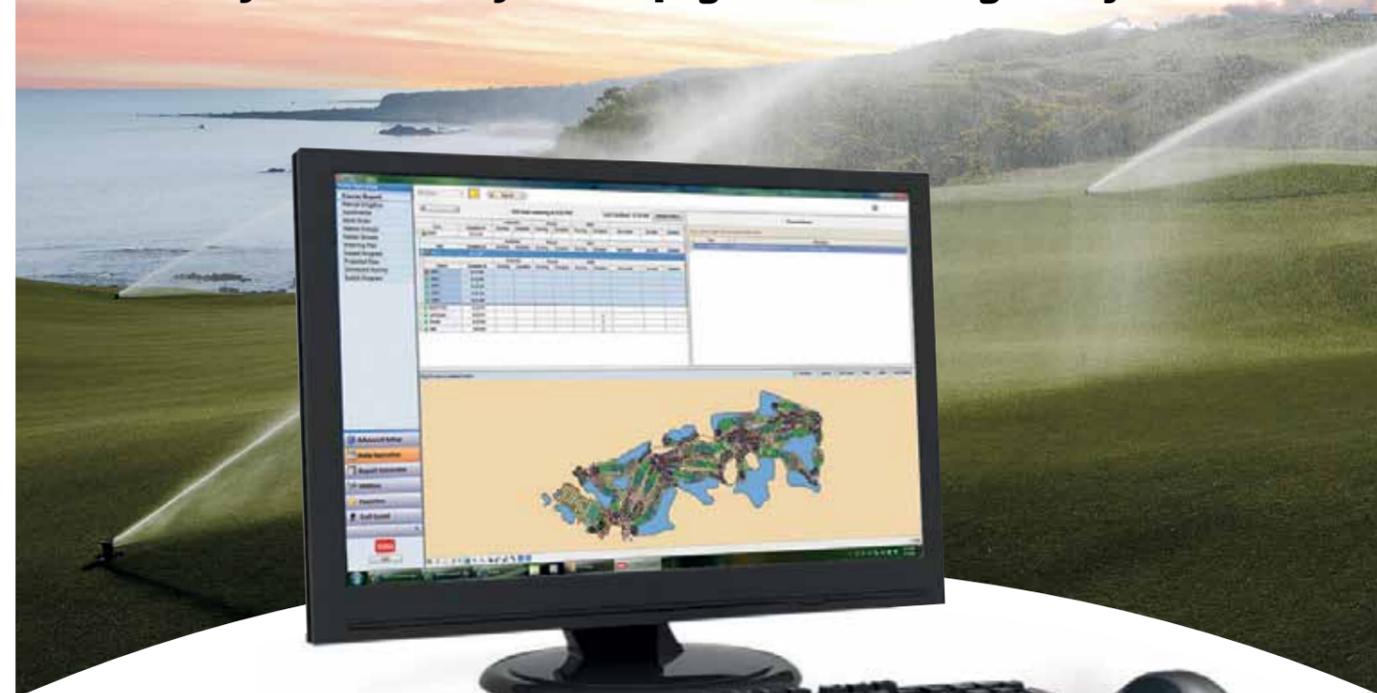
Andrew Brown, corporate accounts manager for The Toro Company, added: "Beaverbrook GC is a prestigious new enterprise and Toro and Lely are delighted to be chosen as its preferred supplier for both irrigation and machinery. We look forward to working with Tim and his team over the coming months."



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Hi! Noon in Australia



Scott Noon, Assistant Greenkeeper at Lancaster GC has spent several months working at New South Wales GC in Australia learning about warm season grasses and expanding his professional and personal education. Here he tells GI how he's getting on



I've been in my current position since 2010, completed my Foundation Degree and after four years at Lancaster I decided to speak to the Course Manager Warren Bevan about gaining further experience working abroad.

He recommended going to Australia for the summer, to learn about warm season grasses, somewhat different conditions to those we frequently experience in the North West of England!

So, I visited the AGCSA (Austrian Golf Course Superintendents Association) website and discovered you could put a job request up on their website, which I did. I then received an email from the Course Manager at New South Wales GC, Gary Dempsey, who said he would be interested in employing me over the summer, and having looked at the spectacular golf course online I knew I couldn't turn the opportunity down.

Having completed all the necessary paperwork, my visa was granted. I booked my flight and arrived in Sydney at the end of September 2014 - ready to start work a couple of days later.

New South Wales GC is a links style course in La Perouse, south Sydney, that dates back to the early 1920s and was designed by Alistair McKenzie. The course is host to one of the most iconic holes in the world, the par three 6th.

The greens are purely creeping bent, thanks to their reconstruction in 2010, when all the greens were newly seeded except the 5th and 6th which were turfed due to their close proximity to the sea.

The tees, fairways and rough are largely couch grass with a percentage of Kikuyu in the rough. However, sometimes the couch grass does encroach into the collars and towards the greens, so it is occasionally dabbed with a product called Tupersan WP that contains the active ingredient Siduron, to prevent it from growing into the greens.

The maintenance facilities at New South Wales are very different to those at Lancaster, mainly due to the fact it boasts purpose built facilities that are only a few years old. It has a covered spray area as well as a large chemical store and fertiliser store, four covered bays for materials such as sand and

topdressing and a roofed fuelling station. They also have a full vehicle lift inside the sheds to make things more manageable for the mechanics.

They have a vast amount of machinery, including 14 Toro 1000 hand mowers, eight for the greens, two for the collars and four for the tees. They also have four Toro 5510's, two ProCores, two rough mowers, eight Toro Workman machines and five tractors amongst other various pieces of kit. This is a lot of equipment but they do have a greenkeeping team of 21 including two mechanics.

The greens are cut at 3mm, with the collars cut at 7mm and the surrounds and fairways both cut at 8mm.

Despite the differences in climate and grass composition to Lancaster, there are many similarities, particularly regarding the daily maintenance tasks and high expectations from visitors and members.

It's proved a very interesting place to work as it's provided plenty of different challenges and allowed me to see so many new techniques and methods. The most notable so far was the burning off the bushland



ABOVE: Bushland being burnt off

ABOVE RIGHT: Turf Nursery

areas on the course that had been finished this year. The areas burnt on the course this year were the left hand side of the 14th and 15th holes, as well as both sides of the 16th hole and the par three 17th hole.

Another part of the annual maintenance programme I have been involved in is the scarifying of fairways, tees and surrounds, which were completed within a few weeks of my arrival. Having done this before I knew what to expect, or at least I thought I did. The amount of litter that was pulled out of the fairways was staggering.

I've learned about the management of warm season grasses and the management of cool season grasses in such a different environment, along with the problems they are susceptible to. With the golf course being directly on the coastline it has been interesting to see what challenges this provides. Due to the high winds and dry weather, the bunkers had to be hand watered on several occasions to prevent the sand from being blown around and to help the bunkers remain playable.

Another issue caused by being on the coast is the salt from the sea water being sprayed onto the 5th and 6th greens. High levels of soluble salts in the turf rootzone can be detrimental to most turf grasses. High levels of salt can reduce water uptake due to osmotic stress, reduce nutrient uptake, and the sodium and chlorine can cause reduced growth by interfering with photosynthesis. To combat this, the areas that are affected are hand watered on a regular basis alongside the current irrigation programme.

The attention to detail is incredible and you can see this in all areas of the course. Spray hawks were created by the club mechanic to allow for a much more accurate spray application on the greens using Agrotop Spray max ADF dual nozzle. Another nice touch was the fact that all clippings taken from tees, greens and surrounds are removed entirely from the course.

Before arriving in Australia one of my main concerns was finding somewhere that I would be happy to live for six months. So, before I arrived, I searched the internet for the best options for location and accommodation. After this, I discovered a room for rent in a house in Botany with a Scottish couple. It's perfect. Only a short cycle in to work, well situated for access to the city and local beaches, and even a pool on site!



After spending just a couple of weeks in Botany I knew that this place was absolutely fantastic and that it was where I would want to spend the rest of my time in New South Wales.

My time in Australia has so far been very enjoyable and the memories and experiences I have gained will stick with me forever. I would like to thank Gary Dempsey, Warren Bevan and everyone who helped me with this amazing opportunity, I can only hope the next few months continue to interest and teach me as much as the previous months have. To anyone who is thinking about working in Australia, I couldn't recommend it highly enough.



Chafer grubs

and how to combat them

In his first BASIS article of 2015, Graham Paul from Sherriff Amenity discusses the turf pest chafer grubs, and how greenkeepers should deal with them



Chafer grubs, the larvae of the chafer beetle, are a fairly common pest of turf in Britain. They damage grass plants by feeding on the roots, which can result in serious thinning of the sward.

However, more harm can be caused by predators, such as rooks, crows, badgers and foxes, excavating large areas of turf in search of the grubs. In this short article I shall look at the biology of these insects and the measures we have to control them.

First, some facts about beetles in general. The simplified diagram below may help to clarify some of the terminology used.

Beetles are classified in Coleoptera, the largest order of insects with over 370,000 species known globally. They vary considerably in shape but most species have two pairs of wings; the forewings (elytra—singular: elytron) are tough, hardened and serve to protect the inner wings and body when not in flight. Elytra are sometimes known as wing cases. The name Coleoptera translates from modern Latin and as ‘sheath-wings’.

Chafer beetles belong to a very large family of insects called the Scarabaeidae, often referred to as the scarab beetles, which number

some 20,000 species worldwide. One of these scarab beetles, the dung beetle *Scarabaeus sacer* was held sacred by the Ancient Egyptians, as a symbol of Khepri (a ‘subordinate’ of the sun god Ra) whose job was to roll the morning sun across the sky! The connection arises from the behaviour of the dung beetles, seen by ancient scholars, rolling balls of dung across the ground. Khepri is often depicted in Egyptian drawings and carving as the figure of a man with a scarab beetle head.

Scarab beetles have distinctively ‘clubbed’ antennae, the club consisting of a number of flaps (lamellae) arranged in the shape of a fan. This feature, which enhances the sense of smell, is especially noticeable in the Cockchafer who seem to be the ‘punk rockers’ of the scarab beetle community.

Chafer grubs are widely distributed across most of the UK. They are particularly common on light sandy and chalky soils in non-irrigated turf such as golf roughs, fairways and ornamental turf. For the most part they are not usually present in sufficient numbers to cause serious damage and warrant control measures. However, should an area suffer a large infestation, turf grass loss can result and this can



MAIN IMAGE: Male Cockchafer showing fan-shaped structure on the antennae
(©www.dominickmoloney.com)

RIGHT: Adult garden chafer

SELF ASSESSMENT

Use the questions below to check your understanding of this topic. Readers can claim BASIS points by visiting the 'BASIS Points Article' section on the Sherriff Amenity website – www.sherriff-amenity.com and answering the questions correctly.

1) In which order of insects are Chafer Beetles found?

- a) Lepidoptera
- b) Coleoptera
- c) Diptera
- d) Hemiptera

2) Approximately how many species are contained in the family of scarab beetles?

- a) 370,000
- b) 200,000
- c) 20,000
- d) 3,000

3) The club structure on the antennae of Chafer Beetles consists of a number of ...

- a) fanlettes
- b) stripules
- c) tabs
- d) lamellae

4) Imidacloprid granules are best applied towards the end of the day because they ...

- a) break down in strong sunlight
- b) can give a strong odour when exposed to UV rays
- c) scorch the grass if the sun is bright
- d) interfere with photosynthesis when first applied.

5) The term entomopathogenic or 'EPN' describes ...

- a) ecologically preferred nematodes
- b) nematodes that kill insects
- c) extra predatory nematodes
- d) protein enriched nematodes



be particularly unattractive. It is therefore important to understand this pest and know how to deal with it should the situation arise. Chafer grubs have a habit of infesting the same area year after year so effective control measures are essential for those routinely affected areas.

There are five species that can be found damaging turf in the UK: - Garden Chafer (*Phyllopertha horticola*), Cockchafer (or 'May Bug' *Melolontha melolontha*), Welsh Chafer (*Hoplia philanthus*), Summer Chafer (*Amphimallon solstitialis*), and Brown Chafer (*Serica brunnea*). The two main species found in turf (in appreciably large numbers) are the Garden Chafer and the Cockchafer.

The Garden Chafer is probably the most important in amenity turf; its grubs can often be found in large numbers in the rootzone. The adult beetles are about 10mm in size and have a metallic green head and pronotum with bronze wing cases (elytra). They usually appear in May and June and are sometimes seen on the surface of turf during the daytime – especially when the infestation is heavy.

The Adult Cockchafer, at 25-30mm in length, is much bigger than the Garden Chafer. They have a dark head with a shiny black pronotum covered by short, closely set hairs. The body is chestnut brown

in colour and exclusive to this species of chafer beetle are several forward-pointing white arrowheads on the abdomen just below the elytra.

They have a dull black abdomen and a long, flat pygidium (stern). The antennae are tipped with large, fan-like clubs consisting of seven blades in the male, whilst the female has only six. Males have longer antennae than females. Adult beetles are mainly seen at night during May and early June and sound like bumble bees when flying.

The larvae of chafer beetles have a curved, creamy white body with a nut brown head and a pair of legs on each of the front three segments of the thorax, which is typical of many beetle species.

The life cycle of the chafer grub varies depending on the species and local climatic conditions but can be generalised as follows: -

Adult beetles emerge from their pupal cases and begin to fly at dusk from late May to June. They mate on nearby trees and shrubs until dawn, at which point the adults return to the soil. Several mating flights may be made but eventually the females lay 15-20 eggs in a 2-5 day period.

The eggs are laid about 15cm deep in the soil and hatch after approximately two weeks. If mois-



ture levels are good the larvae move up toward the surface and begin to feed on plant roots. However, in drier conditions they remain lower in the soil. Larvae continue to feed until late September when they move deeper into the soil to overwinter.

Pupation takes place in the following spring (around mid-May) normally below the surface. The Garden Chafer completes its life cycle in a single year but other species, such as the Cockchafer,

MAIN ABOVE: Adult male cockchafer

ABOVE: Cockchafer grub

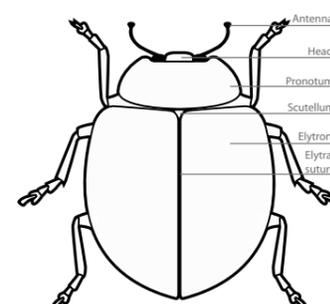
TOP RIGHT: Chafer and bird damage



feed below ground for 2-3 years before maturing into adult beetles and larvae of these may be found in infested soil at any time of the year, although there will be higher numbers in spring and autumn.

Chafer grubs feed on organic matter, including the roots and thatch of all turf grasses and initial damage has the appearance of drought stress. Heavily infested turf first appears off-colour, grey-green and wilts rapidly in hot sun. Continued feeding will cause turf to die in large irregular patches. The tunnelling of the larvae makes the turf feel spongy underfoot and it may be easily rolled back like a carpet, due to the severed roots. In some instances grub populations themselves may not cause observable turf injury, however, severe damage to turf can be caused by predators feeding on the grubs. Large birds (especially crows), badgers, and foxes are the main culprits and show no regard for the grass as they excavate the surface to get at the tasty grubs!

Beetle morphology



Control Measures

Cultural Control by rolling grub-infested turf to restrict their movement and feeding activities has been tried but gives little benefit to improving the health of the grass and does not resolve the problem.

Some degree of biological control can be achieved with entomopathogenic nematodes (EPN's – nematodes that are pathogenic to insects), applied between June to August when the soil is warm enough to sustain them. Various products are available such as 'Nemasys G'. They are usually diluted with water and applied with a sprayer – with the nozzle filters removed!

EPN's are transparent, microscopic, nematode worms that are parasites of certain insect larvae and have a symbiotic relationship with a bacteria carried in their intestines. As soon as the juvenile nematode enters the host it regurgitates the bacteria, which is very toxic to the chafer grub, killing it within 24 hours.

The bacteria help break down host tissues to feed the nematode whilst it completes the rest of its life cycle within the grub and, after reproducing, the carcass bursts open releasing hundreds of new juvenile nematodes back into the soil where they search for new hosts to ambush.

These EPN's are obligate parasites, existing in the soil for short periods as free-living juveniles but are only able to reproduce inside the host grub.

Chemical Control can be achieved with the residual insecticide imidacloprid, marketed under the brand name 'Merit® Turf'.

It is only available for UK turf in granular form, which is applied at the rate of 30 Kg/ha and must be immediately washed into the soil with sufficient irrigation to move the active ingredient through the thatch, wetting the top inch of soil.

The low application rate for these granules (3g/m²) calls for specialist application equipment, as bulking the product with carrier material to facilitate the low dose can give uneven distribution. Imidacloprid breaks down in strong sunlight, thus application should take place towards the end of the day if possible.

Imidacloprid is a systemic insecticide that translocates rapidly through plant tissues following application and is effective by contact or ingestion.

It can be applied at any time of year, however, maximum control is achieved with an application prior to egg laying during spring or early summer, when the adult beetles are active.

This period can normally be anticipated when the beetles are seen in full flight, as this is when they mate and then lay the eggs in the soil. This recommendation corresponds with the most susceptible stages of the pest's life cycle (from egg hatch to the 1-2nd larval Instar stage) Pheromone traps can be used to indicate when the adults have emerged.

SAFEGUARD AGAINST CHAFER INFESTATION THIS SPRING

This spring, turf managers are urged to begin planning a safeguarding strategy against potential Chafer grub infestations. Bayer's technical manager Dr Colin Mumford says it's important to treat newly hatched Chafer grub eggs at the end of the spring because once they're hatched, they're very difficult to control.

Colin said: "Early signs can be the turf exhibiting drought stress symptoms and noticing large populations of birds feeding on the grass."

The grubs are a real concern as they can cause an unstable surface that's potentially dangerous for sports players. For groundsmen, a serious untreated infestation could potentially close the facility for a whole season.

Colin, a former Head Greenkeeper, explains that the adult insects burrow into the soil and lay their eggs close to the surface before the grubs hatch and start feeding on the grass plant roots.

He added: "Once this happens, the grubs essentially cut off the roots causing die back of the turf. In the most severe cases, the turf surface will actually come away from the ground, and peel off like a carpet."

"When the turf is loose, it's attractive to wildlife such as foxes, badgers and birds. These animals will easily tear up the unstable turf in search of grubs to feed on. Situations like these have been known to cause catastrophic damage to the playing surface, and can take an entire season to rectify, presenting a tough repair challenge."

"Merit Turf is an essential weapon for turf managers in the fight against Leatherjackets and Chafer grubs, and for use on managed amenity and sports turf."

When trying to combat these challenging pests, being able to understand the range of species and their associated lifecycles is essential. "There are four particular species often found



in turf in the UK," said Colin. "The Cockchafer is the largest, but occurs more sporadically. The most damaging species are the Garden, Welsh and Summer Chafers."

The Cockchafer can take up to five years to go through one lifecycle whilst the Garden Chafer completes its lifecycle in one year, and the Welsh and Summer Chafer have a two-year lifecycle.

"Without close examination under a magnifying glass, it's very difficult to identify chafer grub species. You need to be able to identify the species in order to know its lifecycle which, in turn, enables you to manage your and your clubs member's expectations with regards to how long it will take to control them. If there's a high risk of Chafer infestation, it's strongly advised that turf professionals use an insecticide like Merit Turf, every year - especially if the Chafer grub species is unknown."

Colin explained the possibility of multiple stages of a grubs' lifecycle presents a key challenge.

"Typically some eggs will have been laid during the spring, but will be present alongside

larger grubs who hatched the year before. Insecticide treatments won't control these larger grubs, which are effectively grubs in their 3rd instar (development stage). In fact, by the time the grubs have reached this size, the damage will have been done."

He advises that the most effective control is to apply an insecticide treatment such as Bayer's Merit Turf preventatively, when the beetles are laying their eggs. This tends to be in late spring and can be anytime between May and July. "A turf professional will need to apply an insecticide at this time of year, every year until the population is controlled or at an acceptable level, as not all the grubs will die with just one application."

They can live in the soil for up to three years, so it's possible to have more than one generation in the soil at any given time. Once Merit Turf has been applied, it should be repeated annually in the growing season, this is why it is important to know which species of chafer you have so that you know whether it has a one, two, or three year life cycle. If it has a three year life cycle, it will take

a minimum of three years to control, as you will only be controlling the juvenile grubs (1st and 2nd instars).

Whilst frequency of treatment is a key issue, Colin concluded that application technique is also important. "Merit Turf needs to be applied evenly across the whole turf area before thoroughly irrigating the treated turf. Watering-in is critical for successful control and to move the active ingredient through the thatch (if present) and into the root zone of the turf. Merit Turf's systemic mode of action means that when the grubs eat the roots, they subsequently stop feeding before dying. The young grubs are also controlled through coming into contact with the product in the soil."



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How to get the best from grinding

Steve Nixon, International Sales Manager at Bernhard, gives a short introduction to training, grinders and how to get the best from them

BERNHARD
grinders 

Everyone in the business uses grinders, whether they have their own or they contract out. Grinders are a vital part of any turf operations regular maintenance programme.

Cutting technology moves on all the time, there are better ways of adjusting mowers more precisely and easier ways to check and set roller heights and these make for a more deliberate science, but the principles are always the same.

The Value of Good Training

Any machine is only as good as the operator, so workshops need to make sure they get good training. However, it doesn't end there.

We need to be mindful of maintaining the training to keep up-to-date with best practice and new technology.

We all need a reminder from time to time.

Three years ago we opened our new purpose built factory in Haverhill, Suffolk.

One of the key features is the Training Centre where we have the whole range of machines side by side.

We have had hundreds of people through the door during the last three years including greenkeepers and mechanics of all levels from across the world.

This year already we have had groups of visitors from Sweden, USA, Finland, Russia and Asia, and their response has been amazing and very satisfying.

The space is very well designed and equipped so everyone gets the chance to learn hands-on.

This helps them to really get a feel

for the machinery and know when something is right.

It's not just the training that our clients enjoy. It is also the chance to see the manufacturing process, talk to the team who put these hand-built machines together, and see what goes into the product.

How our Grinders Work

All our machines deliver the same results because in each case the common and vital component is the bottom blade. This is sharpened on a uniquely designed bed knife grinder, where the blade sits, as if mounted in the mower frame, and it is ground, producing a razor sharp cutting edge as a line parallel to the pivot or mount points of its bed bar. This blade becomes the straight edge and height of cut definer for the mower.

Once re-mounted into the mower frame, the cylinder needs to be ground so that it matches that same straight edge.

Sharpening is an essential process that has to be done regularly in order to guarantee to the players and customers the standards they demand today.

So in order to deliver such high standards week in, week out, these machines have to be very simple to use, fast, accurate and reliable, and the people using them have to be well-trained. That is the recipe for success.

Bernhard reel grinders are used by 65 of the top 100 golf courses in the world precisely because they are so quick and easy to use. The whole process from set-up to completion is quick: an average of 15 minutes floor to floor.

Understanding the Role of a Sharp Cut

Surgically sharp mowers slice through grass blades cleanly with minimal damage to the plant and because they cut all the grass blades at the same height they are uniform in their appearance.

This in turn means that the overall definition of the turf is improved and the ball roll is smoother, so more consistent and often faster to play.

By contrast, if the grass is cut with blades that are not sharp enough they will be torn and uneven with ragged edges which bleed moisture and let in disease.

The moisture lost through damaged tips has to be replaced demanding more water, whilst increased susceptibility to disease

requires more use of fungicide. Repairing and regenerating plant health requires accelerated growth and that in turn means a greater demand for fertiliser and top dressing.

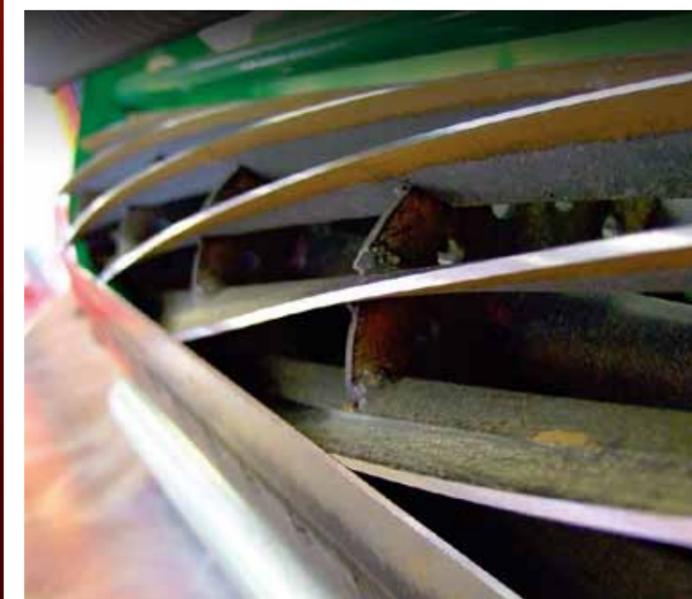
Put all this together and there is a lot of cost for a greenkeeper, both in terms of time and budget.

So my advice would be, don't compromise on the things that really matter.

Limit outside factors; keep your cutting equipment in top condition.

There's no point having a shed full of cutting units with blunt or less than perfectly sharp blades. You need to keep blades sharp all the time, keep your grass healthy and grind when you want to.

In effect, put yourself back in control.



The young greenkeeper's career toolbox

Andy Wight, Head of Work Based Learning at Oaklands College, explains the fundamentals of finding a greenkeeping job, provides CV tips and how to succeed in the all-important interview

In today's cut-throat labour market it's vital that greenkeepers are fully equipped to compete. Fortunately, there are a host of agencies able to provide assistance to job hunters, but it's a good idea for younger greenkeepers to familiarise themselves with the basics of finding and getting a new job – so here's some advice.

Firstly, decide what sort of job you want and why you want it. More money? A greater challenge? Career advancement? Personal circumstances? Then you can look for roles that offer what you need.

It's simple to locate job adverts nowadays, a quick Google search can throw up potential jobs. Of course your very own Greenkeeper International, and trade magazines, can be a very helpful source.

As well as searching online, it's a good idea to send a CV to clubs you would like to work at and ask them to hold your CV in case anything comes up. Most are happy to do this as it might save time and money advertising if they have a list of potential employees on file.

Word of mouth is always a good way of finding out about possible jobs. Networking and being active on social media are also good approaches.

GI GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL
Recruitment
See page 64 for the latest jobs

Recruitment
Advertise your recruitment here ... and online for one month at www.bigga.org.uk/careers

Applying for a new job

To apply for a new job you will normally need a covering letter and a CV.

Any document you send to a potential new employer must be typed up, spell checked and grammar checked. Get another pair of eyes to read through your documents before you send them as it's always hard to spot your own errors!

As a general rule CVs should not be longer than two A4 pages. Don't always use the standard covering letter and CV - amend them to suit the job you are applying for.

So, read the job advert carefully and find out more about the organisation. For example, if a job advert asks for a responsible individual try and see what skills or past experience could demonstrate this then include that information in the covering letter.

You can pay to have a CV professionally created for you but it's fairly easy to create a good CV yourself and the internet is full of advice. Note - I wouldn't use an American site as CVs in the USA may have very different formats to those employers are used to in the UK. Really good advice on writing CVs can be found at the National Careers Service website.

Interviews

The interview is your only chance to make an impact in person so you need to ensure sure you get it right. So how do you do this?

Interview tips:

- Find out what kind of interview it will be so you can prepare. Will there be a test? Will it be one to one or a panel asking you questions?
- Examine the person specification (if there is one), job advert and your CV/application form. Try and consider what type of questions they will ask you then prepare answers. Common examples include "Why do you want the job?", "What are your strengths and weaknesses?" "What can

you offer us in terms of skills and knowledge?" and "Why do you want to leave your present job?" Practice answering these sorts of questions at home so you answer quickly and competently

- Dress smartly for the interview. Get your outfit ready the night before to avoid stress on the morning of the interview
- Arrive on time (if you can, travel to the venue beforehand to see how long it takes)
- Switch off your mobile during the interview

- On entry to the interview room, if possible, shake hands firmly with those present, making good eye contact and try to log their names (it's a good idea to have a pen and paper to write things down as the interview goes)
- If offered tea or coffee it can be wise to decline (risk of spilling it)
- Be careful what you say and how you act while waiting for the interview as it's possible someone has been asked to observe candidates while they wait to go in

- Be attentive, speak clearly and confidently, the employer will form their opinion of you in the first few minutes so a good start is vital.
- Sell yourself as best you can and make sure they know what skills and experience you can bring to the organisation
- Make sure you have prepared some questions to ask at the end of the interview - find out more about the job and the company
- Do not forget to ask about the salary - but make sure it's not the first thing you ask! It's vital you know what you are going to be paid and other important factors before you leave, so if you're offered the job you are fully in the picture

- After the interview, ask if it would be possible to have feedback on your performance as this can be really useful in improving your interview skills
- At the end of the interview thank the interviewer/s for their time, if possible shake hands again and ask what happens next (how



and by when will they let you know if you have been successful)

During the interview make sure you do/are not:

- Late (if you are explain fully why and apologise)
- Swear or use slang words
- Look uninterested (sit upright with good posture)
- Lie about anything
- Read from notes or your CV, unless specific detail is required
- Appear too nervous
- Appear over-confident/show off - they are looking for someone who can fit in
- Discuss things outside of the parameters of the interview (i.e. avoid small talk that might deviate to a sensitive area)
- Bad mouth former employers or colleagues or talk about sensitive issues at your last place of work (shows you can't be trusted)
- Do not have your mobile phone switched on

Leaving your old job

Assuming you have been offered a new job and have accepted it, and

have a written confirmation that you have been given the new post, you can now tell your employer you want to leave your job. When leaving an employer ensure you do so correctly.

Firstly, ensure you have the new job confirmed in writing before you hand in your notice as once you do so you have effectively dismissed yourself from your present job.

Check your contract and give the required notice - leaving early could result in not being paid the final months' salary due to breach of contract. Inform your manager in writing of your intentions and state the reason for leaving.

Attempt to leave on good terms - keep the process professional and resist the temptation to say anything you might regret later on (don't forget the new workplace will most likely ask for a reference from you past employer).

Starting the new job

Your aim is to create a good first impression. Turn up on time (obviously!) and listen carefully to

any induction process. Obtain or request any PPE needed for the job. Ensure you become familiar with break times, other regulations and the layout of the workplace as quickly as possible. Ensure you know the line management structure and your place in it. Find out the emergency systems in case of fire or accident (names of first aiders etc.)

Work as part of the team and create a good impression early on as most new posts will have a probationary period. Employers doubting your ability or commitment may select to not commit to full employment with you.

Ensure you get a contract of employment that covers the full terms and conditions of the job (pay, holiday etc.) You are entitled to a written statement of your main employment terms within two months of starting work. The employment contract is made as soon as you accept a job offer and this has been confirmed.

Happy job hunting - and good luck!

Possible websites

BIGGA website
www.bigga.org.uk/careers
Lists job vacancies in greenkeeping in the UK and abroad for BIGGA members

Apprenticeship Vacancy Matching Service
<https://apprenticeshipvacancymatchingservice.lsc.gov.uk>
The government apprenticeship matching web site, this matches potential apprentices with an employer. Note - it may not throw up results for greenkeeper - using golf as a search word may bring up more results.

Horticulture jobs
www.horticulturejobs.co.uk/jobs/
Wide range of jobs in horticulture

CNS RESEARCH & EDUCATION GREENHOUSE

Cold as ice!

The main prize for Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year, Kevin O'Neill from Muswell Hill GC was an intense seven-week Winter Turf School at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Read on to find out what he learnt amid sub-zero temperatures in the States



Monday 5 January

I should be writing this entry whilst relaxing high over the Atlantic Ocean...but alas, a technical fault with the 'iron bird' has led to a 12 hour delay.

So, my new goal is to get to UMass tomorrow for a soil science lecture that is sure to test my skills against jet lag. I haven't forgotten the real reason for the trip, to learn and expand my knowledge of Turfgrass...and sample a true American chilli dog.

Tuesday 6 January

Well I'm here!
For those of you lucky/unlucky enough to know me (delete as

appropriate!) you may know I travel light. This time I may have set myself a challenge and a half. The airline chose not to load my bag at Heathrow. They had obviously heard about my Bear Grylls-like abilities to survive on the bare minimum, so I currently have a laptop and the clothes I've been wearing for quite a while now as my only companions!

Wednesday 7 January

It's -7C and snowing. I caught a bus to Turf School, then spent the next hour being completely dazed, discussing water soluble Nitrogen and the differing effects of slow and quick release fertilisers. The kind

of juicy stuff I'd come here for - but maybe not after being on the go for 48 hours!

After the first day at 'school', my bag arrived at reception at 2.30am looking in a worse state than me, but it's here.

The next day was much better all round. Topics ranged from fertiliser analysis to seed planting and turfgrass entomology. You know it's going to be a good course when problems caused by raccoons are discussed, sadly Carl Spackler wasn't mentioned!

Saturday 10 January

So far the course has been challenging, thought provoking and



Analysing Turfgrass samples at the Turf School

enjoyable in equal measures. We've covered soil science, turfgrass entomology, turfgrass management, weeds and turf pathology.

It's been interesting to see the range of different diseases that are managed here and also the range of products available. We've also analysed the hugely varied temperatures turfgrass here is exposed to, and next week we'll be looking into the effects of winter kill on turfgrass, which will be something new for me.

One thing that struck me here is how many greenkeepers get laid off over the winter. Even some Superintendents are laid off, this is obviously a result of the harsh

winter weather, but it leaves some of the guys with uncertain futures.

Most seem quite used to it, the guys affected are allowed to claim unemployment money and some guys work snow ploughing. The golf season can be pretty short if there is early snowfall and a late spring thaw.

Last night I attended my first ice hockey game. Absolutely fantastic. It didn't quite match watching the mighty Rochdale FC, but what speed those big lads move around the ice!

Tuesday 13 January

So I'm up and ready for work. The annoying thing is though, it's

midnight. Can jet lag take a week to kick in?!

This week was dominated by soil science. This covered everything from soil textures to particle properties of the soil. It's been enlightening looking in depth at the workings and importance of the soil, almost like a look under the bonnet of the finely tuned engine that is our beloved turf.

The grass identification classes involve us growing unidentified (to date) specimens and making a report on our findings.

Saturday 17 January

So week two of Winter Turf School has passed, and the pace has been relentless. We've looked at how Poa Annua (or Kentucky Bluegrass to my hosts) is considered a weed grass. Now I'm not going to start any sort of debate but it's interesting that coming from a part of the world where we manage Poa/Bent greens (not everywhere granted), is it still right to consider it a weed grass? By definition a weed is an undesirable species...but we discussed whether you're better to try and manage what you have, or try to control and strive for finer grasses in our swards. Interesting stuff, with no 'right' or 'wrong' answers.

It's interesting that many of the topics discussed are similar to those in the UK...apart from the problems caused by raccoons and coyotes!

Saturday 24 January

It's been a week dominated by maths. Now to say maths isn't my strong point would be putting it lightly. But I've tackled this head on, and I'm happy to report decent results so far.

Also, the terms soil colloids, rubisco, adsorption, micelle and isomorphous substitution have all been introduced to me this week!

Sunday 1 February

Two days of no classes gave me and some other students the opportunity to attend the New England Turf Show. Highlight of the day was a presentation by Bob Farren, Director of Golf Course Maintenance at Pinehurst Resort. He talked us through the changes made at the No 2 course and his experience hosting back to back Men and Ladies US Opens. Fascinating stuff - especially how the course has been taken back to a more original style at a time when the 'manicured' look is supposedly ideal.

The course continues to move along at fair old pace. All the stu-

dents are really getting along and helping each other out. Next week's highlights include soil chemistry and physiology, arboriculture, disease management and a couple of guest lectures from the USGA agronomist department.

The natives are getting excited about the Super Bowl, I'll be doing my bit by watching a game I don't fully understand but hopefully cheering at the right times, and more importantly for the right team. It's also pleasing to note the game will be played on natural turf...as it should be!

Tuesday 10 February

Either side of the university being closed for three days due to heavy snowfall, we've continued our studies with the added bonus of two speakers - a Superintendent and a golf course architect.

First was Bill Spence, Superintendent at Brookline Country Club in Boston. Bill has been at the helm for more than 30 years and has hosted US Opens and Ryder Cups.

It was fascinating to hear him speak about the daily struggles with managing the agronomic needs of the golf course alongside the needs and demands of the golfers. But I felt one of his most important points focused on communication. This is more vital than ever for greenkeepers, be it speaking to a golfer on the course or addressing a conference audience.

Next was golf course architect Tim Gerrish. After noting the important historical role of UK courses influencing worldwide course design, he said that properly using the land nature provides was the ultimate design goal, meaning the golf course fits in with the surrounding land, rather than forcing the surrounding land to fit with the golf course.

I've also had an insight into reducing the effects of winter kill on golf courses. It's been fascinating to see how they deal with up to four months of snow and ice cover, and the resulting damage that inevitably occurs. Grass species selection, covers, fungicide and fertility applications along with spring renovation techniques all play a part in determining how quickly surfaces can be restored.

Sunday 22 February

As I sit in Bradley International Airport, I can't believe it's seven weeks since I arrived in a rather dishevelled state. Now I've graduated Turf School!

Thank you to everyone who was there with me. An extra special nod



to the 'lunch crew' who made that hour long break so enjoyable.

From Dr Jung's journey into turf pathology via South Korea and Wisconsin, the fascinating lectures on soil science, turf physiology with its new (for me) look at what goes on and why to make the green stuff grow, the weird and wonderful world of Entomology, turfgrass mathematics (a nod to Dr Ebdon for helping me grasp the numbers

game), not forgetting the rest of the subjects - it's been wonderful.

Monday 23 February

The next stage of my trip saw me head to Minneapolis and Toro HQ. The cold in Minneapolis quite literally froze you to the bone, wind chill of minus 40 is something to behold and frozen nose hair is quite a strange sensation, but on the plus point it was too cold to snow!

But the weather didn't detract from a quite amazing experience. I toured the research and design facility then headed to the metal works at Toro's manufacturing plant at Shakopee in the afternoon.

Day 2 started with a trip to Tomah where Toro's machines are assembled, it was superb seeing everything come together first hand. The sheer size of the operation and the logistics involved means I will

no longer just 'jump' on a machine without giving some thought to the whole process involved in producing the machines we sometimes take for granted.

Tuesday 24 February

I then made the trip South to Texas and the GIS. It was great to catch up with some familiar faces in San Antonio. The show was very enjoyable, and I managed to attend

a couple of seminars that gave me further insight into golf course management - for much more on this read Sean Brocklehurst's diary on page 16.

I'm genuinely leaving America a wiser man...and a wiser greenkeeper! I'd like to thank all those who made it possible, Toro, BIGGA, everyone at Muswell Hill GC and my family. It really has been a life changing experience.

Social media and the turf industry

Michael Hanisco, Aquatrols' Marketing Communications Coordinator, explains how social media impacts on the turf industry and how you can make the best use of it

It seems today that social media buzzwords are everywhere you look. You're hard pressed to go an entire day without hearing about a 'hashtag' or a 'trending topic.' But what does it all mean? And how does it fit into the world of turf?

In a few short years, social media platforms have fundamentally transformed the way that people communicate. Millions of people access news, interact with family and friends and make purchasing decisions from the comfort of their favourite social platform. Facebook and Twitter are publicly traded companies with valuations in the billions of dollars. Whether you like it or not, they are here to stay.

The turf world is not immune from the effects of this social revolution. There is a strong and growing community of turf professionals from around the world who are using social media to share ideas, educate themselves and others, and become better stewards of their profession.

These platforms offer new opportunities to connect with others in the industry, from the golf course down the road to a cricket club a continent away. A golf course superintendent in the United States recently described Twitter as "the world's largest association meeting."

So how can greenkeepers and turf professionals make use of these new tools?

Troubleshooting and Problem Solving

Imagine the following scenario. A UK-based greenkeeper encounters a disturbed area on their golf course. The disease doesn't resemble anything they've seen on their course before, or even anything they've read about in a textbook. Stumped, they snap a photo and turn to their Twitter following for assistance.

"Any guesses at what this may be?" they ask.

Within a few minutes, answers are pouring in from around the world. A greenkeeper in Ireland has seen similar damage, but is unsure of the cause.

They share the photo with their followers and ask for their help. A turf pathologist from the United States chimes in with their opinion – similar turf samples have been sent to their lab in recent weeks.

Within an hour, the problem has been diagnosed and a solution has been offered. What once may have taken days or weeks to diagnose and treat has been solved within hours.

Explaining Management Practices to Golfers

It's no secret that golfers do not always understand or agree with turf management practices. Anything that interferes with play, now matter how temporary, is often greeted with scepticism, if not outright disdain.

Social media gives greenkeepers another platform to explain the value and importance of the work that goes into improving playing conditions.

A brief blog post on the need for aeration can go a long way in quelling complaints about the holes punched on greens. An early morning Tweet announcing a frost delay, wet playing conditions, temporary greens, product applications, etc. can go a long way to inform golfers before they get to the golf course.

In years past, this type of communication has been accomplished through newsletters and emails. While many golfers may still prefer older methods of contact, there is a growing audience that is in tune with the world of social media.

The goal is to strike a balance between new and old and to reach golfers wherever they may be. Social platforms are simply additional tools in a greenkeeper's arsenal to

educate golfers and keep the lines of communication open.

Networking and a Sense of Community

Inherent in the social sphere is a sense of community. Social media offers a unique opportunity to connect with people who share similar interests and passions, even those who may be thousands of miles away. Turf professionals are a rare breed and they face a unique set of challenges, regardless of geography. By participating in the social media conversation, you are contributing to a new, global turf community.

In February, Aquatrols and Farmura hosted a "TweetUp" in our booth at the Golf Industry Show in San Antonio, pictured right. Turf managers and greenkeepers from around the world descended on the booth at a pre-determined time to meet face-to-face with colleagues they had been interacting with online.

For many attendees, this was the first opportunity to put a face to a name. It was clear that these online interactions had created not only business relationships, but genuine friendships as well.

Social Media for Brands

Greenkeepers are not the only ones participating in the online turf community. Turf companies, industry associations, and manufacturers are increasingly focused on using social media to interact with their members and customers.

Aquatrols and Farmura have a strong social presence and we use these tools to listen to and interact with our customers and industry partners. We view social media platforms as an additional opportunity to serve our customers, both at the distributor and end-user level.

Our award-winning blog keeps our customers abreast of new technologies and discoveries. We regularly monitor our Twitter feeds for



about the author



Michael Hanisco is Marketing Communications Coordinator for Aquatrols. In 2012 he implemented a social media strategy for Aquatrols to engage customers, increase brand awareness, and support the sales and marketing staff. With Aquatrols' acquisition of Farmura, he is now working to expand and enhance Farmura's social media presence in the UK market

questions about specific products and try to respond as quickly as possible. Our Facebook pages are full of photos from industry events and help us to put a 'face' to our company.

Where Should You Start?

While the jargon may sound confusing and overwhelming, the truth is that social media tools are becoming increasingly intuitive and easy to use.

It takes just a few minutes to create a Facebook or Twitter account and hit the ground running. Twitter and Facebook smartphone apps can keep you connected while you're on the go.

Talk to fellow greenkeepers in your area to see if they are using social media platforms and to what degree. Once you're signed up, take a look at how others are using these tools. Take note of what you like and don't like to see on their pages. Then join in the conversation!

You can follow Aquatrols on Twitter at @Aquatrols and "Like" them on Facebook at facebook.com/Aquatrols.

You can follow Farmura on Twitter at @FarmuraLtd and "Like" them on Facebook at facebook.com/FarmuraLtd.



Farmura Sales Team

Turning the clock back at Royal Cromer

How Royal Cromer GC Course Manager Mark Heveran maintains the picturesque coastal course with the help of Redexim machinery



Mark has been at the club since joining as Course Manager in September 2010. He is part of a team of six, some of which started at the club when they were 16. It is a very young and enthusiastic team, with the eldest member aged just 34.

Mark sees the young team as a positive thing as everyone is determined to make the course the best they can, no-one is set in their ways!

Wind is always a key factor at the course and when combined with a dry spell in the summer season, it is vital that water is used in the best possible way. Mark said: "I don't like watering too often, but when we do I want it to be used in the right way so we aerate every four weeks using pencil tines. This means the water is being utilised most effectively."

Mark purchased a Redexim Verti-Drain 2220 in January 2014 and uses it solely for aeration on

the greens, tees, approaches and pathways to ensure the maximum amount of air is introduced into the ground. Mark added: "The biggest benefit we see in doing this is the much improved putting and playing surfaces; better root density and a more sustainable plant able to look after itself - able to reduce your food and water input because the root depth of the plant is much deeper."

A big issue for Mark and his team is time and keeping playing downtime to a minimum to help the club's high revenue stream to continue. The 2220 Verti-Drain is a fast action machine allowing them to aerate all greens in 6½ - 7 hours when it would have taken three days in the past.

"This is a big plus for us, but we didn't want to sacrifice depth to have a quicker machine like you would with a lot of other quick action aerators on the market - we can still hit ten inches with the

2220. It also still gives us the option to increase the speed even further by using pencil tines to a depth of 4-6 inches. This flexibility has also allowed us to dispense with two old machines - a smaller Verti-Drain and a John Deere AirCore that we used more for pencil tining. Now we use just the one machine and in the summer we're out at four in the morning with the pencil tines and all finished by 11 leaving a clean finish and not getting in the way of any golfers."

In the summer months, the ground at Royal Cromer gets very hard but an adaptation made by Redexim has helped tremendously. Mark had seen a top spring loaded link on a larger machine that ensured the pressure exerted by the machine, when in action, was not taken by the tractor - acting like a shock absorber in fact. This bespoke option was incorporated into their 2220 and has made a huge difference to the comfort of



the operator on the tractor, as well as preventing any surface damage that could be caused by vibration.

It is this ability to customise a machine to his specific needs that so impressed Mark and has made him a big fan of Charterhouse and local dealer Ben Burgess. In particular he felt Nick Darking at Charterhouse really appreciated the feedback he gave on their new double disc seeder when it was in the development stage.

He was able to suggest the creation of the wheel kit where the hydraulics of the tractor are almost physically pushing the discs into the ground - not an issue on soft ground where the natural weight of the machine allows the discs to rotate and therefore drop the seed. However, on their hard surface a bit of extra power from the tractor hydraulics would be needed to push the discs into the ground to achieve the same effect.

The depth system developed

helps the machine pierce through the hard ground and allows the operator to specify what depth they want the seed at and, by adjusting the height of the wheels, the seeder will deliver the seed into the ground at that depth. In addition, the wheel kit allows easy transportation of the unit around the course.

It is no coincidence that Royal Cromer took delivery of a Double Disc 1430 Overseeder at the back end of 2014 - not only the first one in the UK, but also with the wheel kit option.

This option provides the extra weight needed to deal with the hard ground and the 'napping' - where the ground 'naps' together - that has prevented the club overseeding on the fairways in the past.

Although the seeder arrived quite late in the year they were still able to get out and do all the fairways with it.

This summer will see them able to do the fairways twice and the

greens five or six times. Mark sees the beauty of the 30mm spacing as a 'no disturbance' factor to golfers as it allows a quick recovery and leaves a lovely finish.

Mark concluded: "My main aim with the combined attributes of the two Redexim products - the Verti-Drain 2220 and the DD 1430 Overseeder - is to get the course as natural, and playing the same as it would have been 125 years ago when it first opened.

"To do that though it is paramount we get the right grasses in - fescues and colonial bent grasses - they are the better grasses and what would have been there originally. We are currently managing a lot of the scrubland working towards a complete regeneration of the rough areas with natural wispy fescue.

"The more fescue dominated these areas become, the more sustainable they will be as well to creating a true, fast-running game."

An apprentice's tale

Ever wanted to know about what a greenkeeping apprentice actually does, and whether greenkeeping could be the industry for you? Graham Chambers, Director of Golf at Longhirst Hall GC contacted GI to tell us about the success of their apprentice, Ryan Martin

Ryan, who is 18, has combined studying ILA Horticulture with Amenity modules at Kirkley Hall College with a trainee greenkeeping role, and GI found out more.

Q Ryan, what first attracted you to a career in greenkeeping?

I started as a plant apprentice, during which I also did lots of greenkeeping. As my plant training progressed I found myself enjoying both aspects of my work so wanted to carry on with a greenkeeping course.

Q What have you learnt so far?

Along with the obvious college training, my work on the golf course has taught me the importance of trying to maintain a consistent, playable surface for the members and visitors to play on.

This allows me to put into practice all of the theory I am getting from college.

I've helped the team renovate a lake, dug foundations for the club's new driving range and golf academy which will be opening soon and helped prepare the course for two PGA EuroPro Tour events.

Q Why would you recommend a career on greenkeeping to others?

It's great working outside, and each season of the year has its own work programme, so it's very varied day to day and week to week.

It's also great fun, with lots of banter between the team.

Also when you have worked hard, and you see the course looking at its best, it's great to hear the golfers praise the course. It makes it seem very worthwhile.

Q What have been the biggest challenges?

Even though it is great working outside, initially being outside all of the time took some getting used to.

Before my first PGA EuroPro Tour event preparation, I was a little apprehensive.

However, during the event we



worked so well as a team, everything came together and clicked into place.

Q What are you most proud of working on so far?

Working on the course leading up the EuroPro Tour event, then watching the pro golfers play on the course we have worked so hard on, then actually seeing it on television, made us all proud.

Graham added: "We have a close relationship with Kirkley Hall College, and have always been a strong advocate of training with myself, the Course Manager Stephen Smith, and other current and past staff all going through training there."

"A lot of people still wrongly perceive greenkeeping to be a 'last resort' career. This is so wide of the mark. It's a science, it's people, it's sport, it's recreation, it's working as a team.

"For the likes of Ryan, seeing him develop as a greenkeeper and as a person is very rewarding for us, and a positive move for us investing in



the future of our club.

"Greenkeeping is a close knit community, with many options for furthering your career should you want to.

"I see it as essential that both male and female students get the correct information from advisors in school about the benefits of working in our industry. Ryan is proof of that."



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Section Notes

Please email your notes to steve.castle@bigga.co.uk by the 10th of the month

All the latest news from your Section, in your new-look notes pages...

Around the green



South East

Contact your Section correspondent with news, events or anything else for Around the green...



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Events Coming Up

SUSSEX

Spring Competition & National Championships Qualifier, 1 May, Lewes GC

Sussex Section Away Day, 10th June, Littlestone GC

Annual events, sectional, regional and national are posted on the BIGGA Sussex Section Facebook page.

News

KENT

I'm at a loss to describe how good the day at the resplendent Royal St. George's course went. A perfect sunny day and Kent's finest flocked to the best course in the land. The hospitality the club showed was fantastic. We were made to feel so welcome. The course itself was sheer perfection. Superbly presented tees and fairways leading to lightning fast greens. Fortunately the roughs were a modest length allowing those of a slightly wayward disposition to find a few errant shots!

Thank you to Paul Larsen and the team for hosting our motley crew (again!) and to all the Royal St. George's crew for their impeccable service. Thanks also to all who attended today. So many of you managed to score well which speaks volumes about how everyone felt about playing such a prestigious venue.

Results: 1 Adam White (Royal St. George's) 37pts, 2 Russ Bain (Chislehurst) 36, 3 Dan McGrath (North Foreland) 36, longest drive (320 yards uphill into wind) Ross Mackie. Nearest pin - Oli Hook

Thank you all for a truly memorable day. It's days like these that make it all seem worthwhile.

SUSSEX

Welcome new members Anthony Misselbrook (Chichester GC), Bradley White (Cophthorne GC), Daniel Dumbrell (West Sussex GC), Ryan Burton (West Sussex GC) Richard Wearing (Hadlow College) and Andy Reynolds (West Chilmington GC), I hope to have met all of you in the near future and that you will all immerse yourself in the association's activities and opportunities.

I urge you all to visit and 'like' the Facebook page for our section (BIGGA Sussex Section), which is gradually becoming a platform for information and discussion on upcoming golfing and educational events and will give us all an opportunity to network as a section. We are also on Twitter so follow us @BiggaSussex.

I caught up with new BIGGA members Daniel and Ryan and they has this to say about joining the association. Daniel said "I am delighted about joining BIGGA and look forward to all the exciting opportunities that will now be open to me...I intend to use the membership to advance my career using a variety of networking opportunities such as tournament experience, seminars, sectional and regional events... Ryan added "I am very determined to develop myself professionally and I recognise the importance of meeting and getting to know others in the industry, I believe my BIGGA membership will be invaluable in these areas, especially with the CPD programme and I am hoping to get the opportunity to gain my first tournament experience this year".

The Sussex section did us proud at the South East Region Golf and Dinner Day at Walton Heath GC which as usual was in fantastic condition. In division 1 Andy Brown (Goodwood G.C.) came 2nd and in division 2, Simon Wells (Pyecombe GC) came 1st with Andrew Norman (East Sussex National GC) in 2nd - All 3's scores combining to mean Sussex also won the sectional plate competition! Also not to be outdone Gary Ogilvie (Avoncrop/ Hill Barn GC) who won the trade prize! Well done fellas!

Andrew Naismith (Worthing GC) gained a place on the BIGGA Open Support Team 2015 at St. Andrews GC and he had this to say "I've been applying for the last 5 years to be part of the team so be successful this year at the 'home of golf' is very special for me. To be involved in the greatest golf tournament, at one of the most historic golf courses is going to be overwhelming and I just can't wait to get stuck in!" We wish Andrew all the best.

A reminder for those who are not receiving emails regarding section events, please let me know your email address so we can add you to the mailing list, don't stay in the dark!

Thanks to Sponsors

SUSSEX

The Sussex Section is indebted to the continued support and sponsorship of the trade and would like to thank the following: Avoncrop Amenity, Collier Turfcare, Countrywide, Ernest Doe, Everris, Godfreys, Grass Roots, Headland Amenity, Indigrow, JSM Limited, Lister Wilders, Mitchells Groundscare, Rigby Taylor, Sheriff Amenity, Symbio, Tacit.

South West & South Wales

Contact your Section correspondent with news, events or anything else for Around the green...



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Events Coming Up

SOUTH COAST

Golf days 2015: Spring is at Wellow GC on 22 April. Cost £20 with first tee off at 12.00, this includes a bacon roll on arrival and dinner after the golf. Entries to biggasouthcoast@hotmail.com remember pay before the day if you want to play.

Summer tournament is at Southwick Park GC on 2 July, Turkey Trot at Hockley GC on 2 December more about those events nearer the dates.

DEVON & CORNWALL

The next meeting is on 15 April which is being held at Ilfracombe GC.

SOUTH WALES

Tuesday 16 June the Rigby Taylor Challenge Match will be held at the Players Club a 10 man team, 1pm start.

Wednesday 8 July, Golf Management Trophy at Cradoc GC start time 9am.

Wednesday August 5, Patrons Cup Comp & Course walk held at Newport GC, 1st tee 11.30am.

SOUTH WEST

Please keep an eye out for the South West fixtures list which will be distributed shortly. In the meantime here is a summary of the year's events:

16 June Rigby Taylor Team Challenge at The Players Club

22 July Golf Management Trophy at Minchinhampton GC

10 September Summer Tournament and National Qualifier at Bristol & Clifton GC

18 November Regional Conference at Somerset County Cricket Club

15 December Christmas Tournament at Marlborough GC

South West Section Countrywide Knockout for teams of two begins shortly, please contact Joe Curtis for entry and details (joecurtis85@tiscali.co.uk). All of our Section events are open to members of other sections, please feel free to contact us and attend as everyone is welcome.

News

SOUTH WALES

Condolences from the South Wales Section go to the family and friends of Ollie Floyd.

Our recent Spring Seminar at Royal Porthcawl GC had a great turnout. All speakers sharing their experiences starting with Rob Hogarth on how the entire team at Remedy Oak rebuilt all new greens on the course in 7 weeks.

Great to see Steve Chappell's Ryder Cup seminar, also Jerry Kilby with food for thought on dealing with committees.

A change during the afternoon to get out in the fresh air and see the projects that have reshaped Royal Porthcawl GC and what's next on the agenda - thanks to Ian Kinley.

SOUTH COAST

Congratulations to Tom Smith from Wickham Park GC and Luke Elgie Rushmore GC for getting on the support team for this year's Open.

The section Seminar was a huge success, feedback was so positive its being hailed as the best the section has put together, well done to all that were involved.

The first of our Turf Club visits to The Berkshire GC was also a great success, thanks to Ian Morrison for an informative afternoon, this sold out within a week of being released. Anyone who fancies running an afternoon Turf Club please contact the committee on biggasouthcoast@hotmail.com. Spring is round the corner - happy Greenkeeping.

DEVON & CORNWALL

The Devon and Cornwall section had their seminar at St Mellion, with 7 excellent speakers. 51 attended and thank you to St Mellion for allowing us to host the event.

Other news - Devon and Cornwall section are going international with a trip to South Wales.

SOUTH WEST

Eight of our section members have successfully undertaken chainsaw refresher training recently and the feedback has been that the course has been very positive. We have the opportunity provide these courses and many others on a regular basis and speaking from personal experience I would highly recommend them, please contact Stuart Bowman (s.bowman@thornburygc.co.uk) to express your interest.

Section member Paul Worster recently attended the FEGGA conference in Portugal. This conference gave Paul the opportunity to meet with representatives from greenkeeping associations from across Europe to discuss and coordinate initiatives aimed at promoting and improving the greenkeeping industry for all of us. Paul is very happy to answer questions that anyone may have about the benefits that FEGGA brings to our BIGGA members.

Our section social media pages are as follow: South West Facebook: Bigga Southwest. South West Twitter: @BiggaSouthwest, please follow us for updates!

Please remember to settle accounts for training and event attendance promptly to assist us in maintaining a successful section. Any questions please get in touch with any of the committee members.

If anyone on your team is not receiving Section emails please ask them to contact Lucy to supply their addresses (southwestsectionbigga@outlook.com).

Thanks to Sponsors

SOUTH WEST

Many thanks to our South West Section 2015 Patrons: T H White, Greensman, Irritech, Headland Amenity, Countrywide, Farmura, H. Curtis & Sons and Ecosolve for their continued and valuable support of BIGGA South West Section. With their support we would not have the opportunity to provide the level of training and section events that we do.

Midland

Contact your Section correspondent with news, events or anything else for Around the green...



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Events Coming Up

MID ANGLIA

Our first event of the year will be held at Brickendon Grange GC on Thursday June 4 from 1pm, look out for more information on our Facebook page and expect entry forms soon. This is the qualifier for the National so hope to see a great turn out to support this popular event.

The Summer Pairs Competition is at Welwyn Garden City GC on Thursday 23 July so plenty to look forward to this summer with fun golf days at fantastic venues.

MIDLAND

Spring Tournament – Gaudet Luce GC. Wednesday 20 May, 12.30 start, cost £25. Closing Date 6 May. 18 Hole Stableford please contact Rhys Thomas to book.

Autumn Tournament - Kidderminster GC. Wednesday 9 September, 12.30 start, cost £25. Closing Date 26 August. Make Your Own Team Of 4 Players -18 Hole Stableford.

Winter Tournament - Blackwell GC. Wednesday 9 December, 10am start. cost £27. Closing Date 21 November. Pairs For Partners To Be Drawn On The Day
www.biggamidlandsection.co.uk

EAST OF ENGLAND

Our next golf day is the rearranged Christmas Texas Scramble on Thursday 16 April at Cleethorpes GC, first tee off 9:30.

EAST MIDLAND

Reminder of the Pairs tournament sponsored by Headland coming up. I have not received anything from any of the members recently, it would be great to get some stories so if there is anything happening please drop me a line gilksmatt@farol.co.uk

So far we have the following venues: Burton on Trent GC April 30, Rothley Park GC July 8 possibly a bbq, Par 3 event at Beedles Lake on 20 August, Willesley Park GC on 28 October AGM.

Education days will be announced so please check the Facebook page and Twitter for more information. The committee is working hard to try and engage more, so if there is anything you propose or if there are topics you would like addressing please feel free to contact us. Looking forward to seeing you at one of the golf days or education days soon. Here comes the sun!

News

MIDLAND

News is a bit light this month, I think everyone is frantically doing spring renovations, keep up the good work guys! Kudos to David Fellows who achieved top marks in Ken Bruce's Pop Master on Radio 2, just to make it clear Dave was on his break when he appeared!

Head to the BIGGA website for entry forms for the Midland qualifier.

EAST OF ENGLAND

Our section seminar was held on 4 March at Newark GC. The event was well attended with presentations from Britrisk Health and Safety on the top 10 tips for H&S; David Snowden of Agronomic Services on oxygen in the soil and foliage feeding; and Ultra Soil Solutions on the use of Gypsum as a soil amendment along with a demo of the BLEC Mulit-Spray. Many thanks to all the speakers on the day and also to Newark GC for their hospitality. Hopefully another seminar will be planned later in the year, possibly in November.

Monday 9 March was like transfer deadline day for three GCs in our section. The retirement of Simon Willey after over 15 years at Waltham Windmill GC started it. Rob Welford left Cleethorpes GC after over 9 years to take over at Waltham. Steve Beverly left Immingham GC after over 8 years to take over at Cleethorpes. Rob Bemment was promoted to Head Greenkeeper at Immingham GC after working there for nearly 10 years. Good luck to all, especially to Simon in his retirement.

EAST MIDLAND

Hope all is well across the Section, I've been very busy with demonstrations and getting new equipment out the door. One piece of equipment that seems very popular or is a hot topic is the AIR2G2, I have been to see some of you with this, if you are interested in results or seeing it please give me a shout. We seem to be heading in the right direction with the weather.

Thanks to Sponsors

MIDLAND

Thanks to Banks Amenity for sponsoring the Spring Tournament, Working Turf for sponsoring the Autumn Tournament and to Campey Turfcare for sponsoring the Winter Tournament. Also a big thank you to our calendar sponsors for March.

MID ANGLIA

ALS, Tuckwells Machinery, Avoncrop Amenity, Headland Amenity, Amtech Amenity, Farmura, Everiss, Countrywide, Banks Amenity, Rigby Taylor Ltd. The Mid Anglia Section would like to thank their wonderful sponsors for 2015 and we are very grateful for your continued support with funds for our section.

EAST OF ENGLAND

Thanks to Rigby Taylor and Mansfield Sand for sponsoring the rearranged Christmas Texas Scramble.

EAST MIDLAND

Thank you to Headland for sponsoring the Pairs Tournament.

Northern

Contact your Section correspondent with news, events or anything else for Around the green...



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Events Coming Up

NORTH WEST

2015 Fixtures: Summer 11 hole competition and a tour with a Q&A session - The Mere Monday 6 July.

Cricket match North West v North Wales section at Ashley Cricket Club - Wednesday 8 July 5pm.

Whitelaw Bowl - Penrith GC, Thursday 10 September.

Knockout Trophy Final - Hillside GC, Thursday 17 September.

North West section seminar - Myerscough College, Wednesday 28 October.

Bert Cross Trophy and AGM – Wilmslow GC, Tuesday 10 November. Tee from 9.30am

NORTH EAST

Spring golf day - Sharpley GC 22 April.

Also the East Scotland section would like to invite any North East members to their spring golf day if anyone would like to attend at Longniddry GC on 16 April, tee time from noon.

Ponteland GC will be hosting a Toro irrigation day in May details to follow. Anyone wishing to help with committee please contact S Olver.

CLEVELAND

Greenlay Turf Machinery will be holding machinery demonstration days at Middlesbrough Municipal GC on 15 April and Parkland GC 16 April.

Spring Tournament is at Blackwell Grange GC on Wednesday 29 April, cost £18.

NORTH WALES

Spring Tournament and course walk at Henlle Park GC on 29 April, this will be an individual stableford qualifier for the national tournament later in the year.

News

NORTH WEST

Firstly we would like to congratulate John McLoughlin on becoming the Course Manager at Warrington GC

Stuart Hogg on becoming Course Manager of The West Lancashire GC and Chris Trimble becoming Assistant Greenkeeper at Hoylake. Secondly we would like to congratulate all members of the Section who have been chosen for the Open support team at St Andrews.

Lee Burton of Fairhaven GC and a friend are completing 2,015 miles in 2015 between them. They are raising funds for Rosemere Cancer Care who cover Lancashire and south Cumbria. Lee was diagnosed with Testicular Cancer in 2013 just before he headed up to Muirfield as part of the R&A support team, he has first hand experience of their services. For more and to donate please visit <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/team/mlm2015in2015>

NORTHERN

Spring has now officially arrived and we can now look forward to the coming golf season both from a professional and a playing point of view.

The Northern Conference recently took place at Chester-le-Street GC. With a good number of enthusiastic greenkeepers in attendance, the guest speakers presented both interesting and informative talks on subjects ranging from setting up a golf course for a professional event to grinding. A big thank you to all who attended the event, the speakers for giving their time and of course Chester-Le-Street GC for allowing the use of their facilities.

Golf Diary 2015: 25 June Invitation day – Brough GC 1pm. 24 September Presidents Day - Ilkley GC - 10:30am. 17 December Christmas - Hanging Heaton GC time tba.

Having taken over the media duties it is apparent how difficult the task of writing a column for the magazine is without input from the members so if you have anything that may be of interest to others please drop me a line.

CLEVELAND

Like I say every year "this year is going to be our best" and I fully believe it will be mainly because we are all a little bit wiser and more prepared for whatever gets thrown our way and because I am ever the optimist!

News around the section starting with my own club -James Tock recently attended and passed the chainsaw maintenance, cross cutting and basic felling at Wynyard GC. Well done James.

Barry Walker has been selected to play for England over in Ireland for the ten pin bowling triple crown this will take place in April. It's going to be a busy year for Barry as previously mentioned he will be going to Las Vegas in August.

The northern region conference was held at Chester-le-Street GC on 11 March. The day was a well-attended with a great range of speakers. Thank you to everyone involved with making these days happen. A raffle was held at the end and £162.50 was raised for the greenkeeper benevolent fund.

If you have any information you would like to share then email me on amcgeough@aol.com or ring me on 07974458640

NORTH WALES

We held a seminar at Coleg Cambria on 18 February - a great success with 64 delegates enjoying a packed day of talks and with a few laughs on the way! We wish to thank Coleg Cambria, Deeside campus for again hosting our seminar.

Thanks to Sponsors

NORTH WEST

The Northwest section would like to thank all of the sponsorship it receives over the course of 2015.

CLEVELAND

Thanks to Lloyds for sponsoring the Spring Tournament.



Contact your Section correspondent with news, events or anything else for Around the green...



<p>CENTRAL Craig Boath cboath@carnostiegolflinks.co.uk @BIGGA_CENTRAL</p>	<p>SOUTH WEST OF SCOTLAND Amanda Dorans & Ian Smith amanda.dorans@lochlomond.com / iansmithgm@hotmail.co.uk @BIGGA_SWS</p>	<p>EAST Hamish Campbell greenkeeper@alancampbell.demon.co.uk @BIGGA_ES</p>	<p>NORTH Paul Sharp & Neil Sadler paulsharp@hotmail.com / gkneil@sky.com</p>	<p>WEST Stuart Taylor stuart.taylor@glasgowgolfclub.com</p>
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Events Coming Up

NORTH

The first North Section golf outing on the Swailend Course at Newmacher is approaching fast. All the entry forms should be out by now so get them in as soon as, to ensure you get a tee time, as these outings are very popular. I'm sure Dale Robertson and Patrick Wood and their team will have the course in top shape for the day.

WEST

Spring outing at Clober GC on 24 April courtesy of Clint Maxwell and his council plus probably a bit of influence from Kenny Hunter.

CENTRAL

Golf Outing - Monifieth Golf Links 28 April. We also have a few things in the pipeline including a Course Walk around the Old Course before The Open, details to follow.

EAST

Section Outing 16 April Longniddry GC. Course Walk Gullane GC 12 May. Scottish Open 9-12 July, Gullane GC. Scottish Golf Championship 6 August, Portlethen GC. Willie Woods Tournament 19 August, Broomieknowe GC. Section Outing 22 September Cardrona GC. East Section AGM October, Venue TBC. Xmas Soiree in December, TBC.

SOUTH WEST OF SCOTLAND

Thank you to everyone who has registered for the Spring golf outing on 14 April at Dundonald Links. If you've not registered then please contact myself at the above email address or Derek Wilson at Bogside.

Dates for your diary - Autumn Outing 3 September at Brodick GC. AGM 29 October Irvine GC.

News

NORTH

Adam Lindsay has left Peterculter GC to become the First Assistant at Deeside GC, Scott Davidson has left Nippenberg GC

to move to Aboyne GC as Deputy Head, Rob O'Donnell has moved from Oldmeldrum GC to become Head Greenkeeper at Kippie Lodge GC and finally Brian Heggie has replaced the retiring Brian Cocker at Alyth GC as Head Greenkeeper. On behalf of all the section we would like to wish all these guys success in their new posts. We would also like to wish Brian Cocker a happy retirement.

As I write this, I'm not long back from the GIS in San Antonio. We had a fantastic week of education, a bit of golf and a little socialising! If anyone gets the opportunity to go on one of these trips, it is very worthwhile and a great experience. On behalf of all attendees, I'd like to thank Fairways GM and Ransomes Jacobsen for their superb hospitality.

WEST

An educational day was organised at Williamwood GC on 18 February to show off the Air2g2 and the AFT trencher carried out by Souters for which we are very grateful. Both demonstrations were very successful and Gerry tells me the difference in the greens completed is quite incredible. Some 22 attendees managed along to witness the machines in operation so a big thanks to them for coming along and thanks to Williamwood for hosting the day.

The Scottish conference as usual was extremely well attended with an amazing 230 delegates. Richard Windows filled in at short notice, thanks to Richard for helping out.

Once again I mention the difficulties of the future for GCs having recently read that 3 clubs have closed down south of the border. Let's try and get more youngsters involved in the sport to make the future brighter. It's going to be a difficult time over the coming years until things settle and folk start to decide golf is a good sport to be enjoyed by all ages.

I hope everybody is up to date with all their health and safety documents, risk assessments, signage, training, best practise and all the other issues which relate to this subject. Our club recently changed adviser from Aviva to Xact and some of the changes requested were an eye opener, I cannot believe the amount of paperwork involved now relating to health and safety matters and thought I was up to speed on most issues. Signage on golf courses now stating please be aware, take care of wet turf, most of the signs tend to be common sense but we now have to have them in view as disclaimers. What issues do you have to address over the coming months which you might want to share with other greenkeepers?

I needed my staff to sign off, vehicle driver check sheets, legionella, electrical safety, petrol spillage, diesel spillage, although these were things we were aware of procedures for dealing with the matters were not in place, these were devised and all staff had to sign off they read and understood the detail. Please feel free to let me know of your issues.

CENTRAL

I was unable to make the Scottish Regional Conference this year due to attending the Golf Industry Show in San Antonio, but have heard it was a great day. Snow on the morning of the event did not deter members from heading to Dunfermline to hear Stan Kostka, Robert Patterson, Gordon Irvine, Steve Chappell and Richard Windows present on a vast range of topics. A great attendance of over 200 hundred, also saw former Central Section member Daire Higgins pick up the Harry Diamond Quaich for Scottish Student Greenkeeper of the Year. Congratulations and Good Luck also to Daire who has taken on a Head Greenkeeper role at Carne Golf Links, Ireland. Daire was previously employed by St Andrews Links Trust and was a student at Elmwood College.

Everris held a trip to Holland to show greenkeepers their fertiliser plant in Maastricht, 7 lucky central section members were invited to attend - Bob Meikle (Crail), John Watson and Ian Scott (Downfield), Steve Chappell and Scott Fenwick (Gleneagles), Archie Dunn (Auchterarder) and Neil Ballangal (The Bay) all having a really enjoyable and educational visit. Good Luck to all 24 teams who entered this year's Section Pairs Matchplay Competition. It is a great way of getting out and about visiting new courses as well as meeting members from the Section.

St Andrews is already preparing for The Open. The stands on holes 1 and 17 are going to be bigger than ever with almost 8,000 seats whilst a further 1,800 seats will be added behind the 18th green. The greenkeeping team have already prepared a new area for the television compound measuring 8,500m2 between the New and Jubilee courses where they had to move 20,000 tonnes of soil.

By the time you read this Gavin Neill (St Andrews) and Chris Brown (Gleneagles) will have been on the FTMI. The expectation is that they will leave with a clear understanding of their future career path, goals and a realistic overview of the expectations that come with the role of being a Manager.

EAST

Best wishes to Keith Burgon who has taken the reins at Eyemouth as Head Greenkeeper and to Brian Heggie who has taken over at Alyth GC as Head Greenkeeper, all the best guys and look forward to seeing you throughout the year.

Great news to report that Castle Park has continued to operate as a new buyer for the golf course has been found, great news for all involved.

Course Walk at Gullane GC 12 May, please contact section to confirm places, place, places first come first served, limited to 20.

The Oatridge (Binny) Golf Course has been put up for sale, the section hope all goes well as this is a great facility and well worth a visit.

Scottish Seniors will be played over Archerfield Links in August, excellent to see another east venue on the professional rota this season.

The section and all involved in greenkeeping wish Tom Brannon (Greentech Sportsturf Ltd) a speedy recovery from his recent illness, looking forward to a visit when you are back on the road.

SOUTH WEST OF SCOTLAND

Spring has finally arrived, well I hope it has - as I write we are experiencing gale force winds. The feedback from the recent Scottish Conference was excellent. Once again, a great format that was enjoyed by all who attended, so on behalf of SWS, I'd like to thank John Young, all at BIGGA House and all of the speakers for delivering a fantastic event. Our new Scottish Region Chairman Jim Paton was well received and we are looking forward to hearing more from Jim throughout 2015.

Many thanks to Richard Windows STRI for facilitating the recent get together for Course Managers. By all accounts, the day was very productive and provided a good opportunity to meet local course managers on an informal basis. Hopefully this will be something which will be repeated in 2016.

Social media dominates how we communicate, so with this in mind, I'd like to take this opportunity to ask the Section to contribute to SWS's Facebook page as well as the new SWS Twitter account @bigga_sws.

I hope that this year's Golf Environment Award winners have all enjoyed their trip to the Algarve as much as I did. My time in Portugal last year was from beginning to end, absolutely amazing!

April means a few things - Easter, the new golf season and the Masters... Happy Easter everyone and all the best for the new season!

Thanks to Patrons

CENTRAL

Thank you to all our sponsors for your support last season, we look forward to working with you again this season.

Welcome New Scottish & Northern Irish Members

Barry Dolan, Affiliate, Lawn Master, Lorraine Paterson, Greenkeeper, Callander GC
Adam Carnall, Head Greenkeeper, Falkland GC
Calum Jackson, Assistant Greenkeeper, Turnhouse GC
Gavin White, Greenkeeper, Royal Portrush GC.

Welcome New Northern Members

Darren Barker, Affiliate, Balmers Garden Machinery Ltd, Stephen Harmston, Greenkeeper, Chester-Le-Street GC
David Heathcote, Greenkeeper, Fairfield Golf & Sailing Club
Matthew Hall, Assistant Greenkeeper, Heaton Moor GC
Harry Viggars, Assistant Greenkeeper, Whitwood GC
Gavin Hill, Assistant Greenkeeper, Chesterfield GC.

Welcome New Members

Nicholas Bird, Course Manager, Kings Norton GC
Alan Bradley, Greenkeeper, Swinley Forest GC
Charlie Brown, Greenkeeper, Swinley Forest GC
Joel Chappell, Greenkeeper, Belfry GC (The),
Colin Kerfoot, Greenkeeper, Alexander Park Golf Park Resort
Luke Trow, Head Greenkeeper, Burlish Park Golf Centre
Billy Farnsworth, Assistant Greenkeeper, Ruddington Grange GC
Lewis Simmonds, Assistant Greenkeeper, Sandwell Park GC.

Welcome New South East Members

Simon Adby, Course Manager, Rusper GC
Anthony Misselbrook, Deputy Course Manager, Chichester GC
Nick Dowe, Greenkeeper, London GC (The), Daniel Dumbrill, Greenkeeper, West Sussex GC
Ryan Burton, Greenkeeper, West Sussex GC
Dean Lawrence, Student, Hadlow College,
Perry Angel, Assistant Greenkeeper, Rochester & Cobham Park GC
George Lansdown, Student, Hadlow College
Richard Wearing, Student, Hadlow College
Ryan Careford, Assistant Greenkeeper, Crews Hill GC
Bradley White, Assistant Greenkeeper, Copthorne GC
Daniel Wiltshire, Assistant Greenkeeper, Lingfield Park GC.

Welcome New South West & South Wales Members

Simon Cooper, Deputy Course Manager, Machynys Peninsula Golf & Country Club
David Rosser Head Greenkeeper, Garnant Park GC
Conor Munro, Assistant Greenkeeper, Brokenhurst Manor GC
Curtis Thomas, Assistant Greenkeeper, Celtic Manor Resort, Jack Groves, Assistant Greenkeeper, Broadway GC
Rickie Ashby, Assistant Greenkeeper, Broadway GC
Tom Workman, Assistant Greenkeeper Players Club (The), Kelvin Bush, Assistant Greenkeeper, Players Club (The).

Welcome New International Members

Timothy Leat, International Member, Rich River GC (Australia), Callum Haughn, International Member, Mill Ridge Golf (Canada), Markus Suojoki, International Member, Pickala Golf (Finland).



Greenkeepers Training Committee

This month, the GTC's Chairman Donald Steel discusses whether the traditional Greens Committee is now past its sell-by date

It is right and proper that the Trailblazer/Apprenticeship scheme should be Employer led and it is reassuring that many GCs have signed up to it, but it also provides an opportunity for them to review their greenkeeping policy structure.

Now is the time to ask whether traditional Green Committees are past their "sell-by date".

There seems little sense training young men and women to become highly qualified only for the highly unqualified to cast doubt.

Popular workshops staged by the GTC are directed at the Head Greenkeepers, Secretaries and Chairmen, stressing the vital importance of good communication not least with the members who are invariably adept at getting the wrong end of the stick if not fully informed.

Communication is crucial in any endeavour but it is equally crucial for golfers to develop a relationship with their greenkeepers through proper channels.

Under the ideal situation, there would be a key person, and only one person, who would represent all golfers at a course and communicate with the Head Greenkeeper.

That key person should be respected by his fellow members and knowledgeable enough to understand what a Head Greenkeeper may explain.

Such a person ought to be honest in their dealings, meet frequently with senior greenkeepers, and be practical in their suggestions.

At a private club, that key person would normally be the Chairman of Green but, in most Clubs, the position changes every year.

If Chairmen are good at their job and well trusted, they should remain in office for as long as possible.

Anybody who believes they can learn the ropes in a matter of months, and there are those who think they can, is sorely deluded.

At public or proprietary courses,



Donald Steel

it is the owner who obviously undertakes the liaison work.

The offshoot of the quality of modern course care is that all golfers have come to expect high standards of condition and presentation.

They, too, are increasingly interested in getting to know how things are done and why.

That can only be good.

On the other hand, if the condition of a course deteriorates, everyone suffers.

It is not necessarily the result of doing something wrong but it is a time when a Head Greenkeeper must have the confidence of those around them.

Equally, the Head Greenkeeper wants to know when their efforts are appreciated.

That is not the same as saying they should be free from criticism.

He or she must be accountable but any criticism should be constructive and come from that single source.

Reasons behind certain actions should also be circulated.

Routine exercises carried out in summer are invariably aimed at making sure that courses are playable in the winter.



The GTC is funded by:



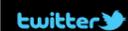
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You can follow the GTC on
Twitter @TheOfficialGTC

That is sometimes conveniently forgotten.

Where agronomists or consultants are employed, their advice forms part of a prescribed programme which needs similar backing.

Agronomists are trained experts who, for instance, can combine with Green Chairmen to fight battles over expenditure.

I am not sure the day can be seen when Head Greenkeepers are sole holders of the purse strings but the fine results expected cannot be achieved with modest budgets.

Great strides have been taken over a long period with regard to the recognition of the work and status of greenkeepers and, having worked closely with a great number, and been dependent on their skills, nothing has given me greater pleasure.

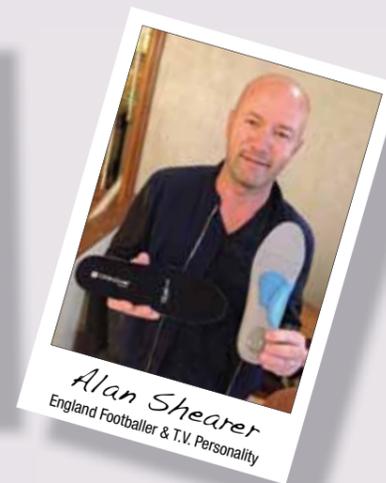
As it is our courses that bring us together, it is entirely right that Head Greenkeepers should be appointed as proud custodians and allowed to get on with what they do so well without anyone riding on their back.



Chris Evans
T.V. & Radio Presenter



Andrew 'Freddie' Flintoff
England Cricketer, Celebrity & T.V. Personality



Alan Shearer
England Footballer & T.V. Personality

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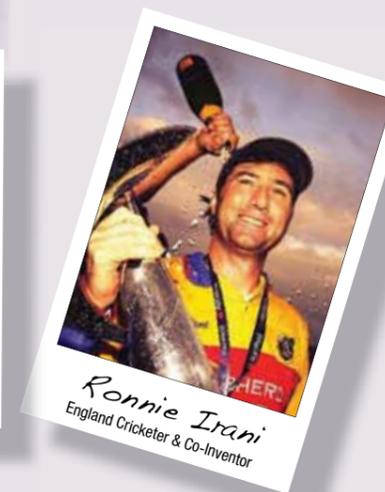
Ronnie Irani
England Cricketer
& Co-Inventor



Darren Gough
England Cricketer, Celebrity & Presenter



Charlotte Jackson
Sky Sports News Presenter & Celebrity



Ronnie Irani
England Cricketer & Co-Inventor

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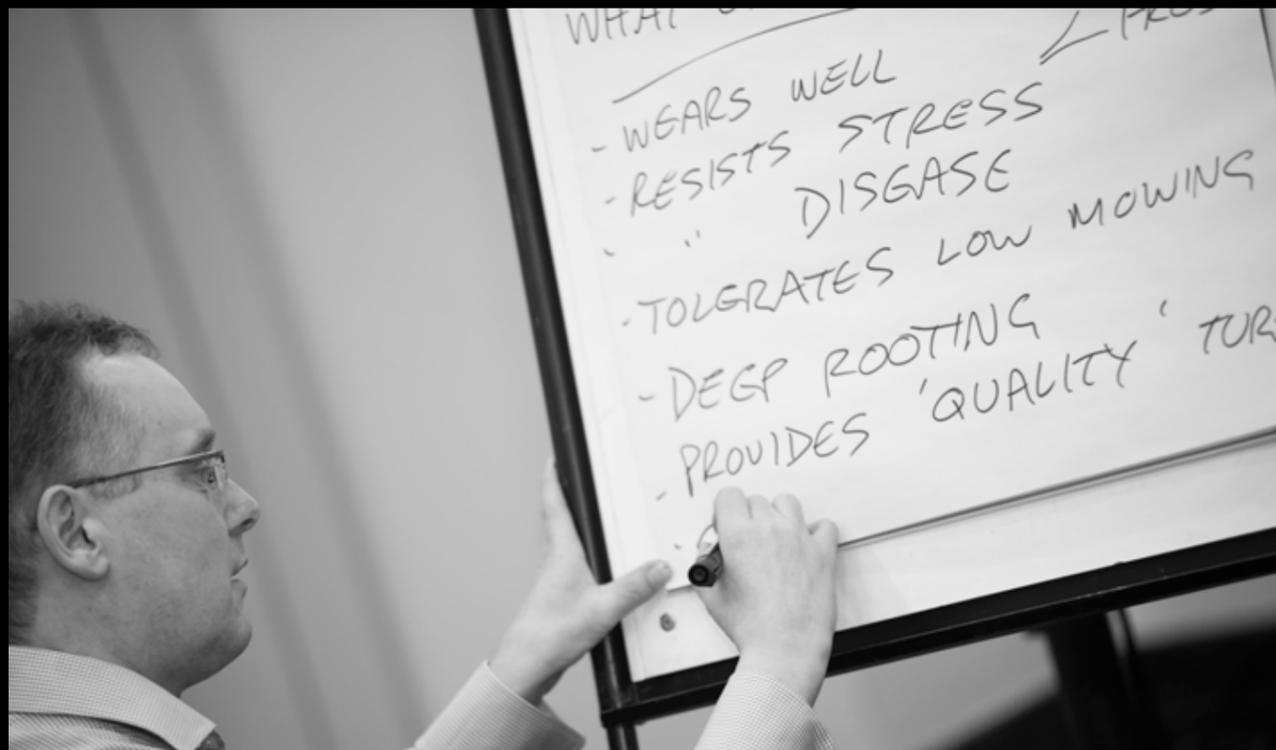
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Recruitment



The Greenkeeper International recruitment pages are here to help you match the right person to the right job. With a monthly circulation reaching over 15,000 people, targeted direct to your industry, you will be guaranteed to find a high calibre of candidates to fill your positions. The magazine is read by greenkeepers across the UK and the world at a huge variety of facilities, by turf managers of various experience and different roles. It is also delivered to the trade, to educational facilities and many more establishments. Its unrivalled reach across the turf management industry means it is the perfect place to advertise your vacancy. Just contact BIGGA's Sales Team to place your ad.

Head Greenkeeper at Stoneham GC

Stoneham GC seeks a highly motivated individual with the vision and skills to produce a course of the highest quality. The successful candidate will demonstrate the following:

- Minimum 5 years' golf course supervisory experience
- Qualified to NVQ 3 or equivalent.
- Spraying certificates PA 1, 2 & 6.
- Strong supervisory and communication skills.
- Knowledge of IT and presentation skills preferred.
- Experience in golf course renovation programs e.g. Bunkers, drainage, and woodland management.
- The ability to set goals, targets and motivate a team.
- Budget construction and management.
- Machinery maintenance scheduling and replacement planning
- Salary negotiable according to experience and qualifications.
- On-site accommodation is not available.

Applications with CV, can be made via e-mail (preferred) to: Richard Arnold - manager@stonehamgolfclub.org.uk
Closing date for applications: 19th April 2015. All applications will be treated in strict confidence.



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To join you will have an in-depth knowledge of the requirements of the modern sports/fine turf professional and have experience in advising products in the amenity sector. A formal sports turf or BASIS/FACTS qualification would be advantageous, but full training will be provided for the right candidate.

We offer a competitive salary, car option, staff discount, training, good working conditions, pension scheme and a rewarding and stimulating place to work!
Closing date for application: 16 April 2015
Send your CV to Sam Honeyborne at shoneyborne@countrywidefarmers.co.uk

Assistant Greenkeeper Aspley Guise & Woburn Sands GC

Aspley Guise & Woburn Sands GC is a Private Members Club looking to recruit a self-motivated person keen on delivering a high standard of work. The successful candidate will be highly motivated with very high standards of work, an eye for detail, flexible and with the ability to work as part of an enthusiastic team.

Suitable candidates will be qualified to a minimum NVQ level 2 or equivalent and preferably holding spraying certificates PA1 and PA6a.

A good understanding of general greenkeeping practices and knowledge of health and safety requirements is essential.

Salary is dependent on qualifications and experience.

Please send a covering letter along with your CV and salary expectations to:
General Manager, Aspley Guise & Woburn Sands GC, West Hill
Aspley Guise, Milton Keynes, MK17 8DX
Email: secretary@aspleyguisegolfclub.co.uk
Closing date: 10th April 2015 / No agencies

Golf Course Maintenance Mechanic Trump International Doonbeg Golf Links, Ireland

Key skills and attributes for the role:

- Inspects, diagnoses and repairs mechanical defects/failures in various golf course maintenance equipment, including, diesel-, electric- and petrol, trucks, trenchers, sweepers, rollers, mowers, and other mechanical equipment used in golf course maintenance and construction
- Instruct/train golf course maintenance workers regarding preventive maintenance, and the proper cleaning of and safe operation of equipment.
- Prioritizes equipment repair and maintenance work.
- Grinding and blade/reel set-up
- Maintain a preventive maintenance program within budget on all equipment, and purchases repair parts and replacement supplies.

Please apply with your CV and cover letter to:
Doonbeg.hr@trumphotels.com

Deputy Head Greenkeeper

We are looking for a Deputy Head Greenkeeper to join our team at Crane Valley GC on a full time basis. You will be required to work 40 hours per week, this will be varied over the seasons and overtime may be required to complete your duties. Salary is negotiable.

We are looking to recruit an energetic, self-motivated, dedicated and experienced Greenkeeper to support the Course Manager. Ability to lead and motivate staff, along with and in the absence of the Course Manager. You will support with monitoring absences across the team, allocate duties to the team appropriately and ensure work is carried out in a timely manner to appropriate standards. The candidate should have a strong mechanical and technical knowledge of Greenkeeping machinery and modern Greenkeeping techniques.

Essential Qualifications:

- NVQ Level 2/3 Sports Turf Management or equivalent.
- Minimum 3 years experience

Desirable Qualifications:

- Chainsaw License
- PA1, PA2 & PA6 Spraying Qualification

Greenkeeper

We are also looking for a Greenkeeper to join our team. He/She will need to have a positive, enthusiastic and driven approach to join our existing team.

Work on the course will involve a variety of duties so this position requires an individual who is able to use their skills in all areas of course maintenance, therefore, an NVQ level 2 in Greenkeeping and sports turf maintenance is a minimum requirement.

This position is on a full time basis working 40 hours per week, this will be varied over the seasons and overtime may be required to complete your duties.

Salary dependent on experience.

All applicants please email the Course Manager mark.gordon@hoburne.com

Tiverton GC Tiverton, Devon Head Greenkeeper



Tiverton GC was established in 1932 thanks to the generosity of Sir John Amory, who donated the land for the benefit of the people of Tiverton. His wife, Lady Amory (Joyce Wethered), who was widely regarded as one of the world's finest golfers, contributed to the present layout of the course. It was originally designed by five-times Open Champion James Braid, recognised as one of the best golf course designers of all time.

The vacancy for this position has arisen due to retirement and we are keen to recruit a Head Greenkeeper who has excellent technical ability, proven management skills and an enthusiasm and dedication to support the Club's commitment to continuous improvement. Having an interest in the game of golf would also be an advantage.

The successful candidate will:

- Have a minimum of 3 years management experience in a similar role.
- Have a minimum of NVQ 3 but NVQ 4 or additional relevant sports turf qualifications such as a degree would be advantageous.
- Work closely with Chair of Greens and Greens Committee to present an outstanding golf course year round for members and visitors.
- Be a first class communicator and leader to successfully manage and develop the existing team of Greenkeepers.
- Have a traditional approach to Greenkeeping based on sound agronomic practices.
- Have excellent knowledge and able to promote and maintain compliance with all relevant Health & Safety legislation.
- Hold correct certification to complete work as required, for example pesticide spraying and chainsaw operation.
- Be responsible for all machinery including routine maintenance.
- Have a good level of knowledge in respect of automatic irrigation systems.
- Have responsibility for managing budgets and working within financial controls.

Please apply in writing including a CV to: Ian Brierley, Chair of Greens, Tiverton GC, Post Hill, Tiverton, Devon, EX16 4NE
or Email c.brierley153@btinternet.com
Closing date for applications: 30th April 2015
All applications will be treated in strict confidence.

Course Manager Chesterfield GC, Derbyshire

Chesterfield GC, established in 1897, is a Harry Colt designed parkland course located on the edge of the Peak District. The course is renowned for the quality of its greens, reputed to be among the finest in the midlands.

The Club is seeking a highly motivated individual with high technical ability and proven management skills to continue the improvement to the course. The successful candidate will need to be experienced, and will demonstrate a professional and modern approach to greenkeeping, an ability to communicate and to lead and develop the team.

Full details can be found on the BIGGA Website.

Trevor Glover, Secretary/Manager
Email: secretary@chesterfieldgolfclub.co.uk
Closing Date: 30th April 2015



Greenkeepers

We are currently recruiting for two experienced Greenkeepers to work on our two 18 hole championship courses. Working within a team you will ensure that the courses are presented to the highest standards for members and visitors to the club. In addition, you will also be involved in preparation for future tournaments.

You must have experience of at least two seasons as a Greenkeeper, you will have a passion to learn and to exceed expectations. The positions are based on a 40-hour week (plus alternate weekends) however flexibility will be essential, particularly over the summer months and leading up to and during tournaments.

All successful applicants will be offered the opportunity to attend Plumpton College to gain their level 2 qualification.

To apply please send your cv and covering letter to our Course Manager to:- Scott Litchfield at scott.esn@gmail.com or in writing to:- East Sussex National, Little Horsted, Uckfield, East Sussex, TN22 5ES



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A new page featuring the best Tweets and pics from the industry – don't forget to tag @BIGGALtd to give yourself a chance of being featured!

Our favourite tweets this month...

@BIGGALtd
The savings calculator is a great way to see just how much @BIGGALtd Members could save through #BIGGAXtraBenefits login to the members area

@TheHomeofGolf
Taking in the views of #eclipse2015 at the Home of Golf from the roof of the #LinksClubhouse.

@stannesgreens
Another hand cut on the greens this morning. Ropes coming in, GUR in bunkers being removed #linksgolf #spring

@Glen37Chris
@BIGGALtd great presentation from Paul miller tonight at #Elmwood #CPD

@BiggaSouthwest
First turf club is underway..... Adam from Minchinhampton Golf Club takes the stage @BIGGALtd

@gavinwhiteNI
Bit of a cold, misty, and frosty start to the day but that won't last long @royalportrush @BIGGALtd

@sandra4bigganor
Good support for the @GUW Course Management day at Conwy with Laurence Pithie MG @BIGGALtd

@gord_mckie
@thehomeofgolf @theopen @biggaltd Course walk today with the staff on our final spring maintenance closure...

@CradocGreens
An explanation of why we hollow core on the members notice board.

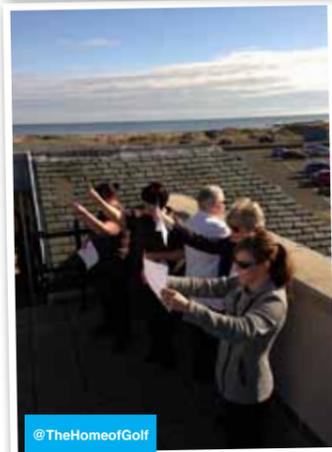
@CentenaryHGK
Great to see the first of the Oystercatchers and Curlews returning to the course for the season



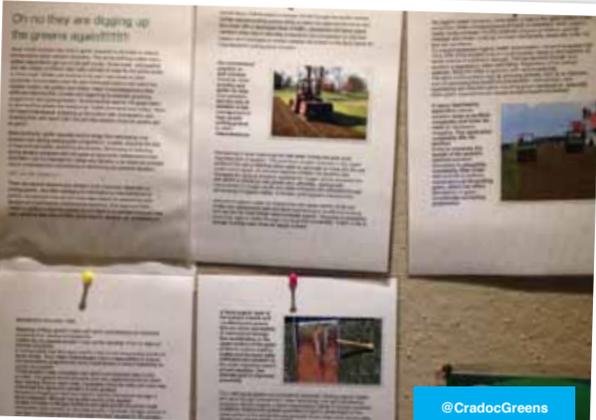
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