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GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

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WELCOME FROM BIGGA



All go on the tournament front

Jordan Spieth's extraordinary triumph at Augusta National kicked the traditional golfing season off with a real bang.

The maturity he showed over the weekend whilst many of the world's top players took turns to attack his lead was unbelievable for a 21-year-old. The Masters made for terrific television and was a great advert for the game of golf, it will no doubt have inspired some to either try the game for the first time or to return from a period of exile. Growing the game is a responsibility we all share and I hope that this year's National Golf Month, which BIGGA is supporting, is successful in bringing players back to the sport. I know our industry will do its part in ensuring courses are well presented and enjoyable to play.

Following The Masters it's all go on the tournament front from now on. This magazine is scheduled to arrive whilst The Players Championship is taking place at Sawgrass, look out for updates from the five BIGGA members who are, courtesy of John Deere, assisting with course preparations for the event. The selection process for next year's event launches straight after the tournament ends, don't hesitate to register for this incredible opportunity.

Later this month attention turns to home soil as the European Tour stages its flagship event, the BMW PGA Championship, on the iconic West Course at Wentworth.

Good luck to Kenny Mackay and his excellent team in preparing the course for the tournament and to all the BIGGA Support Team volunteers. The event seems to grow year on year and I know it will be a fantastic experience for all. It won't be long until The Open Championship is upon us and this month's magazine features a fascinating insight into preparations at the game's spiritual home, The Old Course at St Andrews.

Of course the biggest news this month is going to be the General Election. At the time of writing, a majority for any party seems unlikely.

The outgoing coalition government will ultimately be judged on the performance of the economy and the minefield that is foreign affairs, but will, I believe, leave a positive mark on our industry in the shape of the Apprenticeship Review.

All parties have indicated their commitment to the Apprenticeship programme in their manifestos, which is excellent news as the work that has taken place over the last 18 months or so to review Apprenticeships in golf greenkeeping has been extremely important.

The new 'Level two' Apprenticeship Standard is to be introduced from September this year and is undoubtedly a positive step for greenkeeping. The result is a more demanding, more rigorously assessed Standard that offers the opportunity for outstanding candidates to demonstrate their abilities. There is a lot of further work in the offing to similarly review the higher-level training courses, all of which will be extremely valuable for the industry in the future.

Enjoy the read.



Jim Croxton
Chief Executive

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In the first of a two-part article, Laurence Pithie (GI) travelled to North Cornwall to find out how Trevose Golf Club met the challenge of agronomics v playability

For many UK golf clubs, August can be a 'glorious month for competitors and visitors to play on it is often the preferred time for carrying out major renovation work. Soil temperatures, daylight and weather conditions are favourable for a rapid recovery, but what happens on courses where August is the busiest time of year?

On the approach to Trevose Golf Club, there is a road where that golf was started to be played here. All the natural ingredients of a classic coastal, sand dunes, sea view and the sound of ocean waves make this a compelling site to enjoy being golf.

This is the summer of when Laurence Pithie made a popular golfing destination. The club opened for play in 1921 and although the original Harry Colt design measured less than 5,800 yards, it quickly established itself among the best of what Cornwall had to offer. In 1955, the course was purchased by the Gammam family who have retained ownership.

Interestingly, since its conception there have only been four Course Managers employed over a span of 93 years.

The championship course has undergone numerous changes, now measures over 7,000 yards and is complemented by two short courses.

Members and visitors also enjoy the benefits of a covered driving range, two tennis courts and a staff school. The idea of golf in the summer is a high water table and as such there are a number of ditches, old lead drains and more recent piped gullies to move excess water from the playing areas.

Both greens and tees are naturally drained and offer great playing regardless of rainfall, while the sand and loam of the course has a full balanced irrigation system installed in 2002.

Water is sourced from an internal borehole and two springs allowing an annual extraction of up to 700,000 litres of water, although this amount would seldom be used even in the driest of years.

With competitions from mid-March to late-November, the attraction of playing on firm turf throughout the year presents its own challenges as to when it is suitable to carry out key cultural practices.

Challenge Ahead

When Ian Wood was appointed Course Manager in 2011, his key objective was to enhance the playing quality of greens dominated by the Pin and Bryn that of Trevose, also gained his PhD while working at the Forest of Arden, followed by a stint at Rye House, courtesy of the Club Water Program. The 'use of water on some of the best links courses goes for the opportunity to experience working environments under leading links managers at Dunsborough, Pottersdown Links and St Andrew's before taking up the helm at Trevose.

Jim said: "Being a proprietary owned club, I am directly answerable to the Board of Directors which Nick Cassman is the MD and also a category one golfer. Fortunately Nick and I had similar views and objectives; these being to improve the playing quality of the greens, remove invasive weed grass from the rough and to make general course improvements over a period of time.

"For this to be achieved, both mechanical and manpower had to be sufficient to meet those challenges as well as the support of the Board. We now have a good fleet of equipment, most of which is Toro, while I have the support of eleven staff plus transport time. With a focus on summer, it is essential that course set up is completed ahead of play and this level of resource makes it possible. Part of my brief was to give members and guests a unique links experience and by this I mean providing high quality playing surfaces that are firm, smooth, fast and consistent."



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Chairman's Word

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

Why I love The Masters

Well spring has finally sprung, as April's GI dropped on my doorstep my thoughts were moving towards the application of plant growth regulators, fairway definition, and the annual dose of the incurable Augusta Syndrome.

I must admit to loving The Masters as a tournament and for the role it's played in pushing the standards of golf course presentation all over the world. I can almost hear people getting ready to send me hate mail for that last comment, but I stand by it. Back in the 1980s, The Masters had the ultimate wow factor, with amazing attention to detail and super-fast greens, and golfers demanded their own course to be as good. I believe these demands have led to better education being provided, better equipment being produced and ultimately a better life for greenkeepers.

The golf itself was a slight anti-climax with Jordan Spieth cruising to the win. But a few beers and a curry on the Sunday night with my team from Richmond made for an interesting evening with plenty of banter to keep us entertained.

I spotted an ultimately sad story on Facebook this month. A greenkeeping team found an abandoned dog, took it in and tried to help but unfortunately the poor little thing didn't make it.

For me the real story here is hidden; the fact the team tried to look after the dog was heart-warming and indicative of greenkeepers in general, but the offers from greenkeepers across the UK to donate money for vet fees was a real show of community spirit. This sums up the greenkeeping industry in so many ways and makes me proud to be part of it.

As you may have seen on the BIGGA website Careers Page, Jeremy Hughes is leaving Vale of Llangollen Golf Club, and will be stepping down from the National Board of Management after five years. Everyone on the Board thanks Jez for his dedication and hard work. With his outgoing personality, great sense of humour and his extensive experience in course management I'm sure he will be very successful in his new job.

Due to good succession planning and the integration of deputy Board members his



"#takeleswithyou has reached new heights"

position as representative for the Northern Region will be filled by Scott Reeves, Course Manager at Leyland Golf Club, in what should be a seamless transition.

I'm delighted to see we are again sending a team to support Kenny MacKay and his team at Wentworth for the BMW PGA Championship. I am sure the course will be in fantastic condition.

Joining a BIGGA Support Team is a great opportunity to see how tournament courses are presented, how the various teams work together to produce a world-class product and a fantastic opportunity to network with other greenkeepers.

There is another opportunity in this month's magazine, this time to join the team at Woburn for the British Masters supported by Sky Sports in October. I urge members to apply for these opportunities - and don't get downhearted if you don't get selected at the first attempt.

I've noticed a debate gathering pace surrounding the use of a specific type of grass or grasses for the production of fine turf surfaces. Part of the discussion has suggested that BIGGA should take a stance

on what is the best grass for golf greens. As a members' Association it is our role to ensure that every member is educated and suitably equipped to produce the best possible surfaces within the confines of their own site, budget and resources.

In reality every golf course is different and in my opinion there is no 'one size fits all' answer.

I believe we should continue to report on, educate and inform all of our members on the best practice available for the massive variety of sites we manage.

#takeleswithyou has literally reached new heights, with Nick Paris, Course Manager at Camberley Heath Golf Club, making it to Everest base camp along with my picture (above). Reaching base camp is quite an achievement and not a ride in a 4x4 like I thought it was, congratulations to Nick and his fundraising for good causes.

Happy mowing everyone.

Les.

Contact details

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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





BTME 2016 BOOSTED AS KUBOTA SECURE SPOT IN FIFTH HALL

BTME 2016 has been boosted by the news that top machinery manufacturer Kubota will be exhibiting in the fifth Hall – Hall Q – of the Harrogate International Centre.

Space at the equivalent show two years ago sold out well before the exhibition, leading BIGGA to announce that for the first time in several years, the 2016 show will occupy five Halls.

Now Kubota have booked just under 100 metres of stand space in Hall Q ahead of what expected to be a packed show in January next year.

John Johnson, Sales Support Manager at Kubota UK, said: “The additional space available in Hall Q gives Kubota much more flexibility in the way it can present groundcare products to this very important market.”

Jill Rodham, BIGGA’s Business Development Manager, said: “We’re delighted that such an important supporter of

BTME have reaffirmed their commitment by booking their stand in the new Hall Q.

“They have recognised that this represents excellent value for them. BTME 2016 is shaping up to be one of the biggest yet with the extra Hall, meaning even more exhibitors and more reasons to get involved in the show.”

Companies from every corner of the turfcare sector have already rushed to rebook and new manufacturers will also be at BTME 2016.

Nearly 5,000 visitors flocked to last year’s show from across

the UK and worldwide, visiting over one hundred exhibitors from across the turfcare industry.

Key decision makers from all manner of sports clubs, authorities and associations struck deals throughout the week.

Space is still available at Europe’s leading showcase for turf professionals and buyers. To book a Stand at BTME 2016 please contact Jill on jill@bigga.co.uk or 01347 833800 option 2. For more on BTME 2016 visit www.btme.org.uk



NORTHERN CONFERENCE



This year’s BIGGA Northern Regional Conference took place at Chester Le Street Golf Club and our thanks go to Barrie Lee and the team for their kind hospitality.

The theme for the day was Tournament Preparation with speakers of an excellent standard including Steve Chappell from Gleneagles, Adam Newton of STRI, Phillip Russell from the R&A, Paul Morris of GBR Technology, Ben Taylor of Bernhard & Co and our very own Tracey Maddison from BIGGA.

This event was offered free of charge to BIGGA members thanks to funding from the BIGGA Continue to Learn Fund and also from the Northern Region Education Patrons who include Bernhard & Co, Campey Turfcare, Profusion, Mansfield Sand, Headland Amenity Products and Rigby Taylor.

During the day Ian Pemberton and Martin Wood sold £325 of raffle tickets, with £162.50 donated to the BIGGA Benevolent Fund and £162.50 to go towards more subsidised education events.

Raffle prizes were kindly donated by Rockliffe Hall, Chester Le Street Golf Club, Wynyard Golf Club, Mansfield Sand, Tacit, Rigby Taylor, James Breeze, Steve Chappell, Bernhard & Co and Turfkeeper.

The day was put together by Pete Newton, so thanks to him for his time and commitment and to Simon Olver who presented a great overview of the North East Section and the committee’s aims and objectives.

Sandra Raper



THIRD FTMI AN “OUTSTANDING SUCCESS”



Nineteen delegates from golf clubs across the UK visited Ransomes Jacobsen’s European headquarters for the third BIGGA Future Turf Managers’ Initiative (FTMI), made possible by Jacobsen.

This three-day educational event is aimed at up and coming greenkeepers who are focused on making the career leap to Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. Focusing on personal and professional development, the FTMI uses the expertise of respected course managers, cross-industry training specialists and industry experts to mentor and educate the next generation of industry leaders.

Arriving at lunchtime on the first day, the group was welcomed by Rupert Price, Ransomes Jacobsen’s Sales Director, before being split into groups and touring the manufacturing facilities. This was followed by a light-hearted golf competition on the company’s three-hole golf course, the RJ National, which provided an opportunity for the delegates to interact with each other.

An intensive second day began with renowned Golf Consultant Eddie Bullock, former PGA Captain and now non-executive Director of Golf at Goodwood, delivering a class on what it takes to become an effective leader. Following

lunch Lorna Sheldon, a respected personal communication and presentation skills trainer, provided valuable insights into writing a CV, preparing for an interview and the techniques required when in front of an interview panel. After lunch Steve Chappell, Head Greenkeeper at the PGA Centenary Course in Gleneagles, gave a presentation on the benefits of volunteering opportunities at major tournaments.

The final day began with a highly informative interactive presentation by gWest’s Course Manager Lee Strutt, which provided an introduction to the golf course maintenance budget, the use of Excel spreadsheets and how to sell the budget to stakeholders.

The final speaker was Crystal Mathews, a member of Jacobsen’s HR team, who had flown in from the USA to present to the delegates. Crystal’s highly interactive presentation ‘Crucial Conversations’ provided an opportunity for the team to first identify the need for a crucial conversation and provided the tools they would require to conduct themselves when faced with awkward situations in their new managerial roles.

It was left to Will Carr, Ransomes Jacobsen’s UK & Ireland Golf Sales Manager, to close the event where he thanked the delegates and the mentors for their time and contribution to what was agreed by all, a hugely successful and worthwhile three days of first-class education.

Fraser Jardine, First Assistant at Royal Aberdeen Golf Club, summed up

the experience when he said: “It was a fantastic experience and I learned so many new skills that I can apply to the workplace.

Everyone got the chance to share ideas with each other and I met some great new contacts and friends along the way. It was a huge boost to my confidence and I would recommend it to anyone who is preparing to move up in their career ladder.”

Sami Strutt, BIGGA’s Head of Member Development, said: “The FTMI is an incredibly valuable and inspiring learning experience. It would not be possible without the continued support of our industry partner, Jacobsen, and our mentors, who all volunteered their time for this initiative.

“Having witnessed the interaction between the candidates, presenters and mentors, I can safely say that the future of greenkeeping is in safe hands. My thanks go to Jacobsen and all of the mentors, and my congratulations to all the candidates.”





NEW ROLE FOR BIGGA MASTER GREENKEEPER

West Lancashire Golf Club have appointed Stuart Hogg MG as their new Course Manager, replacing the club's previous long-serving greenkeeper, John Muir, who sadly passed away last September.

Stuart's greenkeeping career began at West Kilbride Golf Club in 1988. Since then he has enjoyed various posts at courses throughout the UK, including Fortrose and Rosemarkie Golf Club, Ross-shire, where he was awarded Master Greenkeeper status by BIGGA.

Speaking about the appointment, West Lancashire Golf Club's Chairman, Nigel Heyes said: "Stuart joins from St Anne's Old Links, where had he been Course Manager for ten years.

"We are delighted to welcome him to the club and I know his wealth of experience combined with such an illustrious career history will make a positive impact on the course and our members."

Stuart added: "I am honoured to take up this new role at this championship course.

"To be taking over from a gentleman who was well respected both at the club and within the industry is an honour, and I am looking forward to working with the team to ensure that West Lancashire not only remains on the Must Play List but increases its ranking as one of the best links courses in the world."

Initially Stuart will be responsible for a team of eight. The investment in course maintenance and greenkeeping staff will enable Stuart to implement a visionary plan over the next three to five years.

Based in Blundellsands, The West Lancashire course will host qualifying for The Open in June and will stage the English Ladies' Strokeplay Championship next year.



BIGGA MEMBER IS CHAMPION SHOOTER

BIGGA member Ian Chenery is celebrating after scooping a National title in shooting just weeks after being selected to represent Great Britain.

The sharp shooter, who is Course Manager at Woodbury Park Golf & Country Club in Devon, first got the bug when he picked up an air rifle aged 13, and now uses a .308 with handmade ammunition.

He has been competing against the country's best in long-range shooting in the F Class League, the UK's premier shooting contest.

Now, following two days of intense competition at Diggle Ranges near Oldham, he has become the National Champion in the 600-yard category (above left).

Now, following two days of intense competition at Diggle Ranges near Oldham, he has become the National Champion in the 600-yard category (above left). Ian said: "It was a very hard shoot as the wind was extremely tricky to read.

"I beat the current British champion by three points to take the win, it's my first overall win and I'm hoping for many more.

"I've also recently received my letter from the Great Britain team committee and team captain to compete in the European Championships held at Bisley Ranges in Surrey.

"We've already held two training camps there to prepare.

"The sport takes up a lot of my time and money.

"Every round is tested, tuned and made by myself, all bullets, cases and powder are weighed, trimmed, batched and then put together with extreme attention to detail.

"I shoot every other week now as I have made the GB team, we shoot a league match and then two weeks later we are at Bisley for team training.

It's a good job I have an understanding partner!

"It's a very demanding sport which requires meticulous preparation and huge amounts of concentration.

"We shoot the smallest bullseyes in any long range shooting discipline in the world, half a minute of angle, which is five inches at 1000 yards.

"To give you an idea of the accuracy level of my set up, I shot a 300 yard competition at Bisley in January and scored 75/75 with 14/15 v bulls, that's hitting a target smaller than a golf ball 300 yards away."

The team's long-term goal is the World Championships which are scheduled to be held in Canada in 2017.

After that, Ian and the team are hopeful their sport will be included in the 2018 Commonwealth Games in Australia.

Ian is now on the lookout for possible sponsorship, and is also keen to speak to golf courses close to Oldham, Bisley and Blair Athol.

He hopes they may be able to help him out with accommodation before training and tournaments.

If you can help with any of the above, or want to know more about the sport of shooting, Ian can be contacted at ichenery@woodburypark.co.uk



The Marquess Course during the Victor Chandler British Masters

SUPPORT TEAM NEEDED FOR BRITISH MASTERS

BIGGA members are invited to apply to join the home greenkeeping team at Woburn Golf Club for the prestigious British Masters supported by Sky Sports in October – a superb professional and personal opportunity for greenkeepers keen to add tournament experience to their CV.

After a seven year absence, the tournament has returned to the European Tour as part of the Race to Dubai and a support team is required to join the Woburn team preparing the Marquess Course for the event.

John Clarke, Courses Manager at Woburn, said: "I volunteered for several tournaments earlier in my career including The Open, The English Open and The PGA Tour at venues as diverse as Royal St George's, The Buckinghamshire Golf Club and Westchester Country Club.

"It's great to gain an insight into tournament preparation, different techniques at other clubs and also pick up all manner of knowledge from the other greenkeepers from around the country.

"We're hoping that October is a good time for greenkeepers to be available from their home clubs to help out at this event, which everyone here is working towards and really looking forward to."

The volunteer team will be fully integrated into the home greenkeeping setup and will be asked to perform a variety of duties throughout the week between 6-11 October.

Due to the nature of the work the support team will be involved in, all applicants must have at least an NVQ Level 2 qualification.

Applicants must be able to commit to working for the entire week, beginning on Tuesday 6 October. Successful candidates will be provided with some uniform for the week along with food, beverages and various other benefits.

Please note that there is no accommodation available. Therefore, this opportunity is most suitable for members

in the Mid Anglia and BB&O Sections, but applications from other Regions and Sections are welcome.

The closing date for applications is Friday 29 May.

If you're interested in applying, please contact BIGGA's Midland Regional Administrator Roger Butler on roger@bigga.co.uk or 07525 593359 for more details and an application form.

Successful applicants will be notified by the end of July.





A STIRLING SUCCESS

Renowned golf club consultant Eddie Bullock recently met the whole team at Stirling Golf Club as part of a prize the team won during the Turf Managers' Conference at BTME 2015.

Stirling's Course Manager James Lindsay entered a draw for Eddie to deliver two sessions at the club, and after winning the draw Eddie recently made the journey to the scenic course in the heart of Scotland.

Eddie's first seminar was an evening session with committee members, staff and club officials including the club's captain. This focused on the importance of customer service.

The next morning he met with the greenkeeping team for a seminar focusing on similar issues, but tailored to the greenkeepers. Like the first seminar, this was extremely well received and will enhance the personal development plans of all the participants.

Eddie said: "Every single member of the team at Stirling embraced the sessions and it was a great day. I was made to feel very welcome and it was a great success for the whole club, opening up new ideas to be more connected with their members and guests, while thought provoking in terms of improving the communication channels."

James added: "It was great to share the experience with the team and committee members at the club which everyone enjoyed."

"Friday's session involving the greenkeepers was well received and we have implemented our own list of actions to follow when dealing with members and visitors on a daily basis. The main committee are working towards a mission statement which they hope to announce soon."

"Thanks again the Eddie for spending so much time with us at Stirling and we are looking forward to seeing the benefits from his visit."



MIKE STRANGE

Everyone at BIGGA was saddened to hear of the death of Mike Strange, greenkeeper at Goring and Streatley Golf Club, who had worked at the Berkshire club for over 40 years.

The Club's Course Manager Brian Valentine said: "Mike started work at Goring and Streatley back in June 1974 as Assistant Greenkeeper, and was then promoted to Deputy Course Manager."

"Mike played golf in many BB&O golf days and also won the Rigby Taylor pairs competition in 2005. He died after suffering a heart attack on 21 March."

"He will be sadly missed by all who new him and all the staff and members of our club."

TWO BRIANS BETTER THAN ONE AT ALYTH



David Barclay, Marketing Convener, Ron Feret, Vice Captain, Brian Cocker and Gill Murray, Club Administrator.

Brian Cocker has retired from the position of Head Greenkeeper at Alyth Golf Club in Perthshire after over 36 years of loyal service.

BIGGA member Brian began his career as an apprentice greenkeeper at Edzell Golf Club, he then made the move to Forfar before being appointed Head Greenkeeper at Brechin Golf Club. He joined Alyth back in June 1979.

During his time he has seen many changes to the profession in methods and equipment contributing to the changes and maturity of the golf course in this long fulfilling period.

Brian is married to Anne and they have two children. He intends spending his retirement golfing, hillwalking, cycling and watching his beloved Brechin City.

Everyone at Alyth Golf Club will miss him and we wish him a long and healthy retirement.

His former colleague Brian Heggie, also a BIGGA member, is now Head Greenkeeper at Alyth.

Everyone at BIGGA wishes both Brians 'good luck' and 'happy retirement' respectively!



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AMANDA INTERVIEWS ...KEITH AITKEN

Amanda Dorans' latest chat is with Keith Aitken, Head Greenkeeper at Brodick Golf club on the Isle of Arran.

Here he tells Amanda about his time at St Andrews and the challenges of island life.

AD: Hi Keith, great to see the Isle of Arran being represented on the board.

KA: Hi Amanda, it's great to get this special little island involved with a great organisation.

AD: How many golf courses are there on Arran?

KA: There are seven, each with their own unique features.

AD: Where did you begin your greenkeeping career?

KA: I began my career back in 1991 at Elmwood College in Cupar.

As part of my training I was fortunate enough to gain experience working on the Old Course, St Andrews. Although I was a keen golfer, this really ignited my passion for greenkeeping.

AD: Talk me through a typical day at Brodick.

KA: After breakfast we check the weather and liaise with the pro to determine outings and tee times.

We discuss as a team our tasks for the day. I am lucky enough to have a team that can work independently if needed, we reconvene at midday for lunch and then a similar course of action applies in the afternoon.

AD: Many of us on the Ayrshire coastline say that Arran shelters us from the worst of the weather. Do you agree?

KA: I have to agree, the course is below sea level and we have little protection from the elements.



AD: What challenges does island life present?

KA: Getting equipment fixed, you can't just go down to your local dealership and get a replacement part. However all the greenkeepers on the island have a great, supportive working relationship.

AD: What are your short-term and long-term agronomic goals?

KA: Short-term we are implementing systems to enable damage limitation in the winter.

The long-term goal is to manage the erosion on the coastline part of the golf course and keep the effects of this erosion minimal.

AD: How important is education to you and do you feel the Association has made changes to meet the educational needs of today's greenkeepers?

KA: Education is very

important, we are always learning and it is good to keep up to date with new policies and procedures.

I feel the Association gives us the chance to share and enhance good practice.

AD: And finally, what would you say to your younger self?

KA: You will have highs and lows but the good points far outweigh the bad, have confidence in your own ability.

AD: Arran is simply stunning and without a doubt one of my favourite places!

Thank you for providing an insight into your interesting career which has seen you work on great courses around the country.

I'm looking forward to visiting the island during the Autumn Outing, which I'm sure will be a real treat for all.

MAKING HIS MARK

Congratulations to Mark Crossley who is the new Course Manager at Prestbury Golf Club in Cheshire.

Mark began his greenkeeping career at Skipton Golf Club before moving to Nelson Golf Club. He then spent a sweltering year working in Tenerife at Amarilla Golf & Country Club, learning about warm season grasses while occasionally cooling off underneath the sprinklers!

He returned to the UK to work at Stockport Golf Club before securing his first Head Greenkeeper role at Mickleover Golf Club, and in 2010 joined Chesterfield Golf Club as Course Manager.

Now he has taken up the reins at Prestbury, a Harry Colt designed undulating parkland course which has held Regional Qualifying events for The Open, and will be heading up a nine-strong greenkeeping team, replacing Anthony Davies MG.

Mark said: "I think it's important for greenkeepers in their career to work at a range of different venues and in a range of different roles, which is what I've been lucky enough to do.

"I've also been Chair of the Greens committee at Chesterfield and ended up on the Board. It's meant more work for me but it means I've got to know every aspect of the club inside out, which I also think is really important for greenkeepers if you're at a club which allows you these opportunities.

"Prestbury is a big challenge but I'm always keen to test myself. They're looking for fresh ideas and impetus and hopefully I can provide that.

"I've got two clear initial aims – create surfaces that members are proud to play on, and encourage the native finer grasses back into the greens. Projects are likely to include constructing new tees and potentially new bunkers too.

"I'm looking forward to continuing Anthony's fine work over the last 26 years, and pushing the standards of the course even further."

Paying tribute to Anthony's contribution, Simon Bolam, Director of Greens at Prestbury Golf Club said: "Not only has Anthony ensured the course has been maintained to the highest standard, he has overseen many major development projects.

"We will always be grateful for Anthony's valuable contribution and he has undoubtedly assured himself of a place in the history of our fine club."

NEW CONCIERGE SERVICE PARTNER FOR BTME

BIGGA are delighted to announce a new partnership with Mice Concierge who will help you with every aspect of your visit to BTME 2016.

As the exhibition at the Harrogate International Centre in January 2016 approaches, you will notice Mice Concierge will be on hand to assist with everything from hotel bookings to travel.

Managing Director Andrew Bowers said: "As the official concierge team for BTME 2016, we are here to help take care of your booking requirements during your visit to Harrogate.

"Our team of friendly specialists are available to help ensure your visit to Harrogate is as hassle free as possible.

"So if you want to know about the hotels, restaurants, travel options for your trip to the event, please do visit our website or call us and we will be delighted to help.

"We offer a service for individual bookings but we also specialise in helping where clients have more complex requirements including group arrangements, small meetings or private dinners.

"Alongside our sister company, Fresh Reservations, we'll help you to plan, co-ordinate and implement your plans and



aim to help you and your colleagues have a great experience whilst in Harrogate!

"With over 17 years' experience we've helped literally thousands of companies to save money and get the best possible

solutions so if you would like us to help you, please do get in touch and we will be delighted to hear from you!"

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Membership News

The latest news from 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.



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OTHER USEFUL NUMBERS

(Full Members only)

Personal Accident Helpline
0207 2048952

Greenkeepers Legal Assistance
0800 177 7891

Lifestyle Counselling Helpline
0844 770 1036
www.arcllegal.co.uk/carefirst

Who is heading to Wentworth?

Congratulations to all the BIGGA members who have secured a place on this year's Support Team for the BMW PGA Championship. For many years, the Association has provided a team of greenkeepers to join the home greenkeeping team for this prestigious event at Wentworth in May. The team will take on a range of duties from early morning prep to match raking alongside some of the world's best golfers. Light clothing and refreshments are provided and a small marquee will act as a base adjacent to the first fairway on the West Course. Please note that no accommodation is provided at this event.

As always, it was a very difficult decision to choose the team, thank you to everyone who applied. The team is revealed on the right hand page. If anyone on the team has any queries please contact Rachael Duffy at BIGGA House on rachael@bigga.co.uk This is a superb personal and professional development opportunity with the team on stand by to deal with whatever the British weather throws at them. Last year, storms on the Thursday which suspended play meant some members of the BIGGA Support Team were required to be on the course at 4.30am on Friday morning to clear debris ahead of the 7am start. One of the team was Steve Hopkins,

Assistant Greenkeeper at Burghley Park Golf Club. He said: "Obviously you have to be on your toes when you volunteer for an event of this importance, but when the weather is against you I think you're even more switched on because you could be needed at almost any time of day. This was proved when a group of us were out blowing leaves out of the bunkers at 4.30am. "But it was a wonderful experience with terrific greenkeepers from across the country. It was very hard work, but it was just great to be inside the ropes seeing the professionals play all manner of remarkable shots. I raked for both Thomas Bjorn and Shane Lowry during the week who both played some brilliant golf."



Home greenkeeping team working at Wentworth

BMW PGA CHAMPIONSHIP SUPPORT TEAM 2016

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| Danny Allsworth, Greenkeeper - Oxford Golf Club | Oliver Davenport, Greenkeeper - Hockley Golf Club | Mark Honey, Greenkeeper - The Wisley Golf Club | Manager - Mowsbury Golf Club |
| Samuel Anderson, Greenkeeper - Stock Brook Golf & Country Club | Graeme Davidson, Assistant Greenkeeper - Swanston New Golf Club | Stuart Imeson, Head Greenkeeper - Dunstanburgh Castle Golf Club | Philip Slater, Deputy Head Greenkeeper - West Herts Golf Club |
| Greenkeeper - John O'Gaunt Golf Club | Anthony Dineen, Assistant Greenkeeper - Top Meadow Golf Club | Craig Kilgour, Deputy Head Greenkeeper - Ponteland Golf Club | David Smith, Greenkeeper - Links Golf Club (Newmarket) |
| Adam Baldwin, Greenkeeper - Gloucester Golf Club | Thomas Dixon, Greenkeeper - Forest Hill Golf & Country Club | James Lomas, First Assistant Greenkeeper - Hadley Wood Golf Club | Anthony Sunney, Greenkeeper - West Middlesex Golf Club |
| Tony Bartram, Assistant Greenkeeper - The Richmond Golf Club | Andrew Doig, Deputy Head Greenkeeper - Tynemouth Golf Club | Craig Kilgour, Deputy Head Greenkeeper - Ponteland Golf Club | Sam Sweetzer, Greenkeeper - West Hill Golf Club |
| Sam Bethell, Assistant Greenkeeper - Wimbledon Park Golf Club | Jeffrey Drake, Greenkeeper - Newbury & Crookham Golf Club | James Lomas, First Assistant Greenkeeper - Hadley Wood Golf Club | Oliver Tanton, Greenkeeper - Royal North Devon Golf Club |
| Sean Borrett, Greenkeeper - Ellesborough Golf Club | Josh Dunn, Greenkeeper - The Belfry | Graeme Main, Deputy Course Manager - Porters Park Golf Club | Liam Taylor, Assistant Greenkeeper - Forest Hill Golf & Country Club |
| Rob Boyce, Head Greenkeeper - Links Golf Club (Newmarket) | Glenn Dyer, Greenkeeper - North Oxford Golf Club | Steve Mason, Course Manager - Stocks Golf Club | Christopher Taylor, Deputy Head Greenkeeper - Willesley Park Golf Club |
| Andrew Brown, Head Greenkeeper - The Goodwood Club | Luke Elgie, Greenkeeper - Rushmore Golf Club | Christopher Mitchell, Former Course Manager - Retired | James Thorpe, Deputy Head Greenkeeper - Dunstanburgh Castle Golf Club |
| Joe Button, Greenkeeper - Meltham Golf Club | Daniel Evans, Greenkeeper - Llandudno Golf Club (Maesdu) | Brett Moggridge, Course Manager - Kirtlington Golf Club | Johann van der Merwe, Greenkeeper - Farnham Park Golf Club |
| Russell Carr, Greenkeeper - The Goodwood Club | Toby Giles, Greenkeeper - Hockley Golf Club | Dominic Nea, Senior Greenkeeper - Frinton Golf Club | Bradley White, Greenkeeper - Copthorne Golf Club |
| Joseph Cartwright, Greenkeeper - Hever Castle Golf Club | Arnie Haskell, Greenkeeper - Farnham Golf Club | Jack Rank, Greenkeeper - York Golf Club | Simon White, Course Manager - The Chase Golf Club |
| Shaun Cuffin, Greenkeeper - Falmouth Golf Club | Steven Hirons, First Assistant Greenkeeper - Kirtlington Golf Club | Nick Roberts, Greenkeeper - Hertfordshire Golf Club | Steven Williams, Greenkeeper - Wrexham Golf Club |
| | | Simon Robinson, Assistant Greenkeeper - The Mere Golf Resort & Spa | |
| | | Richard Saunders, Course | |

L&D News

The latest from the Learning and Development department at BIGGA

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.

IN-HOUSE TRAINING AT LADYBANK

David Gray is Head Greenkeeper at Ladybank Golf Club, a heathland course in Fife which has held final qualifying for The Open on several occasions. They have started in-house educational workshops – and are gaining CPD credits as a result as well as increasing their knowledge!

David said: “The course at Ladybank is uniquely constructed on a site of natural sand and gravel. We have an abundance of wildlife including deer, woodpeckers and bats amongst many others. It’s a truly beautiful setting and an absolute pleasure to work at this fabulous site.

“Myself and Course Manager Colin Powrie thought it would be highly beneficial to do some in house training, and asked the team to make some suggestions on an area they would like to see covered.

“We then spent some time putting together detailed presentations on these topics.

“Following this we have overseen the introduction of ‘mini workshops’ to educate our team, and to borrow a phrase from BIGGA, ‘continue to learn!’

“These are very relaxed, informal and focus on giving the guys an insight into why we do things a certain way, and by explaining this to all the team they are then fully aware of what we are trying to achieve and why.

“We had our first workshop in January which was ‘The setting up and performance of cutting units’. This outlined the benefits of maintaining sharp blades, and the potential impact of mowing with blunt blades.

“We also demonstrated the correct setting up of our various units during a practical session at the end.

“At the end I handed out feedback forms to the team to



discover what they thought.

“Our second workshop discussed a topic which was very much relevant giving recent criticism from a minority of members – ‘Bunker sand analysis- selecting the correct specifications’.

“This focused on how we choose the correct specification of bunker sand, and explained how our current sand met all areas of recommendation from both STRI and ETL. We also highlighted the importance of particle size and shape, and how this could affect performance.

“We have regular particle size distribution testing done to ensure we receive a consistent product so we looked at past specification sheets and explained the process involved.

“To finish off I laid out a number of sands ranging from medium fine to coarse and included our current topdressing, bunker and kiln dried sand to show how very different these products were.

“The plan is to run around six of these workshops per season, covering anything from Setting Units to Grass Identification.

“Topics will be timed to ensure the learning is then put into practice.

“For example, heading into autumn and winter we will run one based on frost damage, as our frost policy is often scrutinised.

“This will help the guys answer any difficult questions focused around the policy, and ensures that we are all prepared with the same answers or reasoning.

“Feedback has been great so far, the team seem to enjoy these little bonding sessions, as do I.

“We are awarded CPD credits for these workshops, and having been actively involved in it for a few years we encouraged all the team to enroll on the BIGGA CPD programme and we will set some annual targets for each of them for the season.

“We never stop learning!”



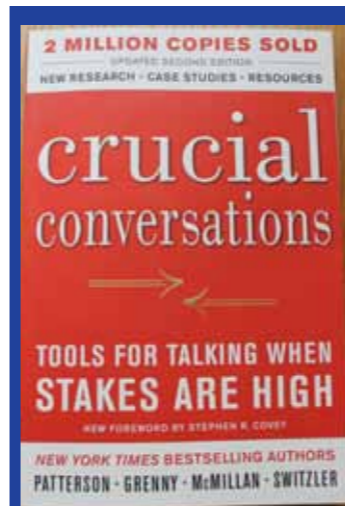
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LIBRARY UPDATE

Deb Burnett at BIGGA House has been busy improving and updating the Lending Library – and more and more members are taking advantage as a result!

The Library, which is kindly sponsored by John Deere, has a range of new titles including ‘Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes Are High’ by Patterson, Grenny, McMillan and Switzler which was used during the FTMI 2015.

This book aims to give you the tools to “prepare for high-stakes situations, transform anger and hurt feelings into powerful dialogue, make it safe to talk about almost anything and be persuasive, not abrasive.”

Deb has also added synopses to many of the available books. To access the Lending Library, visit the Members Area of the BIGGA website and click on ‘Lending Library’. If you have any questions please email deb@bigga.co.uk



CPD APPROVED

Congratulations to the following members who gained CPD Approved status:

- Anthony McGeough - Richmond (Yorks) Golf Club
- William McMeikan - Turnberry Hotel & Golf Course
- Robert Bond - Sebonack Golf Club
- Steven Hardy - Warwickshire (The) Golf Club
- Kevin Armstrong - John O’Gaunt Golf Club
- Blair Shearer - Dunbar Golf Club
- Joe Barnes - Royal Lytham & St Annes Golf Club
- Matthew Army - La Moye Golf Club
- David Gray - Ladybank Golf Club
- Pete Newton - Rockcliffe Hall Golf Club
- Gavin Neill - St Andrews Trust
- Glenn Kirby - Hockley Golf Club
- Andrew Campbell MG CGCS CCM - Ransomes Jacobsen Ltd
- Anthony Gorman - Royal Wimbledon Golf Club



ENTER TORO STUDENT GREENKEEPER OF THE YEAR 2015

Are you undertaking a work-based diploma or SVQ level 2/3 or a HNC in Golf Course Management? If the answer is yes, you’re eligible to apply for this prestigious Award. You will also need the support of your college tutor.

Once you have applied you will be invited to Regional Interviews at the end of June. You will be interviewed by representatives from BIGGA, Toro and a local golf course manager.

The interview lasts thirty minutes and you will be asked a range of questions varying from what you know about the scheme and why you think you should be chosen, to your greenkeeping and machinery knowledge. It’s your chance to shine. We can have over forty applicants for six finalists spots, so dress to impress and do your research!

For the successful six, the final is held in September at BIGGA House. The final features a group discussion on the first evening followed by a short multiple choice test the next morning. For the rest of the day, the candidates will be given an essay question to work on and will then carry out a ten minute presentation about themselves.

The opportunities for your personal and career development from being a part of this incredible award are second to none.

For more details, and to apply, visit the Members Area of the BIGGA website, click on the Education tab, then click on ‘Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award’ on the left hand side.

BARONNESS SCHOLARSHIPS



Congratulations to Stuart Ponfield, Head Greenkeeper at Wheathill Golf Club, who has been awarded a Baroness Level 3 Scholarship.

Stuart will be studying for his Diploma in Work Based Horticulture at Myerscough College.

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GREY WATER HARVESTING

GI INDUSTRY UPDATE

The latest turf industry news from around the globe



CHARTERHOUSE DEMO DAY

Following the announcement that they were to become exclusive UK distributors of Graden products, Charterhouse Turf Machinery recently invited members of the UK trade press to Hankley Common Golf Club.

Graden Industries is at the leading edge of quality specialist turf machinery. The company started out as a family business serving just the Australian Turf Industry, but over the years has branched out throughout the world.

Charterhouse Sales Manager Nick Darking said: "We are delighted to have the Graden range on board, but it is of course tinged with sadness following the passing of Keith Kensett. However, we are very pleased that John Fitzpatrick has joined us from Kensetts to act as our Graden Product Specialist. I honestly believe the Graden machines are one of maybe four key pieces of groundcare machinery which have had a profound effect on the industry. The phrase 'to Graden' has become a generic term, just like 'to Verti-Drain' has. The phone has not stopped ringing since we took on the range last year."

John Fitzpatrick demonstrated the two tractor mounted models, the Swing Wing and GBS 1200. "What makes these machines unique", he said, "is the speed

at which they can accurately function. This means that contractors, groundsmen and greenkeepers can get the job done quickly, before the weather turns, offering time savings over other machines."

Next up came the two pedestrian models in the range, the GS04 'Original Graden' and the critically-acclaimed Contour Sand Injection (CSI) unit. The GS04 was originally designed for Cricket Squares but has now found a home on most sports surfaces. Offering a 0.4m cutting width and variable cutting depth from 0-45mm, this machine can remove up to 22% of a green in one treatment (depending on blade width and spacing). The ingenious CSI is a scarifier/aerator with the ability to scarify to any depth from 1mm to 40mm, whilst using a gravity feed system to simultaneously backfill the grooves with either sand or a combination of sand and seed to improve drainage and rooting. Its floating head makes it perfect for undulating areas such as golf greens, tees and approaches.

Gareth Roberts, Course Manager at Hankley Common Golf Club, said: "On the first pass of the Swing Wing I was amazed at the amount of material being removed. I also like the fact that the blade depth can be adjusted to suit any need.



CLEARWAY TO SUSTAINABILITY

It's becoming increasingly evident that optimism is returning to golf clubs throughout Europe and many clubs are keen to build on this, not only to enhance their appeal, but to tackle compliance and efficiency issues to establish their environmental standing.

Sustainability is the watchword at present and it is right that we should all be concerned about harming the environment and depleting natural resources. One area of concern and which is covered by legislation is that of washing golf course machinery. The EU Water Framework Directive, due for implementation this year, is fast becoming the driving factor to address inadequacies at many golf greenkeeping facilities throughout Europe and beyond. The directive has been enshrined in law by EU member states and is enforced by government agencies; The Environment Agency in England for example. Severe penalties are at their disposal to ensure compliance and to prevent pollution.

Many golf courses have tackled greenkeeping wash-off issues but a number still need to act. So what are the points to consider?

Pollution Prevention is the main concern and hydrocarbons (oil, grease, diesel, petrol) found on every turf maintenance machine are not permitted to enter the groundwater. So, washing off to ground is just not permissible.

Water saving is a major consideration too. It has been calculated that in excess of half a million litres of water can be wasted each year on a typical eighteen hole course by wash-off. That is not only very costly to those paying for water but a terrible waste of a diminishing and increasingly valuable natural resource.

To address these two points, the solution is to install a washpad water recycling system and a dedicated washpad. There are very few genuine full biological recycling systems on the market and, beware, some "solutions" do not actually recycle! Cost, safety, ease of operation and maintenance obviously are considerations too.

One recycling system that meets all legal requirements is ClearWater, a UK designed and manufactured system from Highspeed Group Ltd. ClearWater has the distinct advantage of being totally unobtrusive, as it is installed safely below ground. Unaffected by extremes of temperature and allaying worries over bacterial formation such as Legionella, ClearWater with its stable and low operating temperature is the ideal choice.



HUXLEY GOLF HELPS MANOR CELEBRATE CENTENARY

Brokenhurst Manor Golf Club celebrated its centenary year with the official opening of a new specially commissioned All-Weather Short Game Area, created by Huxley Golf.

Nestled in the beautiful natural landscape of the New Forest National Park, the Club is renowned for its superb 6220 yard 18 hole course designed by the great course architect Harry Colt.

Often frequented by famous golfers, the friendly welcoming club never disappoints and is highly regarded by all who play there.

The new short game area was the finishing touch, as Club Manager Neil Hallam-Jones explained: "We were keen to celebrate our hundredth year by creating a tangible asset, a new aspect to Brokenhurst Manor that could be enjoyed by our members long into our next century."

"This Area is a fantastic addition to our already impressive course. The fact that it is operational regardless of weather conditions is of considerable benefit to our members and visitors alike."

The brand new facility is positioned in conveniently close proximity to the

Clubhouse. Designed using a variety of Huxley Golf tournament quality surfaces, it provides a comprehensive yet low maintenance all-year practice zone.

Huxley Golf's Managing Director Paul Huxley added: "I was delighted to be invited to be a part of Brokenhurst Manor Golf Club's centenary celebrations. Not only was it a wonderful occasion, but I'm proud that Huxley Golf has been involved in creating something new. This not only marks their success to date, but helps them look to the future. I hope that everyone enjoys the new practice area."

FLORATINE TAKES THE GUESSWORK OUT OF BENEFICIAL BACTERIA

It is widely acknowledged in the Sports Turf Industry that mycorrhizal fungi and beneficial bacteria are symbiotic with healthy turf.

So now all the guesswork and time consuming techniques for producing 'bugs' have been bypassed with Floratine's new unique product EON BIO.

EON BIO is a 'time capsule' release of humic acid containing mycorrhiza fungi and exact quantities of beneficial bacteria in a prill form.

Easy to use with top dressing and granular fertiliser.

Floratine have always pioneered cutting edge science and been the

leaders in their field and they have established EON BIO by identifying those bacteria proven to benefit the soils.

EON BIO is not compost derived but specifically cultured and this is what sets it apart from any other product currently on the market.

Should customers wish to order online the EON BIO and The Floratine range are available via Agronomic Services' new website and online shop for those who prefer the online shopping experience.

If any technical advice is required then Agronomic Services are always happy to talk to customers old and new.



A balancing act

Steve Castle travelled to The Home of Golf to discover how the greenkeeping team care for a course which golfers worldwide feel ownership of, while also keeping an endless list of interested parties happy ahead of The Open's return to the Old Course



The Director of Greenkeeping at St Andrews, Gordon Moir, is in his office going through the various unusual and often bizarre email requests he receives daily.

He's had messages from golfers wanting to land a helicopter on the site to play a round, hundreds of enquiries about playing rounds of golf for charity – and after our meeting he was due to meet an American student keen to use the links for a sponsored walk at midnight.

"We treat each request on its merits, we couldn't possibly say yes to all of them, but we're keen to help when we can. 99% of people are very respectful of the site."

This is typical of a day's work for Gordon, who offered me the warmest of welcomes on my first visit to the world-famous facility. It's tempting to waffle on about the special atmosphere of the place, its unparalleled history and its

immense scale with seven courses all vying for attention. Well, all of this is true. But it's the sheer accessibility of the place that surprised me.

This is no Lord's, Wembley or Wimbledon where trespassers will be prosecuted. It's common land, so joggers trot across the path which slices the 18th fairway of the Old Course in two, couples walk hand in hand and dog walkers trudge along, seemingly immune to the charms of the old place.

A group of overexcited tourists scrambled to obtain the classic snapshot of themselves imitating Jack Nicklaus on the Swilcan Bridge. One side was cordoned off to allow the greenkeeping team to repair the turf surrounding it – damaged by the footfall of over 45,000 golfers a year plus the aforementioned day trippers.

Just two of the greenkeepers attempting to maintain order

– and world-class surfaces – at St Andrews are Gordon and his namesake Gordon McKie, Course Manager on the Old Course.

They join a team of around 55 full-time greenkeepers and six mechanics, plus 28 seasonals added in summer who look after the seven golf courses run by the Links Trust.

McKie began his career working with Ian Macleod at Tain Golf Club and served his apprenticeship there while attending Elmwood College. He was promoted to Assistant before joining St Andrews as Deputy in 1996, working alongside Moir on the Eden Course. After a spell on the New Course he came over to the Old in 2007.

One of the first things he makes clear is his gratitude that the Old is closed to golfers on a Sunday to allow the public to wander the land – allowing the greenkeeping team to carry out agronomic tasks.



MAIN IMAGE: Mowing the 18th fairway on the Old Course

INSET: Gordon McKie, Course Manager (left) and Gordon Moir, Director of Greenkeeping #takeleswithyou!



JOINING THE TEAM

Paul Armour joined St Andrews almost a year ago as Course Supervisor on the Old Course. He was formerly Head Greenkeeper at Lochgelly Golf Club, so how does working at The Home of Golf compare? He said: "When I joined, I still didn't fully appreciate the scale of St Andrews Links. It's a real privilege to be a small part of such a special site which means so much to golfers worldwide. "The excitement within the greenkeeping team, and

the whole town, has been building for months ahead of The Open. Having been part of the BIGGA Open Support Team on a couple of occasions I do have some very valuable major tournament experience. "However, now I'm seeing all the preparations that go on well before the event I realise the sheer scale of the work that goes on to ensure the event works perfectly. The infrastructure is huge. Now I can't wait for it all to start!"

Paul Armour (left), Course Supervisor on the Old Course, with Simon Connah, Deputy Course Manager on the Old Course

McKie said: "No pun intended, but for us that day is an absolute Godsend – we do the majority of our work on a Sunday.

"We had a group of greenkeepers playing here the other day, and one of the questions was "how do you maintain the level of grass cover with 46,000 rounds annually?"

"Basically, you focus on the areas where all that traffic is. Ok, these things cost money, but we're lucky enough that we have the backing to spend the money to keep the golf course in the condition it is.

"Working on the Old is very challenging, when you think of the annual roundage, but it's very rewarding. You speak to people all the time who have saved up and waited for years to play here, a once in a lifetime round, and speaking to someone like that can make your week.

"Because this is the home of golf, and it's on common land, everybody is a stakeholder, which became very apparent to me a few years ago when we started to make some changes! But it's great people feel like that, it gives you a feeling of pride to present it in as good a condition as you possibly can."

Ah, those changes. Some prominent golfers, course architects and media commentators were hugely critical of the decision to alter parts of the legendary links – including working on the Road Bunker, the re-siting of several other bunkers on various holes, adding a bunker on the 9th and re-contouring a section of the 11th green. So, what was the greenkeeping view?

McKie recalled: "I found the changes exciting and so did all the greenkeeping team. Obviously there was a lot of pressure when you realise how many people around the world feel a wee bit of ownership towards the Old Course. It's the Holy Grail for many golfers which makes you understand the furore when we made the changes, but we were totally confident in them, as were the local golfing community and the local clubs which use the courses as their home club."

One major move was advanced gorse management across the site. Not a story to excite the headline writers, but cutting back these sometimes troublesome shrubs was a major focus for the team.

McKie explained: "We're not just a tournament venue. We're open to all abilities of golfer, so they have to be able to get round so they can enjoy it rather than making it so tough it's difficult to play. When I took over, it seemed you had to carry a lot of gorse to get from tee to

fairway, and some of the gorse had grown so much it had created completely blind tee shots. It needed to be cut back."

Moir added: "Some people think St Andrews is a museum which has never changed, but the courses have changed numerous times. They went through massive changes in Old Tom Morris's lifetime, they went to double greens for example. These latest changes were needed to bring the course into line with how the game is played now, and bring back many of the challenges the great players of the past faced."

It became increasingly clear to me that the list of stakeholders the greenkeepers have to deal with is almost as long as the roll call of winners of the Claret Jug at The Home of Golf. So how do the team deal with this?

Gordon added: "We have meetings twice a year with representatives from the local clubs and tell them what agronomic and winter work programmes we're planning. At our most recent meeting they mentioned the condition of a winter mat on one of the holes and the amount of pitchmarks – that's all they brought to the table, so we must be doing most things right!

"But it's not just the clubs – you've got the local hotels, tour operators, golf pros, Fife Council,

BELOW: The two Gordons in Hell bunker

the Government and of course The R&A. Sometimes the tour operators are unhappy if their clients are playing off winter tees. They all want to tee off from the same places as the pros, but with the traffic we have that's not possible and you have to explain that to them.

"Around 30% of the bunkers over the winter were GUR, which is probably similar to most courses – yet we had one golfer claim it was 90%! We did have Hell Bunker and the Road Bunker out of play, plus the Swilcan Bridge has been fenced off to renovate the turf around it, although you can still access it from the other side. So because some of the icons are closed, some people perceive that half the course is closed and that's not the case.

"We try and publicise this sort of thing as best we can through our website and other methods, but sometimes the message just doesn't get through. We can understand the disappointment some people feel but they have to remember that it's essential winter work."

July sees the 144th Open Championship roll into this stunning part of the Fife coast, so what's the current mood among the team?

McKie, whose handicap is ten, said: "The Old Course is the jewel in the crown, and golfers expect conditions to be the same as what they've seen for The Open. But remember





we have the R&A Medals, the St Rule Trophy, the Links Trophy, the Alfred Dunhill Links Championship and many other competitions. For all of those, the course gets pretty much the same level of detail applied as for The Open. So for The Open, we do the same things we do all year round, we're just lucky enough to have a bigger team.

"Across the site the greens are around 80% fescue with a percentage of bent grass. We do have various patches of poa, ryegrass and Yorkshire fog. The greens on the Old vary – the central areas which get less traffic have better quality grasses.

"We aim for a green speed of 9.5 to 10. 10.5 is the maximum, but the weather is important, you have to think of the wind strength and direction."

Regarding green speed, Moir – a four handicapper – explained: "You get a few complaints, particularly in the summer. On a calm day, when the greens are 9.5, some golfers say they're too slow. But if they play the next day with five times more wind, which happens regularly here, they will still be 9.5 but putting will be much more difficult – so you can't have them too fast."

The pair have been heavily involved in BIGGA for many years. McKie believes his work on various Section Committees helped

him secure his first position at St Andrews. He was Chairman of the Scottish Central Section in 2011 and 2012.

"I felt like I was making a difference, it's quite rewarding. The key for me was helping to provide more educational opportunities, particularly for young greenkeepers. It's great to see opportunities such as the Bernhard Delegation and the John Deere TPC Sawgrass Volunteer Programme. My Deputy, Simon Connah, was a Bernhard Delegate this year and he's got so much from it – it opens so many doors and this is the message we need to get across.

"On a personal level, it certainly helped me secure the job here on the Eden because I already knew Gordon from various BIGGA events."

Moir became Head Greenkeeper at Fraserburgh Golf Club aged just 20, and is passionate about ensuring there is support available for younger turf managers.

"At 20 I often relied on Head Greenkeepers in the area to help me out. When I went on golf outings, I always made sure I was playing with other Head Greenkeepers so I could ask questions. I also learnt a lot from the magazine and reps who came in. I then made the move to the Eden Course from Fraserburgh in 1991."

ABOVE: Hell Bunker
BELOW: The R&A clubhouse behind the first tee of the Old Course



Both Gordons have worked on the BIGGA Open Support Team on several occasions, and McKie still recalls raking bunkers for Jean van der Velde during his final round meltdown at Carnoustie in 1999.

He laughed at the memory and said: "My advice to the BIGGA Open Support Team is enjoy yourself, take in what's going on and make contacts. I still recognise and chat to people now I met for the first time on the team, you see them at BTME and conferences.

"I remember sitting in the BIGGA marquee at one Open and around me were Walter Woods, George Brown and Jack McMillan to name just three. I listened to everything they were saying and learnt so much. Most of all, enjoy the experience because you don't often get an opportunity like it."

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Jim Arthur - A decade on



On May 14 2005, Jim Arthur, one of the most influential and controversial names in greenkeeping passed away.

Here, independent agronomist Robert Laycock looks at the impact made by Jim and gives his own personal view on his methods and beliefs.



I write this having just returned from an advisory visit at a links golf course. The sea was choppy and the wind whistled across the fescue and bent greens turf. I often think of Jim Arthur, but particularly when I am at places like this.

Jim would have enjoyed it and it is a prime example of the kind of management style that he advocated. But it is not only seaside links where this kind of management is appropriate. There are also suburban greens with a high content of fescue and bent, managed in the same way.

Jim Arthur died ten years ago this month. He single-handedly changed the course of golf course agronomy in the UK, which in my view was heading in the wrong direction in the hands of some

unscrupulous fertiliser salesmen and a complacent agronomy establishment which had taken its eye off the ball.

His 'back to basics' approach to agronomy became very popular at that time and he claimed to have advised more than 500 golf clubs. He formulated what is now known as sustainable golf in the face of tremendous opposition.

Jim's aim was to match the composition of the turf on the greens to that of the nearby fairways, where fescue and bent are so often dominant, fighting against the annual meadow grass growing in the greens.

Fertiliser applications at many golf courses were too high and this, coupled with overused irrigation systems, caused soft putting surfaces and the character of golf

about the author



Robert Laycock has had a wide-ranging career as a turfgrass scientist and agronomist, beginning with an MSc at Imperial College. This was followed by research at STRI before working in the turf industry. He launched his business as an independent agronomist, specialising in golf courses, in 1992 and is a founder member of RIPTA. He is a Chartered Biologist and a Fellow of the Institute of Horticulture. www.robertlaycock.co.uk

greens were changing as a result. He recognised this and stood up for what he believed in. Fortunately the R&A listened and he became Consultant Agronomist to the Championship Committee.

As anyone who was around in those days is aware, Jim was a controversial figure.

Recently, when I mentioned Jim's name to a Course Manager at a very well known course, he responded by saying: "The days of Jim Arthur are long gone, and this means that now we can progress" - as if Jim had been an encumbrance!

This was at a course where clearly it had been forgotten that Jim's approach had been implemented there decades before to good effect.

But how have things progressed since Jim's day? Sure, there are new products and pieces of equipment,

Jim Arthur

A trained agronomist, Jim was a traditionalist and loathed cosmetic changes to golf courses. He argued against the use of fertilisers and discouraged heavy watering – preferring regular aeration and scarification, and published 'Practical Greenkeeping' which became one of the most widely read books in the industry.



but the basic understanding of how turf and soil interact remains the same.

If you are going to follow the path of austerity that Jim advocated, you can't just turn off the water and fertiliser, you need to follow a middle way and have a supportive agronomist to advise.

You also need to have the golf club, in particular the membership, on your side. While his approach may have worked in some places it did not work everywhere and in some cases it would have been better to let things stay as they were.

Jim is best known now for the book 'Practical Greenkeeping', commissioned by the R&A and still available in the BIGGA Lending Library, but he was also a prolific writer of articles.

Looking through my archive of his pieces I see a consistent approach by him to the problems that he saw on the golf course. He fought tirelessly for traditional greenkeeping techniques.

Although on a personal level Jim was friendly and supportive, he could have an abrasive streak when he thought he was right. When I started working for myself as an independent agronomist over 20 years ago, I crossed swords with him on several occasions in print,

though whenever we spoke he was always very polite. He inscribed my copy of Practical Greenkeeping "From one agronomist to another" and I was very pleased when he wrote that he had seen an article of mine that he liked.

Jim supported the role of the greenkeeper and fought for them to be respected by the golfing community. He was a good speaker and gave much of his spare time to the cause of good golf agronomy, delivering talks to greenkeepers and interested parties in his inimitable way.

Reading through his numerous articles, the same themes crop up. As well as the fight against *Poa annua*, some of his bugbears were 'bugs in a jug', the fight against American influence on the traditional game of golf and the overuse of irrigation systems.

Another example was his distrust of soil analyses. As someone who had studied agricultural botany at university, he was more than capable of understanding and interpreting soil analysis results, yet he claimed to be able to assess the potassium requirement of turf almost by instinct.

It may be difficult to justify this in these days of benchmarking and gadgets, but it worked. He made

ABOVE: Scything the 18th green at St Andrews

LEFT PAGE: Jim (right) with Gordon Child (left) at the Westurf Trade Exhibition at Long Ashton GC in 1998

his assessment of the condition of golf greens on the basis of a sound scientific academic background and years of experience. Just as a birdwatcher can look at a bird and know exactly what species it is without looking at a textbook, so it was with Jim when inspecting golf turf.

Someone who sees thousands of golf greens a year gets to understand which ones are the healthy ones and how what has happened to them during their previous management affects their well being.

Jim Arthur's dismissal of analysis techniques was controversial but in many respects remains true, not least because of the variation in results following different sampling techniques and analysis methods.

He knew the drawbacks and limitations of soil analyses and the way that they could be used as sales aids by some fertiliser salesmen. I disagreed with Jim about the usefulness of soil analyses but I agree with him that only using fertiliser companies' soil analysis results to choose a fertiliser regime is unwise.

He believed that unscrupulous salesmen can create problems by selling inappropriate fertilisers and then selling something else to cure them. Independent advice is vital – I'm with Jim on that!

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Win an iPad in our annual competition – and appear in our desktop calendar

Get in the picture

Snap-happy BIGGA members again have the opportunity to win an iPad in the 2015 Photographic Competition.

Why not show off your course and send us a stunning photo? Digital camera images are preferred, but mobile phone entries are also encouraged. Digital images will be displayed at a 16:9 ratio. If you are using a mobile phone, please ensure it's taken on the highest resolution setting possible.

Members will again have the opportunity to pick the winners.

A panel at BIGGA House will reduce the entries to a final shortlist of 24, then members will pick the eventual winner.

The 12 pictures with the most votes will be included in the desktop calendar, and the entry with the most votes in total will scoop an iPad plus a framed version of their photo which will be presented to them at BTME 2016.

To enter, please send your photos to comps@bigga.co.uk with 'BIGGA Photo Comp 2015' in the subject field.

Please include your name, the club you work at and your membership number plus a caption for the photo with details of where and when you took it.

The closing date for entries is Friday 17 July 2015.

Advice from a past winner

Joe Dormer, Deputy Head Greenkeeper at West Sussex Golf club, won the Competition in 2013 and advised:

"It's not always practical to carry an SLR camera with you at work, and I think most will agree that a good photo is often about being in the right place at the right time. Personally I like taking photos of

the golf course with my phone to share on Facebook and for record keeping.

"A particular couple of photos taken of the 14th seemed to be quite popular on social media, and being my favourite area of the course I decided this would be the spot for my photo for the calendar.

"I usually arrived at the 14th mid

morning when the sun was up, so it was a case coming into work with an SLR (kindly lent to me by a friend) on a day off and getting the shot I wanted.

"So my advice would be to think hard about when and where your photo will be taken, use a good camera, and go out of your way to get the shot if need be!"

BIGGA GOLF PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION 2015 TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1 Open to BIGGA members only.

2 Photos of the course members work at, or a course they have visited, will be considered. Entries will only be considered if the entrant states what course the photograph shows.

4 Each entrant is limited to a maximum of 5 entries ie 5 different photographs

5 All photography entered may be used in a variety of publications.

6 Images to be high resolution and at 16:9 landscape (actual print size 172mm wide x 100mm high at 300dpi). Only images taken with a three megapixel camera or higher will be considered.

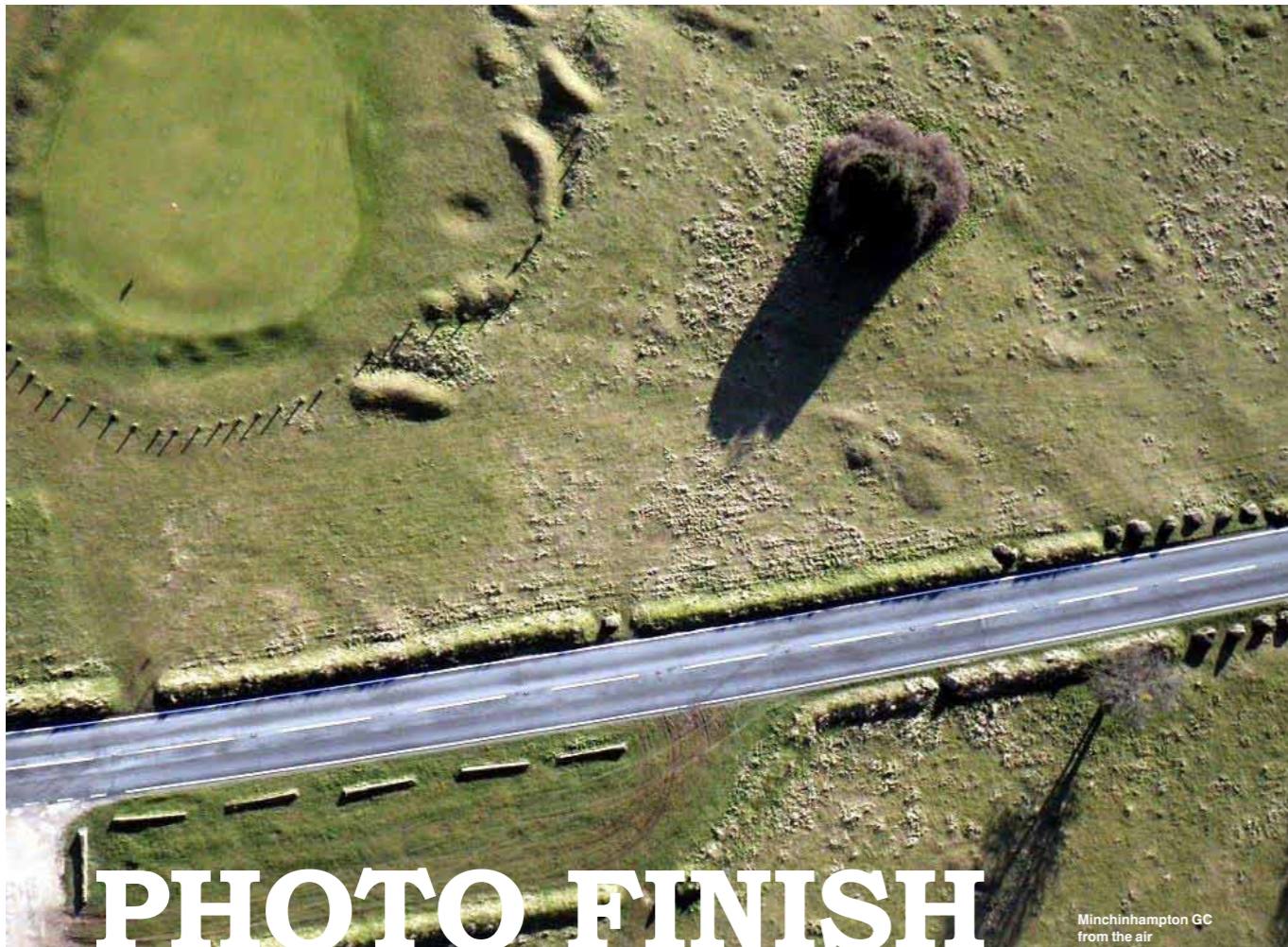
7 Entries are via email to comps@bigga.co.uk with transfer methods advised for large files. "BIGGA PHOTO COMP 2015" to be listed in the subject header.

8 The best 24 images will be provided for members to give their views on via an online survey. The survey will be linked to through the BIGGA website and will be open to votes within the Members' Area only. The leading 12 will feature in the 2016 BIGGA calendar.

9 The winning entry will receive an iPad and a framed copy of their shot.

10 BIGGA reserves the right to reject any entry if it is considered inappropriate.

11 The closing date for the competition is Friday 17 July 2015.



Paul Worster, Course Manager at Minchinhampton Golf Club, explains how good photography can promote your course and also help your agronomic projects

In this day and age when we are being constantly bombarded by different images from all around us – Twitter feeds, Facebook and the like; are we actually making the best use of the technology in our jobs?

One of the biggest disappointments greenkeepers seem to have is not having images of “what it was like when the course opened” – and it’s not uncommon for members to say “well, it never used to be like that”. Wouldn’t it be nice to be able to prove, or disprove it?!

A personal regret of mine is that I have just three pictures of my first golf club with just one of these being of me on a Ransomes-Hahn machine out on the course – taken at the tender age of 19 (no boots, ear-defenders, safety glasses or anything else but that’s by-the-by).

It was very refreshing to bump into Euan Grant at BTME and learn that in his new challenge of developing the Championship Course at JCB the first thing he did was to buy a drone to photograph the land.

As the course development takes shape, Euan will be able to demonstrate exactly what it looked like at each stage of development, right through to the finished product.

This will enable him to present the

benefits of the improvements even to the most critical of inquisitors. A really powerful use of photography.

At Minchinhampton, we do have a significant number of images taken by both me and my predecessor Laurence Pithie MG, and these really do show change over time.

This can be very important when making the case for a new bunker or perhaps moving an old one; taking down some trees and revealing a view; developing a tee and so on.

I would encourage everyone with a decent camera, or failing that just a phone, to spend a little time going around the course and getting images of each and every hole, tee, bunkers, trees, surroundings, greens and features. Get these on file and in order so you can quickly find a view on any given hole of just about everything, and then repeat the performance every so often – maybe five years.

That way the club relatively quickly builds a library of good information allowing it to monitor change and development. You might even ask your membership if they have any pictures and make arrangements to copy them into the system.

I was actually prompted to write this by an email from the Chairman of the ‘Kite Photography Association of Gloucestershire’. It won’t surprise you to read that I’d never actually heard of them but he asked me if I was interested in aerial images of Minchinhampton Common.

I immediately accepted and he responded with several fantastic images taken from a few hundred feet clearly showing stunning shots of the architecture of our Common.

One of the best examples of tracking change over time I’ve seen was actually at The Berkshire where images showing the (now) tree-lined golf courses being actually formed on open heath with views from miles around are displayed in the clubhouse.

Another great use of this type of information is the restoration job at Parkstone in Dorset where the course was completely hidden away in dense woodland, but now has stunning views across Poole harbour and the like.

So, with the 2015 BIGGA photographic Competition in the offing with some superb prizes and the chance to get a photo of your course in the Calendar and on the website, there’s never been a better time to get snapping!

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A Cornish treasure

In the first of a two-part article, Laurence Pithie MG travelled to North Cornwall to find out how Trevose Golf Club met the challenge of agronomics v playability

MAIN ABOVE: 10th & 2nd Greens courtesy of Jon Wood
BELOW: Marram grass planted on banks by new tee

For many UK golf clubs, August can be a 'quieter' month for competitions and visitor play so it is often the preferred time for carrying out major renovation work. Soil temperatures, daylight and weather conditions are favourable for a rapid recovery, but what happens on courses where August is the busiest time of year?

On the approach to Trevose Golf Club, there is a real sense that golf was meant to be played here. All the natural ingredients of dramatic coastline, sand dunes, fine wiry turf and the sound of ocean waves makes this a compelling site to enjoy links golf.

This is the essence of what makes Trevose such a popular golfing destination. The club opened for

play in 1925 and although the original Harry Colt design measured less than 5,800 yards, it quickly established itself among the best of what Cornwall had to offer. In 1955, the course was purchased by the Gammon family who have retained ownership.

Interestingly, since its conception there have only been four Course Managers employed over a span of 90 years.

The championship course has undergone numerous changes, now measures over 7,000 yards and is complemented by two short courses.

Members and visitors also enjoy the benefit of a covered driving range, two tennis courts and a surf school. The idea of golf in the morning and surfing in the afternoon is a rather interesting concept! For the

golfing fraternity and thanks to a mild climate, the course remains popular throughout the year. At no time is it regarded as being quiet and therein lies the challenge of producing excellent playing surfaces while play is continuous throughout.

Course Overview

The course is comprised of varying depths of blown dune sand over shillet, which is a mix of clay and slate.

Natural course grasses are fescues and bents although poa is dominant on the greens, while marram and cocksfoot are present in the more outlying areas.

Drainage is good although there is a high water table and as such there are a number of ditches, old land drains and more recent piped



laterals to move excess water from low lying areas.

Both greens and tees are naturally drained and offer year round play regardless of rainfall, while frosts are rare this near to the coast.

A full Rainbird Irrigation system providing water to greens, tees, fairways and walkways was installed in 2003.

Water is sourced from an internal stream and two springs allowing an annual extraction of up to 7000m3 (15 million gallons), although this amount would seldom be used even for 36 holes.

With competitions from mid-March to late-November, the attraction of playing on firm turf throughout the year presents its own challenges as to when it is suitable to carry out key cultural practices.

Challenges Ahead

When Jon Wood was appointed Course Manager in 2011, his key objective was to embark on the transition of greens dominated by Poa and Rye to that of Fescue. Jon gained his HND while working at the Forest of Arden, followed by a stint at Pinehurst, courtesy of the Ohio State Program. The lure of working on some of the best links courses gave Jon the opportunity to experience working environments under leading links managers at Doonbeg, Portmarnock Links and St Andrews before taking up the helm at Trevose.

Jon said: "Being a proprietary owned club, I am directly answerable to the Board of Directors to which Nick Gammon is the MD and also a category one golfer. Fortunately Nick and I had similar

views and objectives; these being to improve the playing quality of the greens, remove invasive weed grass from the roughs and to make general course improvements over a period of time.

"For this to be achieved, both mechanisation and manpower had to be sufficient to meet these challenges as well as the support of the Board. We now have a good fleet of equipment, most of which is Toro, while I have the support of eleven staff plus two part-time. With a 6am start in summer, it is essential that course set-up is completed ahead of play and this level of resource makes it possible. Part of my brief was to give members and guests a unique links experience and by this I mean providing high quality playing surfaces that are firm, smooth, fast and consistent.



Initial Work Detail

“For these objectives to be achieved, it was necessary to document where we were in terms of green performance and roughs content, the working practices required, timing of such work and the effect on play.

“While soil temperatures rarely fall below 6C, recovery from divot damage and general wear can be slow, while wind is a constant factor. Taking all factors into consideration and working closely with STRI, it was agreed that January and February would be the main months for greens renovation.

“Soil analysis revealed that incompatible layers of sand and peat had been added to the natural sand rootzone, leading to root break and too much moisture being retained in the upper profile.

“For Fescues to replace Poa and Rye as the dominant greens spe-

cies, the growing environment had to change and that was the initial objective.

“A soil exchange programme was implemented so all greens were cored at 40mm centres and then top dressed, starting with around 75 tons of Rufford 1742 which is used at both Saunton and Peranporth. Further solid tining was implemented throughout the year and a further 125 tons added in smaller amounts.

“Revolution wetting agent was applied monthly from February, while fertiliser applications via granular and foliar were kept to a minimum.

“After less than two years, OM content is almost at our target level of between 3% and 4%. Soil moisture content has fallen by 10% but still has some way to go before reaching the desired target levels for Fescue.

Progress Continues

“It soon became time to deal with the invasive rye. After initial trials on three greens, Rescue was applied to all 18 greens in August 2012 with a follow-up application later in the year.

“Two further applications have been applied since to remove all remaining rye.

“The latter being more of a spot treatment exercise.

“Various methods of overseeding with a straight Fescue mix have been implemented to determine what works best and for us it has been slit seeding with the Vredo.

“This is completed twice a year in May and September, with turf ironing to follow in order to restore putting surface quality.

“Although the greens remain predominantly Poa, a start has been made to changing the botanical

about the author



Laurence Pithie MG
 Laurence Pithie MG runs his own training and consultancy company, Turf Master One Ltd. Previously he spent 17 years managing multi-site golf operations in the UK. With 42 years in the golf industry, Laurence has used his experience and knowledge to produce a number of recent 'case study' articles.



INSET ABOVE: Green profile 2012

MAIN ABOVE: Par 3 3rd Green courtesy of Jon Wood

TOP LEFT: Recovered green after Rescue & over-seeding

SECOND TOP LEFT: Core Collecting (cored)

RIGHT: Rye invasion of putting surface



composition of the sward, now that we are nearing our various target levels in all departments.”

While the main emphasis has been on the greens, Jon has also had great success in thinning out the rough which contained a high level of invasive cocksfoot.

Jon continued: “We used Laser which is an approved herbicide for use in grasslands to remove unwanted weed vegetation.

“Along with cutting and collecting clippings, areas of rough are now more playable, with less time spent on lost ball searches.

“Tee enlargement, bunker renovations and marram grass planting have also been completed and this will continue.”

Summary

The success in restoring Trevose to a natural 'running' links is largely down to having a clear vision of

what is required. Jon has demonstrated that with good planning and organisation along with the support of the owners, a dedicated staff and a good level of equipment, much can be achieved.

Allocating January as the main month for greens renovation has worked well in this part of the UK with its mild winter climate.

Yes, recovery takes that bit longer but by Spring the playing surfaces are back to their best.

Membership feedback has been very positive and a full calendar of events for 2015 is testimony to the progress been made.

Next month Laurence heads to Bude to find out how they manage a similar situation further north up the Cornish coast

A Move 'Home'

Since this article has been published, Jon has returned to

St Andrews to take up the reins as Course Manager on the Castle Course.

Jon (right) said: "I joined Trevoise three-and-a-half years ago. It was my first Course Manager's position and a good challenge for me professionally. It was an opportunity to make my mark at a course which had a lot of a potential.

"I had been lucky enough previously to work at clubs with large resources, so at Trevoise where the budget is not quite as significant I had to adapt and learn new skills with a smaller team and less machinery.

"It's been great for my career, plus because it's a family owned proprietary club there is no committee, which has been a bit of a bonus!

"I've thoroughly enjoyed my time at Trevoise and it's been a pleasure to work with such a dedicated, committed and passionate team.

"For me, I feel returning to St Andrews is like going home. I already know quite a few of the team from my previous role there, and I can't wait to get started. Obviously it's a unique site, the Castle Course has been a magnificent addition and it's a dream move for me."

Neil Ivamy has now been promoted to Course Manager at Trevoise with Kevin Paterson moving into the role of Deputy.

Neil said: "I'm very proud to have been appointed Course Manager, as a local lad growing up Trevoise always had a special feeling about it.

"I'm very grateful to have worked with Jon. He's always made time to reinvest his knowledge into the team and this is something I will be looking to do with my team in the future.

"He was also very influential in putting my case forward to senior management in getting my new role and for this I am extremely grateful.

"BIGGA has also played a key role in progressing my career.

"Reaching the national final of the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award in 2012 gave me key interview experience, and this helped me tremendously when I interviewed for the position of Deputy Head Greenkeeper here later that year.

"Other initiatives such as the BIGGA Open Support Team have enabled me to gain tournament experience and network with other greenkeepers across the country which was hugely beneficial to my career too."

BIGGA wishes Jon, Neil and Kevin all the best in their new roles.



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All-weather turf - a greenkeeper's friend or foe?

Huxley All-Weather Tee at the Castle Course, St Andrews Links

Paul Huxley, Director at Huxley Golf, discusses the potential uses for artificial turf in modern greenkeeping – from practice ranges to pathways

Twenty years ago, few greenkeepers would contemplate allowing artificial turf anywhere near their golf course - and they were right. Although many courses had high wear areas, where natural grass struggled to provide an acceptable playing surface, the artificial turf then available proved quite unsuitable for golf.

People tried it on highly used tee areas and putting greens, but it was soon obvious that artificial turf made for tennis would not hold a tee peg or stand the wear on a

golf tee, and that synthetic surfaces made for hockey were no good for putting greens, which soon became unrealistically fast – like putting on glass.

But today it's a different story. More and more greenkeepers are discovering that purpose-made all-weather turf for golf is readily available. What's more, there are now plenty of examples where the right specification of all-weather turf for golf, correctly installed and used in the right place, has been a big help in keeping standards up and benefitted both golfers and greenkeepers alike. From members'

clubs to Open Championship and Ryder Cup venues, all-weather turf for golf is playing an important and successful role in helping greenkeepers meet golfers' demands for high standards throughout the year.

What led to this change? Well, as my old history teacher used to say when talking about the Industrial Revolution - "Necessity is the mother of invention." When the Huxley family business stopped supplying grass cutting and turf maintenance machinery in 2000, we could see a need from many of our golf course customers. Golfers



Students practising on the University of Stirling's Huxley all-weather putting green under the watchful eye of High Performance Coach Dean Robertson

wanted to play all year round, but natural grass couldn't always stand the resulting wear and there was no suitable, alternative low maintenance surface available.

So, we sensed an opportunity. Soon after we stopped making mowers to cut grass, we began developing and supplying grass, suitable for golf, that did not need cutting, and the Huxley Golf business was born!

So, where at a golf facility is all-weather turf most suitable? Well, we've certainly never advocated digging up natural grass greens and tees on much-loved golf courses and replacing them with artificial grass!

From the start, there has been a high demand for alternative "winter tees". Many courses have teeing areas shaded by trees where grass doesn't grow very well, or short holes with small tees which struggle to cope with high traffic. There are now hundreds of Huxley Golf all-weather tees at traditional member clubs as well as several Major Championship venues, throughout the UK and overseas, allowing greenkeepers to rest the natural grass tees to ensure they are in prime condition when required.

These days, more and more golfers want to practise. We've seen a rapid rise in demand for all-weather practice tee areas, as natural grass simply cannot cope with the many thousands of balls hit from a club's practice tee. At St Andrews Links, they have three very large all-weather practice tees which, for several years, have enabled many thousands of golfers to enjoy the high standards expected at The Home of Golf.

Similar all-weather practice tee facilities have proved a great success at Gleneagles, Royal Troon, Royal Lytham & St Annes, the Els Club in Dubai and The Hong Kong Golf Club as well as at numerous traditional members' clubs.

Short game practice areas, featuring all-weather golf greens and tees, are also becoming popular at proprietary golf courses, teaching academies and ranges. Brokenhurst Manor Golf Club in Hampshire recently chose to celebrate their Centenary by investing in a Huxley all-weather short game practice area to help improve members' golf.

Top quality all-weather golf greens will receive a shot realistically from any distance, without leaving a pitchmark, so they are ideal for practice greens or for small golf courses where maintenance

time must be kept to the minimum. We've constructed several small all-weather golf courses for private customers and have installed a number of similar courses for hotels and leisure complexes in the UK and overseas.

How about putting greens, pathways and lawns? We've installed all-weather putting and chipping greens at the homes of numerous professional golfers as well as at clubs where high usage has caused problems.

Pathways, bridges and waiting areas are all typical situations where all-weather turf can help greenkeepers maintain great visual appearance with high wear capability. Anyone who watched The Masters at Augusta will see the all-weather turf pathway over the Hogan bridge to the 12th green, and Huxley pathway turf can be seen throughout the UK from St Enodoc in Cornwall to Carnoustie in Scotland.

Is maintenance minimal? Normally yes, but it's crucial to remember it's far from non-existent! Birds drop grass seedlings, so you may need an annual application of Roundup or foliar weedkiller. Moss treatment may be necessary in certain conditions. Apart from that, unless wear is very high indeed, it's mainly a case of maintaining visual appearance which can usually be addressed with a leaf blower or brush.

If you have high wear areas on your course which are difficult to maintain, or if you want to improve or extend playing facilities without additional maintenance, you should certainly consider all-weather turf for golf. But - take advice from a reputable supplier and installer who can give suitable references and details of satisfied users who you can contact.

Remember that the correct base construction and installation are as important as the quality of the turf itself and don't waste time looking at uninstalled samples which tell you nothing!

By all means ask for advice from us here at Huxley Golf. We are the official supplier to the PGA, the Scottish and Welsh Golf Unions and to the English National Golf Centre at Woodhall Spa. Chosen with care, all-weather turf for golf can be a real friend and asset to today's greenkeeper.



Sand Pro makes light work at Burford

James de Havilland visits Burford Golf Club to see how the team are getting the best out of Toro's Sand Pro when it comes to bunkers

TORO



The greenkeeping team. From left: Stuart Richens, Neil Fathers, Andrew James. Front: Michael Barnes, Richard Hitchman.

Opened in 1936, Burford Golf Club is located in the heart of the Cotswolds. Although noted for its tree-lined fairways, the course has other standout features to include its bunkers. With 80 to choose from, many a golfer will have paid at least one a visit during 18 holes of play.

Greenkeepers know better than anyone that getting a course's bunkers right can be something of a challenge. Allow the sand to harden and an errant ball will stand a chance of eased extraction. Too deep and soft sand can see a ball burrow down too deeply.

The sweet spot is a fluffed surface that slows the ball on entry yet leaves it sitting just at the right level for the attention of a well-swung wedge.

Head Greenkeeper and BIGGA member Stuart Richens said: "Although we are experimenting with bunker liners, to include one created using rubber crumb, the bulk of the bunkers on this course have not been built to a specific specification. The main reason for trying linings is to see if they can help reduce our maintenance costs. With 80 to look after, including the one on our practice green, we need to keep on top of our bunker care."

When he joined Burford in 1986, Stuart says all the bunkers had to be routinely raked by hand, a tedious job that could easily take one man a day to complete. Nowadays with the course being so heavily used the bunkers would take even longer to hand rake. A conventional 'blade and peg' type ride-on bunker rake arrived in the 1990s, this type of mechanised tool having looked after the bunkers until February this year.

"Early last year, Toro dropped off the 2040 rake for us to try," added Stuart. "To be honest it was then a new model and I did not expect much from the machine. Three rake elements combine to give just over a two-metre wide width, the 'teeth' being made from a flexible rubber. I thought it would be too wide and did not think the 'groomers' would do much of a job, particularly in a bunker with hard-packed sand."

To further add to Stuart's initial misgivings, the Sand Pro 2040Z has a 'tricycle' zero-turn chassis. Working out how to steer a machine without a conventional wheel took some getting used to. But the machine was left with the club for long enough for Stuart to really give it a try and this saw his early misgivings replaced with a desire to buy the machine.





With a working width of 2.13m, the Sand Pro 2040Z has the ability to make short work of larger bunkers, its zero turn capability enabling it to also work in tight spots. Although the rubber 'groomer' rakes do not bring up stones and sub-sand debris they are aggressive enough to really fluff the surface. Hand perimeter raking adds the final touch to an impressive finish.

Toro Sand Pro 2040Z zero-turn bunker rake SPECIFICATION

Engine	Kawasaki 12.2 hp (9.1 kW) 2-cylinder petrol
Fuel Capacity	17 litres
Ground Speed	Forward 0-19.3 km/h, reverse 0-6.4 km/h
Height	185 cm
Length x Width	226 x 213 cm with Flex Tooth Rake
Weight	417 kg with Flex Tooth Rake

"With our steel-bladed rake there was always the possibility that the operator could bring up stone, particularly in a bunker that was nearing the need for a top-up with sand.

"I was also worried when raking the lined bunkers, the metal pegs of our previous machine having the potential to do a lot of damage if a liner got caught. The rubber rake fingers of the 2040Z are really gentle. They do not bring up any stone and, if a tooth hits the lining, it will ride up and over."

So does gentle behaviour in turn mean the flex tooth rake is not up to the job of cracking a bunker pan? Well you would think so, but Stuart suggests this certainly is not the case. One pass is typically enough to fluff up the most challenging of sand surfaces, producing a consistent and well-groomed finish.

"We only started using the new rake in February this year, but during that time it has raked all the bunkers at least two times a week, this increasing to three times as spring sees more play around the course."

Key rake operators are Michael Barnes and Richard Hitchman, both of whom have grown to like the Sand Pro 2040Z. Michael, however, is the more experienced user, having used the same model of rake at his previous club, Tadmarton Heath.

"I came to Burford at the same time as the new rake," said Michael. "As I had used a 2040Z before, it was me that got to use it here first. It is a good tool that does a decent job. Traction and agility mean it is easy to get into all the bunkers here and it has a nippy 12mph travel speed. This enables us to rake all the bunkers on the course in around four hours."

A 12.2hp twin-cylinder petrol engine powers the Sand Pro 2040Z. Stuart says he would initially have preferred a diesel engine but says the quiet and smooth running of the Kawasaki power unit is something all the team appreciate.

With regard to fuel use, 17 litres of unleaded in a full tank is sufficient to do all the bunkers twice, operating costs remaining well within acceptable levels.

"The Toro is priced competitively," added Stuart. "We looked at other rakes to replace our old machine, but the 2040Z was around half the price of some of them. But even if it were more expensive I reckon it would still be the right tool for us."

"The zero turn means it is really agile, a feature that lifts the arm on the inside of a tight turn rounding off the pass to leave a good neat finish.

"We have not had any negative feedback from the members which is equivalent to praise. It does a cracking good job."



BUNKER RAKING

1: A thumb activated switch works the groom lift and lower hydraulics. A 'lift in turn' feature is standard, this raising the innermost rake section in a tight turn to ensure and even finish is retained.

2. Steered via a pair of 'hockey stick' levers, the Sand Pro 2040Z has just a choke, ignition key and throttle on the side panel. In work, the throttle is set to half-revs, this delivering plenty of power, reduced noise and decent fuel use.

3. The rake's 'groomer' arms are raised hydraulically, the rubber fingers allow safe operation in lined bunkers.

4. The rubber fingers are sufficiently rigid to really fluff even hard bunkers sand. The finish left is attractive, with sufficient fluff to hold a ball without it sinking.

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Clouds over Chalara control

Dr Terry Mabbett revisits chalara ash dieback and gives his view on the UK outlook for the threatened ash tree – and whether moves to combat it have proved successful as summer approaches

Greenkeeper International was first to alert the industry to an impending epidemic of chalara ash dieback in September 2012. Since then the causal fungus (*Chalara fraxinea*), which infects the leaves and then proceeds to invade the woody tissue and kill native *Fraxinus excelsior* (common ash) trees has performed according to expectation.

Chalara was introduced on thousands of infected ash seedlings imported without checks or quarantine from EU countries and planted at hundreds of different sites all over the UK. As such, the result was entirely predictable.

The pathogen spreads via airborne spores at distances of 20-30km per season and sufficient to establish the 621 wider environment infections already identified, originating from these infected ash tree plantings of which 407 have been documented so far.

Given the disease affects a native woodland and wayside tree of secondary timber importance, the reaction by UK government is unprecedented.

Investment in research here and across Europe is huge and only dwarfed by a failure to identify a proactive method of control. The UK outlook seems bleak due to misinterpretations around fungal pathology and disease epidemiology.

Resistance or tolerance

Identification of ash trees with genetic resistance for use in a tree-breeding programme appears to offer the best route to long-term economic and sustainable chalara control.

However, basic misunderstandings prevail about genetic resistance and its distinction from tree tolerance to disease.

Genetic resistance prevents pathogen infection and its growth on the plant (in this case ash leaflets), while disease tolerance describes plants showing reduced disease symptoms and tree damage despite the presence of equivalent levels of active pathogen.

Forestry Commission England planted 150,000 ash trees for genetic resistance screening only to realise that in this particular host/pathogen relationship no such thing has yet been found and may not exist naturally.

Differing reactions by ash trees to chalara reported across Europe appear to be a consequence of differing levels of disease tolerance.

Ash trees are infected by *Chalara fraxinea* during the summer and early autumn months. Ascospores borne in fruiting bodies (apothecia) on infected ash leaf stalks that have overwintered intact on the ground are liberated and become airborne.

They land on growing ash leaves fairly close to ground level and germinate on the foliar surface to produce a germ tube.

There follows a microscopic infection structure called an appressorium which utilises localised high pressure to 'crack' the cuticle and to penetrate the single layer of epidermal cells. The pathogen then colonises the leaf tissue by moving down the leaf stalk (rachis and petiole) to enter the stem and invade the woody tissue, eventually killing the tree or substantially contributing to its death.

Genetic resistance prevents foliar infection through pre-formed



MAIN LEFT: The leaves of ash trees tolerant to chalara are infected in the same way, but the levels of defoliation and canopy thinning will be significantly less than normal levels of damage shown here on ash trees in Norfolk

ABOVE: The infection initiated by a germinating ascospore at the tip of the ash leaflet would have been prevented if the tree was genetically resistant to chalara ash dieback (Picture courtesy Forestry Commission)

RIGHT: Tolerance to the spread of chalara in the woody tissue may be genetically controlled but the age and size of a tree will confound the situation. Infected ash saplings like the one shown here will succumb much more quickly than mature trees (Picture courtesy Forestry Commission)





structures such as thick leaf cuticles (mechanical resistance). Or an inducible chemical defence mechanism whereby a chemical released by the pathogen elicits an equivalent chemical response in the surrounding cells and tissue to curtail and destroy the infection.

Such chemical mechanisms, under the control of so-called 'R' genes and highly specific for host and pathogen, are well established as the crux of genetic resistance in plants to disease.

Plant pathologists call this reaction a 'hypersensitive host response'. Genetic resistance means, in essence, no disease. Differences in reactions of ash trees to progress of infection, disease expression and tree damage are due to differences in the tolerance of trees to disease and not specific genetic resistance.

Tolerance may be under some genetic control but is clearly confounded by size and age of the tree and the conditions under which the tree is growing.

Older and larger trees are less quickly overcome than younger trees by the 'bulwark' effect of a bigger biomass. Similarly ash trees benefitting from good growing conditions – soil structure, soil fertility, soil moisture availability,

light levels and lack of competition from other plants – are better able to 'grow away' from disease.

Ash trees currently claimed as resistant are still susceptible to foliar by *Chalara fraxinea* but show levels of disease expression and damage lower than normal and due to tree tolerance to disease. Tolerance is of limited use in inherently long-lived ash trees which may now die in 20 years instead of ten. The Forestry Commission is currently equivocating by claiming that the terms resistance and tolerance are interchangeable. They may be to the layman but not for the professional plant pathologist.

At the end of the day genetic modification, as used to develop American chestnut trees resistant to chestnut blight caused by the fungus *Cryphonectria parasitica* (Greenkeeper International March 2015) may prove to be the only effective and sustainable way of securing genetic resistance in common ash to chalara ash dieback.

A chemical control conundrum

We are used to having fungicides at our fingertips to control plant diseases whether in agriculture, horticulture, amenity or professional turf. However, there is a lot

more to chemical control than just the efficacy of a fungicide. Other factors include application logistics, economics, environmental loading and the risk of fungicide resistance development, and especially if these impact on continued use of same active ingredients in other sectors such as managed turf.

Any attempt to control disease on wild trees like common ash which is ubiquitous, widespread and frequent is likely to run into problems on all these counts.

Despite this and largely in response to public outrage about chalara being allowed to enter the UK and the clamour for something to be done, UK plant health authorities (in this case the Food Environment Research Agency or FERA) embarked on fungicide testing.

The UK government's Chalara Management Plan (March 2013) included laboratory screening of 17 fungicides, followed up by field testing of those showing highest levels of protectant activity (prevention of leaf infection by spores).

The central aim was identification of protectant fungicide action but they used a laboratory screening test that records unrealistically low levels of protectant activity. Growing the fungus in agar broth supplemented with fungicide, and

ABOVE LEFT: Tolerance to the spread of chalara in the wood may be genetically controlled but age and size of tree will confound the situation. Infected ash saplings like the one shown here will succumb much more quickly than mature trees

ABOVE TOP: Genetic resistance means ash leaves do not sustain infection and remain clean, green and disease free

ABOVE: Ascospores are borne in tiny white, mushroom-like fruiting bodies called apothecia seen here on last year's fallen ash leaf stalks (Picture courtesy Forestry Commission)

about the author



Dr Terry Mabbett
Dr Terry Mabbett is a disease, pest and weed control specialist with forty years international experience covering research, advisory and journalism. His current fields of focus are professional turf and alien insect pests and pathogens of Britain's native and naturalised trees.

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measuring the inhibition of mycelial growth, simulates what happens when fungal hyphae attempt to grow and move through ash plant tissue containing suppressive trans-laminar or truly systemic fungicide that was sprayed onto the leaves and has subsequently moved into the host plant tissue.

Such tests favour systemic suppressive fungicides and are weighted against purely protectant contact fungicides which remain on the leaf surface as a sparingly soluble deposit to inhibit spore germination and/or stop the infection process. They are therefore inappropriate if the overall aim is to identify contact protectant fungicides for field efficacy testing.

The agar broth test used predictably downgraded the performance of the classic contact and multi-site action protectant fungicides like mancozeb and copper oxychloride [fixed copper fungicide] and therefore their status in subsequent field testing. Indeed they effectively downgraded the whole commercial range of copper containing fungicides including cuprous oxide. Cuprous oxide contains 89 per cent of the fungicidally active copper ion (Cu²⁺) and is the most potent of the

RIGHT: Contact protectant copper fungicides like red cuprous oxide shown here are sprayed onto the foliage to form a sparingly soluble deposit to prevent spore germination. Coffee leaves freshly sprayed with cuprous oxide shown here (Picture courtesy Nordox)

RIGHT BELOW: The dried and sparingly soluble deposit of red cuprous oxide deposit on the leaf surface, and visible under magnification here, will gradually release copper ions (Cu²⁺) to protect the foliage against infection over a long period of time (Picture courtesy Nordox)

BOTTOM: This 250-year tree is well beyond the normal 'sell-by date' for common ash and is clearly worth saving by tree injection.

RIGHT PAGE: Ash buds just beginning to burst in March this year – what does the 2015 season hold in store for common ash



fixed copper fungicides on a gram for gram basis. Copper-containing fungicides and especially cuprous oxide would have almost certainly provided the most cost effective control option for this woodland tree disease.

Chlorthalonil which is well known to greenkeepers as a purely contact protectant fungicide with multi-site action was not amongst the 17 fungicides tested. These classic contact protectant multi-site action fungicides present little or no risk of fungicide resistance



development and would almost certainly have offered the only economically feasible options for foliar fungicide spraying of ash trees.

Greenkeepers will probably not recognise these fungicides by commercial product name because they are used in agriculture and horticulture. However, they will recognise some of the active ingredients such as tebuconazole, trifloxystrobin and pyraclostrobin as highly effective, systemically acting (trans-laminar or truly systemic) disease-suppressive fungicides used to control a wide range of turf pathogens including *Microdochium nivale* (Fusarium patch).

These active ingredients selected out by laboratory and field testing belong to chemical groups (e.g. triazole, QoI [Quinone Outside Inhibitor] and SDHI [Succinate Dehydrogenase Inhibitor]) known to present a medium/high risk of resistance development. Risks are aggravated if the fungicides are not used precisely according to manufacturers' instructions and within strict regulatory limitations. Even though this was an experimental trial, these systemic site-specific action fungicides were sprayed on

ash seedlings in the field at a mind-boggling frequency of seven times over a 14 week period.

In commercial agriculture and horticulture, where these systemically acting site-specific action fungicide products are currently applied, use is restricted to no more than several applications per season and usually with no consecutive applications of the same or a chemically related fungicide. Such restrictions are stipulated by the regulatory authorities to minimise risks of fungicide resistance development and to maintain environmental integrity.

If the government run trials continue along these lines nothing in the way of a commercial fungicide which combines the efficacy and economy required to control this disease on ash trees by foliar spraying will be identified. Tree-injection techniques using an appropriate, truly systemic disease-suppressive fungicide to control chalara ash dieback in individually valuable ash trees, within amenity and landscape situations (including golf courses), may prove to be the only practical and economic option for control of chalara ash dieback disease in common ash.



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Markus Suojoki is Head Greenkeeper at Pickala in Finland, the country's biggest golf course and recently spent a month at The Carrick in Scotland furthering his greenkeeping education. He also visited BTME for the first time... and has decided to become a BIGGA member! Here's his story

A fine Finnish

Pickala Golf is based on the Southern tip of Finland, close to the capital Helsinki. It's a 54 hole facility. Because of our hard winter we need to close our courses for almost four months. I decided that this year, I would use my holidays to learn more about this industry.

I was looking at volunteering at courses all over the world. I thought about heading to a warm climate, but decided to head instead to quite a wet Scotland as I thought I would learn the most there!

A big reason for that decision was that Jim Brown is Course Manager at The Carrick. I knew Jim because of my six-week internship at Oulton Hall Golf Club in 2009, and I was keen to learn from him again.

I arrived in Scotland on 11 January. The plan was to participate in as many tasks as I could, and maybe learn skills that could help me become a better Head Greenkeeper.

I flew to Edinburgh and Jim came to pick me up, he had already made good plans for my time in Scotland which was very helpful.

When I first saw Cameron House Hotel on the site I realised that it was a very impressive hotel. Jim had very kindly arranged free accommodation for me at the Hotel, so thank you to Jim and Cameron House again for that. It was big thing for me!

When I left Finland there was 30-40cm of snow on my greens and the night temperature was -20C.

Although Scotland was not quite as cold as that, there was plenty of snow and the course was closed during the majority of my visit because of this. But that did not stop me from asking millions of questions about greenkeeping.

During my entire time at The Carrick, I had very good conversations with Jim Brown and Head Greenkeeper Paul McClearn about greenkeeping and how to be a good manager.

We spoke a lot about how they manage their course and also about some specific subjects like fertility, bacterial inoculations, aeration, top dressing, staff scheduling, health and safety and preparing the course for tournaments.

The biggest difference between Finland and Scotland is the coldness of winter of course but also the amount of rainfall in a year.

They have 1800mm in an average year, we had 400mm in our season.

When I came to Scotland I wanted to learn more about how to use my irrigation system more effectively, but when I heard that amount of rainfall here in Scotland I realised that an irrigation system is maybe not the most important factor for good greenkeeping in Scotland!

It was a very educational month for me and I need to thank Jim, Paul and the whole greenkeeping team at The Carrick.

I also had a chance to visit BTME for the first time ever. I spent two days there, saw a couple good seminars and of course I met a lot of new people. I also spoke to some old friends from my previous visits here in UK and it was nice to see them again. A special thank you to Tito Arana about those good ideas and thoughts you gave me after the exhibition. BTME was a very good experience and I will definitely come back to Harrogate again!

During my last days in Scotland I visited Loch Lomond Golf Club, which is next to The Carrick, to hear a little bit about what they do there. It was interesting to see that kind of golf course and how they manage it.

In my last week I went to London and completed my NVQ Level 3. I have a feeling that I will come back to UK many more times still, maybe for educational purposes or maybe with work - you never know.

I hope that everyone at The Carrick and greenkeepers all over the UK have a good 2015. After my trip I sent off my form to become an International BIGGA member, so in future I can read what is happening at your clubs!

Markus Suojoki
markus.suojoki@gmail.com

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

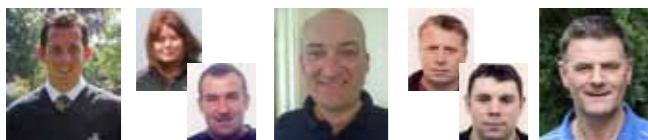


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Contact your Section correspondent with news, events or anything else for Around the green...



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Events Coming Up

NORTH

Chief of education Ali Matheson has organised a seminar for all Scottish North members to attend.

The seminar will cover two topics, including Rye Grass for Golf, which covers modern ryegrass cultivars and their uses. We will also have a talk about Course Set-up from a Rules Perspective.

Places are limited to 30 so be quick as this will be popular. This event will take place at Newmacher GC, starting at midday on Wednesday 13 May.

The next big event on the calendar is the Scottish Championships, which the North Section will host this year. Neil Sadler and his team are looking forward to welcoming everyone to Portlethen GC.

WEST

Just a few events to bring to your attention, the spring outing at Clobber GC was on 24 April, results next month.

The Scottish national outing will be played in the North region in June and John Young will send out the entries within the next month,

CENTRAL

Course walk around the Old Course will happen about the end of June so watch out for details, so please ensure your email address is updated.

EAST

Next event for us is the course walk at Gullane on May 12. Longniddry's hosting of the sections Spring meeting will be done and dusted by the time you all read this.

Congratulations to winners, there is always next time to the rest of the field!

The Scottish Boys Championship at Dunbar is being played in glorious weather as I type this, I hope the weather has been suiting you all, it's just over week since we had snow!

SOUTH WEST OF SCOTLAND

Autumn Golf Outing is on 3 September at Brodick Golf Club, Arran and the AGM is on 29th October at Irvine Golf Club.

News

NORTH

Davie Inglis has left Hazelhead GC and moved to Peterculter GC and Cameron Hutt has left Portlethen GC to join Oldmeldrum GC. We apologise if we've missed any news, but we do need members to send us your information so we can add it to our news section. Please send any correspondence to either email address.

Last season all Scottish sections organised a course walk round Donald Trump's International Links at Menie Estate. Many members attended these walks and they were very well received. We played on 4th April and the golf course was tremendous.

The greens were superb and the turf quality considering the time of year was outstanding. Congratulations to Steve Wilson and his team for complimenting the golf courses reputation. If anyone gets the opportunity to play the course, it is well worth it, oh and thanks again Mark!

WEST

Let's hope the start of the season continues to be good to us as I can see some of the few greens affected by disease back in November starting to fill in nicely. As nobody has contacted me about anything I will just ask the question on wetters to see if people actually read my piece. Which wetters are the best for you and why do you use them, I use a variety of different products, which are not cheap and I feel the results are justified.

I would be interested to hear people's opinions, as there are so many different products on the market. Please feel free to contact me if you are interested. My email is stuart.taylor@glasgowgolfclub.com, my mobile is 07790 823914, or the landline is 01419 425554.

CENTRAL

Paul Miller held a talk on Sand, Sand and More Sand at Elmwood Training rooms and it was another good turnout with 34 people attending. A small group made a trip to Levensat Quarry, this trip was quickly made up so if you didn't hear about it make sure to pass on your email address to us.

There might be another trip lined up so watch this space.

The Spring Meeting was held at Monifieth Golf Links, results to follow next month. Thanks to Scott Rennie and his staff for the great condition of the course.

Greig Easton is leaving St Andrews Links after 9 years to take up the position of Deputy Course Manager at Royal Cinque Ports and we wish him all the best in his career down south.

New members this month:

Marc Mann, Leven Links Golf Course,
Ian Scott, Downfield Golf Club,
Billy Hoggins, Saline Golf Club,
Gudmundur Atli Arnarsson, SRUC (Elmwood),
Michael Hughes, Gleneagles.

Welcome to all and hope to see you at some Central Section events.

EAST

Steven Hulme, Head Greenkeeper at Murrayfield & Ravelston Golf Clubs, has reviewed his journey to the Golf Industry Show as part of the BIGGA Delegation supported by Bernhards.

The report in full is online at www.biggascottishregion.com under education. It's a fascinating insight on the whole process.

We welcome new members - Jonathan Brown, Torwoodlee, Josh Gilholm Muirfield and Robbie Finlayson Haddington, If there are other new members not mentioned I apologise for the omission and welcome you too.

Remember to take chairman Les with you, though it's going to be a tad tricky to top Mount Everest!

The patrons award nominations are now being accepted and must be received by the education member by 31 July.

Full details on the website.

SOUTH WEST OF SCOTLAND

The golf season is well underway and I'm pleased to say for the most part the weather has been good with the exception on the day of the Spring Outing.

Brilliant to see so many of the Section turn up for the blustery event, which I hope, weather aside was enjoyed by all, regardless of your scoring.

Steven Gallagher, Deputy Head Greenkeeper at Dumfries and Galloway returned from the recent FTMI full of praise for the course.

He said: "The chance to network with like-minded people was very rewarding and fulfilling.

The amount of motivation and confidence it gives is a real eye opener and; therefore I would not hesitate to recommend it."

Reflecting on The Masters, Jordan Spieth might not yet be the next Tiger Woods, but he definitely served notice to the golfing world with a record-breaking first major victory.

On another note, it was great to see the players' children participating in the second year of "Drive, chip and putt" - a fantastic way of showcasing golf as a fun family pastime.

And better still, who would have thought that Rory M had such great taste, certainly not me until I saw him pitch up with One Direction's Niall as his caddy - happy days!

Dumfries & Galloway's Turf Club is under way and providing a good platform for the local greenkeepers to get together on both a social and professional level, so looking forward to hearing the outcomes of those meeting through-out the season.

Thank you to Derek Wilson for holding and organising the committee meeting on 30 April. As always, please continue to use the Facebook page and do get in touch with Ian and I with your news.

Welcome New Members

Welcome New Scotland Members

David Philip, Affiliate, Ross Weeden, Greenkeeper, Cruden Bay GC, Scott Corrigan, Greenkeeper, Royal Troon GC, Marc Mann, Greenkeeper, Leven Links GC, Ian Scott, Greenkeeper, Downfield GC, Joshua Gilholm, Greenkeeper, Muirfield, Allan Mackay, Greenkeeper, Cruden Bay GC, Kenneth Lawson, Greenkeeper, Cruden Bay GC, Euan McLaren, Greenkeeper, Dumfries & Galloway GC, Michael Hughes, Greenkeeper, The Gleneagles Hotel & GCs, David Munro, Head Greenkeeper, Fortrose & Rosemarkie GC, Billy Hoggins, Head Greenkeeper, Saline GC, Kevin McGrath, Head Greenkeeper, Elgin GC, Paul Stitt, Head Greenkeeper, Colvend GC, Gudmundur Atli -Arnarsson, Student, SRUC (Elmwood), Robbie Finlayson, Assistant Greenkeeper, Haddington GC, Michael Paterson, Assistant Greenkeeper, Elgin GC, Stuart Thain, Assistant Greenkeeper, Strathlene GC, Alexander McPherson, Assistant Greenkeeper, Elgin GC.

Welcome New Northern Ireland Member

Gary McDowell, Greenkeeper, Royal Portrush GC.

Welcome New International Members

Seamus Gaughan, MIGROS Golf Park (Switzerland), James Connelly, Affiliate, Planet Turf (USA), Zach Bauer, The Broadmoor (USA), Brian Stiehler, Highlands Country Club (USA).

Welcome New Northern Members

Brian Clark, Course Manager, Close House GC, Richard Whittaker, Greenkeeper, Lytham Green Drive GC, Paul Wight, Greenkeeper, Ramside Hall GC, John Edge, Greenkeeper, Ormskirk GC, Matthew Forder, Greenkeeper, Marland GC, James Dudley, Greenkeeper, Warrington GC, Simon Debbage, Assistant Greenkeeper, Whitley Bay GC, Simon Neath, Assistant Greenkeeper, Baildon GC.

Welcome New Midland Members

Philip Plater, Course Manager, North Oxford GC, Michael Smith, Greenkeeper, Wentworth Club (The), Christian Leech, Greenkeeper, Market Drayton GC, Oliver Claridge, Greenkeeper, Harpenden GC, Rajen Ramsamy, Greenkeeper, Harpenden GC, Joseph Green, Greenkeeper, North Oxford GC, Leslie Phillips, Greenkeeper, North Oxford GC, Matthew Mackenzie, Greenkeeper, Ellesborough GC, John Soave, Groundsman, Woburn Golf & Country Club, Lee Crutchley, Assistant Greenkeeper, Beedles Lake GC, Nigel Harding, Assistant Greenkeeper, Thorpe Wood Golf Course.

Welcome New South East Members

Jake Walker-Edwards, Greenkeeper, Bletchingley GC, Matthew Clarke, Greenkeeper, Dorking GC, James Bass, Greenkeeper, Littlestone GC, Greg Hall, Greenkeeper, Gillingham GC, Stephen Davey, Greenkeeper, Wisley (The) GC, Shane Stannard, Assistant Greenkeeper, Aldeburgh GC, Jake Cross, Assistant Greenkeeper, Bletchingley GC, Lee Thorn, Assistant Greenkeeper, Sundridge Park GC, Oliver Kirk, Assistant Greenkeeper Links (Newmarket) GC, Chris Dynes, Assistant Greenkeeper, Crews Hill GC, Warren Morgan, Assistant Greenkeeper, Bletchingley GC, Tony Osborn, Assistant Greenkeeper, Foxbridge GC, Darren Puhlhofer, Assistant Greenkeeper, Hillingdon GC, Matthew Farlie, Assistant Greenkeeper, Gog Magog GC, Jack Bulley, Assistant Greenkeeper, Ilford GC.

Welcome New South West and South Wales Members

Neil Eastman, Deputy Head Greenkeeper, Saunton GC, Gian Povey, Greenkeeper, Chippenham GC, Christopher Dafter, Greenkeeper, Woodbury Park Golf and Country Club, Scott Johnston, Greenkeeper, Langland Bay GC, Charlotte Pring, Greenkeeper, Oake Manor GC, Jonathan Maus, Greenkeeper, Royal Porthcawl GC, Nathan Jones, Greenkeeper, Royal Porthcawl GC, Scott Williams, Greenkeeper, Royal Porthcawl GC, David Bromley, Greenkeeper, Royal Porthcawl GC, Connor Hopkins, Greenkeeper, Enmore Park GC, Ashley West, Assistant Greenkeeper, Shirehampton Park GC.

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 Q&A session - The Mere, Monday 6 July
Cricket match North West V North Wales section - Ashley Cricket Club, Wednesday 8 July 5pm
Whitlaw bowl - Penrith G, 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 WALES

The spring tournament and course walk took place at Henlle Park GC on 29 April, this was an individual stableford qualifier for the national tournament later in the year, a full write up and results will be posted next month.

News

NORTH WEST

The Section would like to wish John Leigh of Blackley GC happy retirement after over 30 years service, we would also like to wish Chris Benton well as he is taking over from John.
One of our committee members Tom Wood went on the R&A scholarship to St Andrews recently, he said:
"It was a fantastic experience. Gordon Moir, Director of Greenkeeping gave a talk covering a range of topics, from an overview the history of St. Andrews and the Links Trust to preparations for The Open.
Gordon also gave a tour of the maintenance facility, which is very impressive and took us on a course walk.
Another experience not to forget was the visit to Kingarrock GC, where the course is maintained using only traditional methods, and you use Hickory golf clubs to play your way around the course. I would recommend to anyone to apply for the Scholarship."

NORTH WALES

In a busy spring "transfer window" James Hampson moved from Llanymynech GC to Chester GC; Harry Barbour has moved from Henlle Park GC to Llanymynech GC; Paul Lowe has moved from Symbio to Farmura and Jez Hughes has gone to use his talents with Symbio, We wish them all the best of luck with their new jobs.

CLEVELAND

As always April is a very quiet month and news is a bit thin on the ground, I'm sure the reason for this is we're all caught up with the sudden flush of growth (maybe not a flush for you lucky links boys) re-shaping of fairways and of course the need to finally put to bed any outstanding winter projects.

Over on the Cleveland section Facebook there are lots of pictures of golf courses in the area looking tip top, ready for another season.

I have a little news - I've signed up for my first marathon on 13 June. As I don't do things in half measures it happens to be the Swaledale marathon which is guaranteed to be lacking in any flat easy stages! It will be worth it and I'll be able to cross it off my bucket list.

If you have anything that you are proud of, or have achieved something and you want it mentioning let me no and I'll do my best to put it in. I can be contacted on either 07974 458640 or amcgeough@aol.com

NORTH EAST

Wayne Reid from Newcastle College has asked if any of our members are looking to employ an apprentice, or would like any of your existing staff qualified to Level 2, 3 or 4 in Work-based Horticulture. Government AGE grants of £1500 are also available to employers if they employ a 16-24 year old apprentice.

Please contact Wayne Reid of Newcastle College on 07725150834 or Wayne.reid@intraining.co.uk to discuss further.

The Section would like to welcome the new Head Greenkeeper at Alnwick GC Stuart Tait to our section. Stuart comes with a wealth of experience having worked at Renaissance and Gullane No1, I'm sure we will all make him very welcome.

Thanks to Sponsors

NORTH WEST

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



Your notes

Please send your news and photos in to your section correspondent or Steve Castle (steve.castle@bigga.co.uk) by the 15th of each month



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 golf 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 coming your way soon. This is the qualifier for the National so hope to see a great turn out to support this popular event.

Another date for your diary is our Summer Pairs Competition at Welwyn Garden City GC on Thursday 23 July so plenty to look forward to in the upcoming months of 2015 with some fun golf days at some fantastic venues.

Hopefully you will all have had the application forms for the Support Team at the British Masters at Woburn in October. This is a fantastic opportunity to be involved in a European Tour Event in our region so don't delay in getting applications to Roger Butler - Midland Regional Administrator - roger@bigga.co.uk for a chance to represent the Section at this flagship event.

MIDLAND

Spring Tournament - Wednesday 20 May 12:30 - Cost £25. Closing Date: 6th May. Prize Sponsor - Banks Amenity, 18 Hole Stableford please contact Rhys Thomas to book

Autumn Tournament - Kidderminster Golf Club, 9 September. 12:30 - Cost £25

Closing Date: 26th August. Prize Sponsor - Working Turf. Make Your Own Team Of 4 Players - 18 Hole Stableford

Winter Tournament Blackwell Golf Club - Wednesday 9 December, 10am. Cost £27. Closing Date: 21st November. Prize Sponsor - Campey Turfcare. Pairs For Partners To Be Drawn On The Day

News

MIDLAND

News is a bit light this month again guys really sorry everyone, once the sun come out and the course dries out flipping eck it's busy! If you have any news let me know, any photos you have pass them on too. Guys as you can see the Gaudet Lauce tournament is on may 20 please if you want to play and let Andy Laing show off his great course book now and come along, everyone is made welcome.

Thanks to Sponsors

MID ANGLIA

A big thanks to our calendar sponsors for march (I'll send a follow up email tomorrow as I don't have the calendar in front of me :))

Rigby Taylor Ltd,
Tuckwells Machinery,
Avoncrop Amenity,
Headland Amenity,
Amtech Amenity,
Farmura, Everiss,
Countrywide,
Banks Amenity
and ALS.

The Mid Anglia Section would like to thank the wonderful sponsors for 2015 and we are very grateful for your continued support with funds for our section.



Your notes

Please send your news and photos in to your section correspondent or Steve Castle (steve.castle@bigga.co.uk) by the 15th of each month



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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

We have two team events coming up in June. The first is our match against the Secretaries which will be held at Burley Golf Club on 9 June.

The second is the Rigby Taylor Team Trophy which will be held at The Players Club on 16 June. Both events require the section to put forward a team of 10. If any members are interested in playing then please contact our Team Captain, Tony Gadd via e-mail at tonygadd9@gmail.com

Following the success of our first Turf Club to The Berkshire, we can now confirm details of our next event. On Tuesday 18 August we have been invited to visit Hockley Golf Club. This will start at 12pm and follow a similar, informal format as before. If you are interested in attending, please contact biggasouthcoast@hotmail.com Places are limited and will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

SOUTH WALES

A Challenge match sponsored by Rigby Taylor will be held at the players club on Tuesday 16 June start time 1pm - a ten man team, please call our match captain Darryl Jones to put your names forward for this event.

SOUTH WEST

All section members should by now have received the fixture card for South West Section events for the year, if you haven't please contact Lucy and provide her with your correct address.

16 June - Rigby Taylor Team Challenge at The Players Club

22 July - Everris Golf Management Trophy at Minchinhampton Golf Club

10 September - Summer Tournament and National Qualifier at Bristol & Clifton Golf Club

18 November - Regional Conference at Somerset County Cricket Club

15 December - Christmas Tournament at Marlborough Golf Club

South West Section Countrywide Knockout for two-balls begin 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 COAST

Many thanks to Tony Gadd for stepping in and writing the column for the South Coast over the last couple of months while new committee members settle in.

If any members of your Greenkeeping team are not receiving Section e-mails then please could they contact biggasouthcoast@hotmail.com.

SOUTH WALES

Wenvoe Castle GC recently held our Spring competition. I must say the course was in great condition and all who participated on the day shared my view, thanks guys for such an excellent turnout. Well done to Mark Wilshire and his team for producing a first class course.

First place with a very impressive 40 points Jon Knight from Llanishen GC, second Ian Kinley, third Lawrence Walter from Wenvoe GC, Rhys Norville longest drive, P Holmstrom with best trade, the Club Captain Ken Howells & Dale Sullivan also won prizes.

Please check out our Facebook and Twitter pages for information on events, golf days (BIGGA) south wales. Great to see projects on these platforms people sharing before and after pictures, yes these accounts are like marmite you either hate or love them, please give them a try.

SOUTH WEST

Our first Section Turfclub was held on 18 March and was a real success with a great turn out from across the section. The afternoon was hosted by Stuart Bowman and his team at Thornbury Golf Centre.

Both Stuart and Adam Matthews gave presentations detailing their recent experiences in bunker renovation projects before our group spent time on the course to view Stuart's successful results.

We are currently planning future events so keep your eyes peeled for details.

Our section social media pages are as follow: South West Facebook: Bigga South West. 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.

Thanks to Sponsors

SOUTH COAST

The South Coast Section would like to thank our 2015 patrons who have offered their support in the first year of our patronage scheme.

This year's patrons are Agronomic Services Ltd, Banks Amenity Products Ltd, Countrywide Farmers Plc, Farmura Environmental Ltd, Indigrow Ltd, MJ Abbott Ltd, New Forest Farm Machinery Ltd, Rigby Taylor Ltd, SGI Industries Ltd, Sherriff Amenity, SuperGrass UK Ltd and Tacit.

SOUTH WEST

Many thanks to our 2015 Patrons: Ecosolve, T H White, Greensman, Irritech, Headland Amenity, Countrywide, Farmura, and H. Curtis & Sons 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.

South East

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



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Events Coming Up

LONDON

As we enter the busy spring period and the cutting gets more regular, I hope you can attend the Spring tournament at Bush Hill Park on Wednesday 24 June, and this is the qualifier for the national tournament. The summer tournament will be at Highgate on a date still to be set.

ESSEX

Spring Trophy - Warley Park Golf & Country Club. Tuesday 28 April. 11am arrival 12 noon tee off. £18 Members/Sponsors. £23 Guests.

Summer Trophy - Boyce Hill Golf Club. Thursday 11 June. Details to be announced.

Essex Captains/Greenkeepers. Romford Golf Club. Wednesday 15 July. Invitation by Captain.

Essex Team Event. Colne Valley Golf Club. Wednesday 16 September. Details to be announced.

SUSSEX

Sussex Section Away Day, 10 June, Littlestone Golf Club. Annual, sectional, regional and national events are posted on the BIGGA Sussex Section Facebook page.

News

LONDON

Congratulations to Nick Street from Crews Hill GC on getting on the FTMI. Finally any of our sections members who would like to offer a subject they wish to have one of our winter short education afternoons please contact me on email j.wells1@sky.com

ESSEX

At a committee meeting we co-opted Rob George from Thorndon Park Golf Club onto the committee to help with the education side of the section and Ian Nicholls from Orsett Golf Club will be coming to the next committee meeting with a view to joining us on the committee member.

More news next month with the results of the April competition at Warley Park.

SUSSEX

I recently returned from FTMI and I have to say, what an experience! The benefits of spending a few days learning intensively in the company of like-minded folk, accomplished industry figures and some awesome speakers, especially my mentor Lee Strutt MG, have just started to settle in. I would really like to encourage any Sussex guys out there who are envisaging a career in management to apply for FTMI 2016!

We are currently looking to enrich the Sussex section experience with some educational and social events. Peter Smith, as always, is working extremely hard to realise this, but we need some more input from yourselves. We would very much like to organise a couple of events in the summer for everyone's benefit.

The Sussex section needs you! Not just for arranging and partaking in course walks but to help make being part of the section something to be proud of! Our section is spread thinly over a large area but it can easily be brought together with the right attitude. The committee is currently in discussion with regards to how the section can be revitalised and diversified. A shared view is one that we require some of the younger greenkeepers to become more involved in the running of things. If you feel you have something to offer but aren't quite sure how to approach the situation, just drop Peter or myself a line.

Via the BIGGA Sussex Section Facebook page I got into conversation with Russell Carr of Goodwood Golf Club. We have decided to liaise at West Sussex Golf Club for a wee tour of the sheds and course. Hopefully if Russell allows me then there will be a reciprocated tour of Goodwood! I cannot stress enough the importance of networking. Steve Chappell, Head Greenkeeper at The PGA Centenary Course, Gleneagles, during his talk at FTMI really opened my eyes to thinking outside the box with regards to networking and volunteer work. I think it would be great to network more as a section, the benefits will be unrivalled.

Before I go I'd like to draw your eyes to a good read - the GTC article featuring Donald Steel on page 60 of the April GI magazine.

EAST ANGLIA

Golf day, 16 April at The Links GC, Newmarket, results: 0-9 Graham Hurren 36, Matt Gill 33; 10-18 George Butters 37, Daniel Graham 36, 19-28 David Driver 35, James Brown 30 (on countback). Trade & Guest Ross Stannard 36, A Durrant 34. Nearest the pin: Steve Millard, Daniel Graham, Graham Hurren. Longest Drive. Mick Buck

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.

ESSEX

We welcome Firstcall Corporation Ltd and Sherriff Amenity as new sponsors of the section with a full list next month.

EAST ANGLIA

Thanks to the golf day sponsors. Main sponsor - Tomlinson Groundcare. Others - Lely (Toro) UK, Ernest Doe & Sons, Tacit, Aitkens, Bartram Mowers.



Greenkeepers Training Committee

This month David Croxton, the GTC's Apprenticeship Trailblazer Chairman, explains the two reforms which he believes will be good news for employers and greenkeepers

During the lead up to the General Election all the main parties pledged their support to the Apprenticeship programme. This is good news for the GTC because when, 18 months ago, the Government put out a call for applicants for Trailblazing a new approach, we saw an opportunity to put Golf Greenkeeping at the forefront of work based Training. The result is that, from September 2015 education programmes in our Sector will just get better.

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills were looking to completely overhaul Apprenticeship programmes so that they became employer led, something which, as an employer, I welcomed. Perhaps, in the past, we accepted too readily those courses which have been on offer by the Colleges [all very well meant, I would say] but this gave employers a chance to have a positive input into content in the future. After all, we are all looking to produce staff of the highest quality possible.

So, back in the early part of 2014, the GTC gained Trailblazer status and embarked on an intense review of the Apprenticeship programmes for Greenkeepers. A focus group consisting of Golf Club Employers, College providers, Golf Course managers, BIGGA and England Golf representatives put together a new GOLF GREENKEEPER STANDARD and a well constructed education, training and assessment programme based around the GTC Training Manual, which itself has been updated.

There are two other aspects to this process, which will only apply in England. The first is a radical change to the way in which students will be assessed and the second is the way the whole of the Apprenticeship Scheme is to be funded by Government.

The overhaul of the Assessment process is a significant development and, as an employer, I think this is a positive step in



the right direction. It is important that we can make a definitive judgement as to the ability of the student at the end of his Apprenticeship period and this will now be the case. A series of end point Assessments will be carried out by Independent Assessors and the results will be graded. Students will be able to attain a Pass, Merit or Distinction and we see this as a big improvement on the current Pass or Fail Apprenticeship Scheme.

The Government has committed to fund a large chunk of the cost on the basis of 2 for 1 i.e. two thirds funded by Government to one third by the employer. However, in addition, there are other significant incentives which the employer can get access to which will offset costs even more. If a student starts young enough i.e. aged 16-18 and most of them are, a further £1800 will be paid to the employer. An additional £900 will be allowed for a business with less than 50 employees and this, of course, will apply to most Golf Clubs. Then finally, a further £900 can be claimed on successful completion of the learning programme.

The GTC is currently working with its Quality Assured Training Providers to prepare the new Golf Greenkeeper Apprenticeship programme for introduction from September 2015. Training Providers will offer help to employers on both designing a

suitable education and training programme to suit both their and the apprentices needs and to also agree a cost for their support. The GTC apprenticeship programme has the full support of BIGGA and England Golf.

So, for someone embarking on a new apprenticeship at basic level some big improvements will be introduced, starting with the Training Manual and working through to the end point Assessments. But, equally importantly this new Framework will carry on right the way through the learning process to advanced qualifications equivalent to Degree Standard or better. Those with the ability and the desire can continue along the pathway as far as they wish and there will be a qualification to match their achievement and their potential. Those that do this can rightly say that they will be true professionals in a real and highly respected profession. It is a genuine alternative to University education which we all know is a very costly exercise. It is expected therefore that work based training, in a wide variety of careers and professions will become more widely adopted thus reducing the cost of education for students and, indeed parents.

For further updates and information please visit www.the-gtc.co.uk or call David and Fiona at the GTC on: 01347 838640



The GTC is funded by:



Contact Details

David F. Golding
GTC Education Director
and Standards Director,
Greenkeeper Training

01347 838640
david@the-gtc.co.uk

GTC
Aldwark Manor
Near Alne
York
YO61 1UF

www.the-gtc.co.uk
www.greenkeepertraining.com



You can follow the GTC on
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George Pitts
Master Greenkeeper

MASTER GREENKEEPER

CERTIFICATE

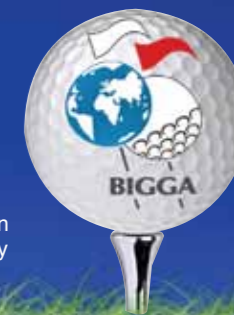
The Master Greenkeeper Certificate is awarded to those greenkeeper members of BIGGA who have reached the highest standards of greenkeeping and golf course management.

It is a prestigious industry award gained by

- Experience as a greenkeeper
- Through formal and informal training
- Golf course management assessment
- A rigorous, two-part examination

All Full, Associate and International members of BIGGA are eligible to join and earn Stage 1 Credits. Applicants must be Course Managers (Superintendents)/Head Greenkeepers to progress to Stages 2 and 3.

Do you have what it takes? Download an application form at www.bigga.org.uk by clicking on Education.



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Over the last 10 years, Turfdry has expanded into sports turf construction, rapidly establishing an excellent reputation.

Using 360-degree excavators and CAT D5 and D6 bulldozers fitted with GPS and laser control systems linked to computer design software, they deliver optimal accuracy and efficiency in transforming projects from designs into facilities.

Upcoming projects include further drainage and construction work at The Rayleigh Club in Essex, where the Turfdry Drainage System was installed on all 18 holes of the championship standard South Course in 2014. Similarly, the greens drainage installed by Turfdry last year at Enfield Golf Club has proven so successful – what was previously described as the most waterlogged green on the course is now seen as one of the best – that a further 6 greens are set for drainage works this year.

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Photo courtesy of Ridding Park Repton Short Course 'Signature Island Green'.



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As this is a trainee position the duties will evolve as experience is gained and both external and internal training is undertaken.

As well as Ransomes Jacobsen we represent several other premium manufacturers such as Claas, Iseki, Charterhouse, Kawasaki, Shibaura, Major, Bailey and McConnel.

If you would like to move forward with one of the largest independent agricultural machinery dealers in the UK and would like a confidential discussion please contact Alistair McRobert on 07836 259261. For an application form contact Keri Ellis on 01228 614242 or email keri.ellis@rickerby.net

All enquires are treated in the strictest confidence. Closing date is Friday 29th May 2015



Amenity Specialist

Sherriff Amenity is the specialist division of Agrovista UK Ltd. We are the leading supplier of turf care and amenity products in the UK. We are currently looking for an amenity specialist to join our team to cover Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex.

This challenging opportunity is a technical sales role in which you will develop and maintain business in your trading area by offering sales support and technical advice to new and existing customers.

Our comprehensive training programme provides professional support, leading to a BASIS qualification, in addition to a full commercial skills training programme. To succeed, not only in our training programme but also as an amenity specialist, you will need to be self motivated, able to work on your own initiative, demonstrate commercial awareness and have a flexible approach towards working in an industry where seasonal fluctuations frequently dictate the working pattern.

Knowledge of the fine turf and amenity industry, along with industry recognised qualifications, would be advantageous but not essential as full training will be given.

This role offers an excellent package including company car, contributory pension scheme and 25 days holiday plus Bank Holidays per annum.

To apply, please forward your curriculum vitae and covering letter to lisa.pitt@agrovista.co.uk alternatively call our HR department on 0115 921 8420 for more information.

Sherriff Amenity, Cambridge House, Nottingham Road, Stapleford, NG9 8AB

Tel: 0115 9390202

Fax: 0115 9398031



Goring and Streatley Golf Club
120 year old private members club.



We are looking to appoint an Assistant Greenkeeper, with no experience looking to make a career out of Greenkeeping or an Assistant with up to one years experience.

The ideal candidate should have the following attributes:

- Self motivated and a keen eye for detail
- Be flexible and have the ability to work as part of an enthusiastic team
- Be able to work weekends as part of an overtime rota

Please apply by email to the Course Manager Brian Valentine
Valentine835953@yahoo.co.uk

Or in writing to: Brian Valentine, Goring and Streatley Golf Club, Rectory Road, Streatley, Berkshire, RG89QA

Senior Greenkeeper

Windmill Village Hotel Golf & Leisure Club, Coventry are seeking a Senior Greenkeeper to join them:

Requirements:

- NVQ level 2 or better in Greenkeeping and sports turf
- 5 years or more experience.
- PA 1 & 6 required

A salaried position with overtime as time in lieu available to use during winter months.

- A lunchtime meal is provided on a daily basis
- Average working week of 39hrs, weekends on a rota system
- Full golf membership is available
- Full use of leisure facility during off peak times

Please send a full CV and expected salary to:

Attn of: Golf Course Manager greenkeeper@windmillvillagehotel.co.uk



SUNNINGDALE GOLF CLUB

Assistant Greenkeeper

Sunningdale Golf Club wishes to recruit an Assistant Greenkeeper. Working as part of a team in the maintenance and development of the golf course, its practice facilities and the surrounding estate.

The candidates should have:-

- Minimum 3 years' experience preferred
- Minimum qualification of NVQ level 2 or equivalent preferred.

Desirable qualifications;

- PA1, PA2 and PA6 spraying certificates

Sunningdale is dedicated to achieving truly World Class standards:

- Senior Open Championship, August 2015
- Seniors Amateur Championship, August 2017
- The Sunningdale Foursomes Tournament, annually.
- Old Course ranked No 2 in England and No 22 in the World Top 100
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- Investors in People Gold Standard Award

Please apply in writing or email with full CV and covering letter to:
Clare Livingston, Administration & HR Manager, Sunningdale Golf Club
Ridgemount Road, Sunningdale, Berks SL5 9RR
jobs@sunningdalegolfclub.co.uk

www.sunningdale-golfclub.co.uk

Closing Date for Applications: 18th May, 2015



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Please send your C.V to stuart.cooper@unipeg.se
Alternatively please contact me on +46766774024.



Woodcote Park Golf Club Qualified Assistant Greenkeeper (full-time)



Woodcote Park is an established private members golf club in Surrey with an excellent reputation.

The successful candidate will be able to meet the following key criteria:

- NVQ level 2 or better
- Preferably at least three years full-time experience at Assistant Greenkeeper level
- References available from employers recognising their high quality standards
- Proven history of producing work at a high standard
- A positive team player who is happy to go the extra mile
- Customer-service orientated attitude and possessing a strong desire to be the best
- PA1, PA2 and PA6a chemical application licenses desirable but not essential
- Remuneration package dependant on experience

CVs with a covering letter/ e-mail detailing how you meet the key criteria should be sent to Mr Gordon Bell, Course Manager, Woodcote Park Golf Club, Meadow Hill, Bridle Way, Coulsdon, Surrey, CR5 2QQ. OR coursemanager@woodcotepgc.com
Closing date: Friday 22nd May 2015

Deputy Greenkeeper Boringdon Park Golf Club

We are looking to recruit a highly motivated individual to join our enthusiastic team and assist the Head Green Keeper with the day to day running of our two Golf Courses.

The successful candidate should have the following attributes:

- Hard working and self-motivated
- A keen eye for detail
- The ability to lead and motivate the team in the absence of the Head Green Keeper
- Willing to work flexible hours (average of 45 hours per week, including alternate weekends)
- A sound knowledge in modern Green Keeping machinery and its maintenance
- A good knowledge of health and safety requirements

Essential Qualifications

- NVQ Level 2/3 or the equivalent in Green keeping and Sports Turf Management
- A minimum of 3 years' experience
- PA 1, PA2 and PA 6 Spraying Certificates

Salary dependent upon qualifications and experience.

To apply please email your CV and covering letter to steve.dougan@boringdonpark.com



PORTLETHEN GOLF CLUB

Require an
ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

We are looking to appoint a qualified Greenkeeper to work within an experienced team, under the guidance of the Course Manager.

Applicants will be qualified to NVQ level 2 and preferably hold current spraying certificates.

A competitive salary is offered dependent on qualifications and experience.

Please forward your CV to Neil Sadler Course Manager, Portlethen Golf Club,
Badentoy Road, Portlethen, ABERDEEN AB12 4YA
or email to admin@portlethengolfclub.com

Deputy Head Greenkeeper Hassocks Golf Club

Hassocks Golf Club is seeking a Deputy Head Greenkeeper who wants to take the next steps in their career to improve their management skills by becoming a Head Greenkeeper.

The Club has ambitious plans to invest in developing the golf course over the next 2-4 years and is therefore seeking a highly motivated individual with the vision and skills to produce a course of the highest quality.

Competitive salary with company vehicle included
Email with a CV to Greg Kemsley (General Manager) to greg@hassocksgolfclub.co.uk or call 01273 846630.

Closing date Saturday 20th April 2015

Interviews will take place week commencing Monday 27th April 2015

Further details at

www.bigga.org.uk/careers/head-greenkeeper/01563.html

Marlborough Golf Club

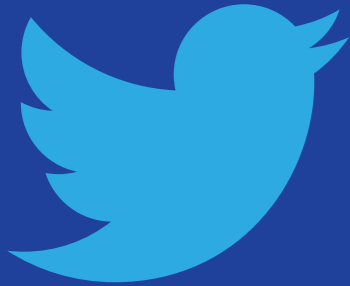
Marlborough Golf Club is a 126 year old Private Members Golf Club. We are looking to appoint a qualified Greenkeeper to work within an experienced team, under the guidance of the Head Greenkeeper.

The ideal candidate will need to be:

- A team player with a passion for delivering a high standard, quality golf course
- Ideally a minimum of 2 years' experience and qualified to NVQ level 2
- Have a good understanding of all Greenkeeping practices.

Salary is dependent of qualifications and experience. The position includes a generous pension scheme, BIGGA membership and work clothing.

Please email or post your covering letter along with C.V. and references to: gm@marlboroughgolfclub.co.uk or in writing to:
General Manager Marlborough Golf Club
The Common Marlborough
SN8 1DU



@BIGGALtd

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...

@SamSweetzer
@BIGGALtd Great photo of the 2nd green at West Hill GC. Taken by @147SHarvey #greenkeeper #almostsummer

@RobSandilands
Another great weekend for golf @GOSgolf_club, greenkeeping is great on mornings like this! @BIGGALtd

@paul_armour
Home end starting to take shape. @TheHomeofGolf @TheOpen @BIGGALtd

@downie82
Martin Brown won employee of the quarter @AldwickburyGolf #HardWorkPaysOff

@AntzXVI
@BIGGALtd pass the information to your members #knowledge

@CHGC_Greens
@BIGGALtd Safely home from Everest! Big thanks to #Djuke for the support of my charity @BFFoundation #takeleswithyou

@sandra4bigganor
BIGGA North West Seminar at Myerscough will be on 28th October 2015, look out for further details and book early @BIGGALtd @BIGGANorthWest

@Tracey_Maddison
Getting ready for a trip to meet @BIGGALtd Northern Ireland #greenkeepers tomorrow with John Young #Lookingforward #education

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Calling all #students that have played #golf could you help @EnglandGolf by completing a student survey <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/LV6K7F3> #uniorgolf



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