

# GI

# GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

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wildlife habitats*

## PRINCE OF PERSIA

*in Bahrain with  
Jordan Fairweather*

*and much more...*

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Jim Croxton

**BIGGA General Manager**  
Tracey Maddison  
[traceymaddison@bigga.co.uk](mailto:traceymaddison@bigga.co.uk)

**BIGGA Finance & Procurement Manager**  
Steve Wragg  
[steve@bigga.co.uk](mailto:steve@bigga.co.uk)

**Contact Us**  
BIGGA House, Aldwark, Alne, York,  
YO61 1UF  
[info@bigga.co.uk](mailto:info@bigga.co.uk)  
[www.bigga.org.uk](http://www.bigga.org.uk)  
Tel – 01347 833800 | Fax – 01347 833801

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#### Production

**Design & Artwork Production**  
Andrew Price  
Tel – 01423 560086

[www.andrewpricedesign.com](http://www.andrewpricedesign.com)  
@APriceDesigner



#### Editorial

##### Communications Executive

Steve Castle  
Tel – 01347 833800  
ext 510

[steve.castle@bigga.co.uk](mailto:steve.castle@bigga.co.uk)  
@SteveCas12



#### Advertising

##### Business Development Manager

Jill Rodham  
Tel – 01347 833800  
ext 519

[jill@bigga.co.uk](mailto:jill@bigga.co.uk)  
@JillyPops12

#### Printing

Warners Midlands Plc, The Maltings, Manor Lane, Bourne, Lincolnshire PE10 9PH  
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George Brown

## The Association Mourns the Passing of a Greenkeeping Legend

**This column starts, as does the main section of the magazine with the news of the passing of our 2003 Chairman, George Brown. An undoubted legend of the profession as well as a great man, I only knew him for a few years but I shall remember him for the passion he showed for the promotion of greenkeeping and a mischievous sense of humour.**

I first met him in 2011 at the Royal St Georges Open Championship in his beloved Kent, I think maybe a whole five minutes had passed before he played his first joke on me, but it was clear from the very first conversation that he was hugely proud of his profession and believed passionately in BIGGA's drive to gain recognition for the professionalism of his fellow greenkeepers. I am sure you all join me in offering condolences to his wife, Brenda, and his two children, Paul and Sarah.

Since George's sad passing I've had many conversations about him with his former colleagues, friends and peers. Alongside his aforementioned sense of humour a consistent theme has shone through in every recollection – his exceptional ability as a greenkeeper to serve the needs of both the turf and the customer. In many ways George was a pioneer in this area, the famous Ailsa course at Turnberry was one of the first of the iconic Open venues to be genuinely open to the golfer, which brought levels of play far in excess of its rivals. George used all his skills and insight to ensure that every golfer experienced first class surfaces whilst ensuring that the golf course retained its true links roots.

Fast forward thirty years and that balance still lies at the heart of greenkeeping. All of our members are custodians of a piece of land, all want the very best for it, yet all have to present surfaces for play come what may.

As with everything, education is the key to success so it is appropriate that this magazine marks the launch of the Continue to Learn Programme at BTME 2016, the largest and most comprehensive greenkeeper education event in Europe. Size isn't everything but with 243 hours of content the 2016 programme is 13% larger than 2015 and, having been formulated through member feedback should represent an attractive option for all. With BTME 2016 set to be busier than ever, I am sure the programme will be incredibly popular, it is a cliché but 'book early to avoid disappointment'!

And speaking of education I must offer my congratulations to all the finalists in the recent Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year event. The standard just keeps on rising, year after year, and as usual it was absolutely inspiring to spend time with such talented and ambitious greenkeepers. Steve Thorne proved himself to be the best of the best but it was a fiercely fought contest. As ever it shows that this wonderful profession is in good hands.

Enjoy the read.



Jim Croxton, Chief Executive



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# Chairman's Word

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

## Education focus as BTME approaches

**September was a busy month with a golf finals weekend and lengthy autumn meetings at Richmond Golf Club followed by a drive up to BIGGA House for a Board of Management meeting and the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year final.**

I would like to publicly thank my team at Richmond for doing such a great job through the summer whilst I have been on Association business. October also sees one of my team retire from greenkeeping after 47 years in the industry - I wish Pat Kidd all the best and thank him for his hard work and dedication.

The Board meeting was, once again, a productive few days. Work continued on the Strategic Plan, thank you to everyone who took the time to fill out the last survey. There will be one more member survey to help us complete the process and I would urge all members to take this opportunity to help shape the future of the Association. We were also very pleased with the end of financial year figures, where BIGGA as a business comfortably outperformed its budget. The final figures, once audited, will be made public prior to the AGM.

As the Board meeting finished I was thrust into judging Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year. Each year the decision gets tougher! In the end Steve Thorne from Rushmore Golf Club was crowned 2015 winner – congratulations to him and I wish him all the best in the States as he claims his prize. As I posed with Steve it was good to finally get my hands on the trophy after trying for years earlier in my career! Well done to all the finalists, it looks great on the CV.

The BIGGA Walkers completed their 60-mile hike to BIGGA House in aid of the Benevolent Fund and I joined them at the end of the first leg. Well done to all of you, and more importantly well done on putting up with Martin Brown for two whole days!

It's good to see Sections and Regions putting on many education events through the winter. Committees and volunteers put in a huge amount of



**“Steve Thorne is the TORO Student Greenkeeper of the Year 2015 winner – congratulations to him and I wish him all the best in the States as he claims his prize.”**

work and time to ensure education is in place for all members to take advantage of. I implore you all to take these opportunities. Also, if you have any non-member friends that would benefit, consider taking them along and maybe they will consider joining BIGGA. This seems like a suitable time to remind all members of the CPD scheme that we have in place. It's free and easy to get registered and we are now starting to see job adverts with a request for CPD Approved or Active status.

On 1 October there was just over one hundred sleeps till BTME 2016. I spent a productive morning with the CEO and other BIGGA team members at the Harrogate International Centre for a planning meeting. At the time the Bridal and Wedding show was in full flow and I think it's fair to say the halls look a lot different filled with models in wedding dresses instead of mowers, tractors and chemical bottles.

As 2016 will see a return to a five hall show and the inclusion of GolfBIC, it may be worth considering extending your stay to ensure you get the most out of the experience. The Continue to Learn programme is included with this month's magazine, once again it's packed with useful, interesting and educational content on a first come

first served basis - so early booking is encouraged.

It was with great sadness that I learned of the passing of George Brown. Dealing with the loss of a friend or loved one is never easy; dealing with the loss of one such as George will be even tougher. George was an amazing character, full of life, always a joker and a storyteller, a brilliant Greenkeeper and excellent golfer but most of all a true gentleman. He was looked up to by almost every Greenkeeper in the country and I was lucky enough personally to get to know him in the later part of his working life. We will all have stories about George that will make us laugh and smile, I am sure they will be told for many years to come at BTME and other networking events, he will go down in history as a Greenkeeping legend. George will be greatly missed and my thoughts and condolences and those of the entire BIGGA fraternity go to George's family.

Les

### Contact details

Les Howkins MG  
Email: [chairman@bigga.co.uk](mailto: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



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# George Brown 1938 – 2015

**Everyone at BIGGA and the greenkeeping industry was saddened to hear of the death of George Brown, who was National Chairman of the Association in 2003.**

George, who was 77, was former Course Manager at Turnberry, the legendary links facility in South Ayrshire, Scotland.

Hailing from Kent, George was immersed in golf from an early age as a caddie, greenkeeper, and also extremely talented golfer.

He was appointed Course Manager at Turnberry in 1985 and hosted three Open Championships – 1986, 1994 and 2009, as well as countless other tournaments and events.

He received a Lifetime Achievement Award from BIGGA in 2009.

## TRIBUTE FROM DONALD STEEL

Many a Scottish greenkeeper has found his way south. George Brown was one of the few crushed by the stampede as he headed north. In 1986, at the “royal” command of Jim Arthur, George was appointed Head Greenkeeper at Turnberry following the sudden death of his namesake, Russell.

As the Open championship beckoned in July, there wasn't a moment to lose but subsequent events proved there was never any doubt they had chosen the right man. It was the first of three Opens that George oversaw in 23 years, a stay that won him Scottish adoption rights and the affectionate title of George MacBroon.

However, he was a

Man of Kent or, more specifically perhaps, a “prince” of Prince's. He was a greenkeeper there as a kid when his father was Caddie Master and his mother did the cooking; and it was there that he won the Kent Amateur championship in 1973. It was to Prince's that he returned as Head Greenkeeper in 1975 and, with what he described as little more than two men and a rake, upgraded the course to the Open qualifying rota. In addition, it was there that he played his final round of golf and it was there, fittingly, that his many friends congregated to celebrate his life after his

cremation on October 2nd.

For sure, George conformed to Winston Churchill's assertion that a man is lucky if his work and pleasure are one but there was nothing lucky about him becoming either a champion golfer or a champion greenkeeper.

However the road George trod was far from easy. The early 1960s were certainly years of hope and expansion but it was also at a time when membership numbers in Clubs were depleted, one or two changed hands and money was scarce. Without today's sophisticated machinery, greenkeeping was rather

more backbreaking and turning professional was far from the automatic process it has since become. What is more, regaining amateur status was full of pitfalls and long waits.

In spite of this, George was good enough to chance his arm as a professional in 1962 a year or so after the PGA abolished their five year qualification period for membership. In order to guarantee an income, he doubled as Professional/Greenkeeper at Alton in Hampshire but greenkeeping was his real day job. In the early 1980s, he was put in charge of the new development at nearby Broome Park before Turnberry provided the platform for him to display his full skills.

Typically, George never complained about his plight when making his way but his real legacy is that he wanted something better for future generations and, more poignantly, fought hard to achieve it. There were others who thought the same way, forming themselves into a happy band of pilgrims to further the cause. Much has happened in fifty years but nothing to compare with the vastly improved conditioning and presentation of our courses all over the world from which all golfers have benefitted.

This is neither the time nor place to name names. BIGGA members can distribute their own accolades but George's robustly attractive sense of humour ensured that serious business wasn't conducted without a smile and a laugh. George and





# THE TRIBUTES FLOOD IN FOR A WELL RESPECTED MEMBER OF THE GOLF & GREENKEEPING ASSOCIATION



Donald Steel

Walter Woods engaged in ceaseless banter often during solemn meetings. One example was Walter's contention that George was the expert in annual meadow grass. Oh well, George responded, at least I have got some grass to treat.

From the outside looking in, my take is that greenkeepers are on a par as a brotherhood with lifeboat men and National Hunt jockeys, doing what has to be done without fear or favour - frequently in weather unfit for ducks. Recent golfing history is full of episodes whereby, only by the dedication and hard work of the local staff and an army of willing volunteers, have glittering shows been kept on the road.

Much of the headway made has revolved around proper training and education. Greenkeeping has become the job of a lifetime - for a lifetime - and much of that advance is down to far-seeing luminaries such as George and BIGGA who have picked up the baton and run with it. As their worthy Chairman in 2003, BIGGA's members will not be surprised that

George faced his final illness head on. He fought the good fight but it wasn't an easy time for Brenda and family and all will wish to convey warmest condolences and good wishes.

My first acquaintance with George was in a South Eastern Counties qualifying event at Frilford Heath, the year he was Kent champion. Unlike many other forms of golf, competitive tournament golf makes everyone equal and, as a result, is wonderful for building respect and friendship. It was certainly a great prelude to our later working together first at Broome Park and then at Turnberry. On the Ailsa, it may have involved little more than a few adjustments but the creation of the Kintyre was a major undertaking in which George played a notable part.

As an accompaniment to his time in Scotland, George showed he had lost none of his skill as a player, rounds under 70 to win Medals or, more usefully, a few pounds, being a common occurrence. When the Duke of York was on service duty, George was more than once recruited to act as partner and guide. The Duke may also not have been immune from George's colourful jokes but what may have impressed His Royal Highness rather more was the pride George took in the attention to detail on courses that can be spotted a mile away. As a leader, George was truly one of greenkeeping's Greats.

Donald is the chairman of the Greenkeeping Training Committee, a noted golf course architect and writer.

## FURTHER TRIBUTES...

**Chris Kennedy, former Courses Manager at Wentworth and one of George's closest friends said...**

"George was a special individual, hugely funny and quite simply one of the finest links greenkeepers there ever was. He was a pioneer in understanding and achieving the balance between managing a fabulous piece of links land, one of the best there is, and meeting the expectations of his customers and employers.

At Turnberry in those days he had to proactively manage a huge amount of wear and tear and did whatever he needed to do to ensure golfers, be they humble amateurs or the elite professionals, encountered excellent surfaces time after time. I used to love our 'discussions' with the likes of Jack McMillan and Walter Woods, who called him 'Stripy' Brown due to his focus on modern presentation. Opinions differed in some areas but he was always a loyal friend to us all. We will all miss him terribly."



Chris Kennedy



**BIGGA AWARDS SPONSORED BY JACOBSEN, PITCHCARE & GBR TECHNOLOGY**



There is not long left to nominate your friends or colleagues for the 2015 BIGGA Awards. The closing date for nominations is 31 October with three fantastic categories up for grabs.

We are delighted to announce that Jacobsen are to sponsor the BIGGA Young Greenkeeper of the Year award, Pitchcare is to sponsor the BIGGA Greenkeeping Achievement of the Year category, whilst the BIGGA Championship Greenkeeping Performance of the Year will be sponsored by GBR Technology.

The winners will be announced live during the prestigious 'BIGGA Welcome Celebration' at BTME 2016 next January.

**TO NOMINATE SOMEONE PLEASE VISIT**

**[www.bigga.org.uk/events/bigga-awards-2015](http://www.bigga.org.uk/events/bigga-awards-2015)**

# CHRIS LAMB SLAUGHTERS THE FIELD



SGC Trophy Winners (l-r) Chris Lamb (Newmacher), Kenneth Mitchell (St Andrews), Stephen Sutherland (Carnoustie), Ian Scott (Downfield), Derek Scott (Scoonie), Adam Lindsa (Deeside)

## 2015 BIGGA SCOTTISH GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP Portlethen Golf Club - 6 August 2015

An excellent 4-under par round of 68 by Chris Lamb of Newmacher Golf Club was good enough to see off the field at this year's BIGGA Scottish Golf Championship.

Chris played some excellent golf along with his playing partners on the day Adam Lindsay from Deeside Golf Club and Scott Thomson of Strathmore Golf Centre. Indeed the quality of the trio was there for all to see with Adam having a 2-under round of 70 and Scott

with a gross 74. Neil Sadler, Course Manager at Portlethen certainly provided a stiff test for the competition with the players using the black tees and with some devilish pin placements on the greens. Neil played extremely well himself by returning a one under score of 71 winning the Ransomes First Class Trophy.

Conditions on the day were excellent considering the poor weather this year but with only a couple of short showers, players were able to enjoy the course conditions in some warmth. Indeed players were full of praise for the greenkeeping team at

Portlethen as they produced a fantastic course for the competition.

Other great scores on the day came from Ian Scott of Downfield Golf Club, who won the Pattison Trophy (Second Class) and Stephen Sutherland of Carnoustie Links who took away the third class prize of the STRI trophy with a magnificent 41 stableford points tally.

Overall the day was a great success and Jim Paton, Scottish Chairman was on hand to thank all those that took part in the competition and again thanked the patrons for their continued support. Jim paid special thanks to Neil and his team at Portlethen for all of their hard work that was there for all to see on the day. Jim provided a Quaich to the golf club as a thank you and a small bottle of whisky was given to Neil.

Jim concluded proceedings by thanking the championship sponsors, Circle Golf for providing support this year. Circle Golf has added to this partnership by providing FREE entry to 4 members from each of the 5 sections at the September 2015 and April 2016 outings.

## COUNTY CRICKET TRIUMPH

What a year it has been for 32 year old Neil Ivamy! Promoted to the role of Course Manager at Trevose, a wonderful 27-hole links venue that features regularly in GB&I's top 100 lists and then playing a key role in Cornwall County Cricket team's first ever Minor Counties national final in 33 years of trying.

Cornwall handsomely defeated Northumberland by seven wickets with 12 overs to spare with Neil, a left arm spinner, taking 2-52 including the key wicket of top scorer Gareth Breese, bowled for 50.

On a badly rain affected day it was typical of a greenkeeper to focus on the magnificent efforts of the groundstaff at the beautiful Wormsley Cricket Club in Buckinghamshire. The ground, founded by Sir Paul Getty in 1992 was saturated by heavy rain, delaying the start whilst the groundstaff removed 10,000 litres of water from the pitch.

Said Neil "The guys did an amazing job to get the game on at all let alone to allow a full 42 over match".

As the Minor Counties Cricket Association President, John Pickup remarked "Congratulations to Cornwall on a memorable win and an outstanding performance. A great day for the Republic of Cornwall!"



Neil Ivamy

SGGA Challenge Cup			
Place	Player	Club	Gross Score
<b>Champion</b>	<b>Chris Lamb</b>	<b>Newmacher Golf Club</b>	<b>68</b>
Runner Up	Neil Sadler	Portlethen Golf Club	70 BIH

Ransomes Trophy (First Class)					
Place	Player	Club/Company	Gross	Gross	Gross
<b>1st</b>	<b>Neil Sadler</b>	<b>Portlethen GC</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>69</b>
2nd	Adam Lindsay	Deeside GC	70	0	70 BIH
3rd	Douglas Melville	Edinburgh Leisure	74	4	70

Pattison Trophy (Second Class)					
Place	Player	Club/Company	Gross	Gross	Gross
<b>1st</b>	<b>Ian Scott</b>	<b>Downfield GC</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>70 BIH</b>
2nd	John Stuart	Deeside GC	79	9	70
3rd	Blair Young	Aitkens	80	8	72

STRI Trophy (Third Class)					
Place	Player	Club/Company	Gross	Gross	Gross
<b>1st</b>	<b>Stephen Sutherland</b>	<b>Carnoustie</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>67</b>
2nd	John Wilson	Irvine GC	91	18	73
3rd	Derek Scott	Scoonie GC	85	11	74 BIH



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## GOLF DAY IN MEMORY OF ROYAL MID-SURREY GREENKEEPER

A group of twenty of Andrew Kinsella's friends and work colleagues gathered together for a memorial golf day at East Sussex National on Friday 21st August. Sadly, Andrew passed away on 8th April this year aged just 38 years old.

One of Andrew's first Saturday jobs as a young boy was as a caddie at East Sussex National and he was more recently an Assistant Greenkeeper at Royal Mid-Surrey Golf Club – so a golf-day at East Sussex National happened to be a relevant

and appropriate venue to celebrate his life.

Gavin Kinsella, Courses Manager at Royal Mid Surrey Golf Club acknowledges, "The extensive scope and affordability of the day including coffee, bacon rolls, prizes for a variety of on-course challenges, winning-team prizes and an overall individual winner's trophy, was only made possible by the help and support of Avoncrop Amenity, TopTurf Irrigation and Banks Amenity."

Andrew's best friend Jamie Scott, the group's appointed Event Manager, adds, "Today was a very special occasion and everyone involved appreciates the generosity and assistance of our supporters. We would also like to thank East Sussex National for their setting-up a fair but challenging golf examination in consideration that our group of twenty demonstrated diverse golfing abilities and some peculiar golfing skills!"

## LATEST INFO POSTER FROM JACOBSEN

This month's GI contains the final poster in a series of four provided by Jacobsen to aid members in communicating key issues within their clubs.

As we head into winter the poster contains tips for golfers to help their course stay at it's best during the inclement season.

All of the posters can be downloaded from the Education section of the BIGGA website by clicking on 'Information Posters' on the left hand side of the page.



# SOUTH COAST TURF CLUB

On Tuesday 18th August 2015 the third South Coast Section Turf Club was held at Hockley Golf Club, Hampshire. Despite still being in their infancy, these events are becoming increasingly popular, with just under thirty Section Members in attendance.

Glenn Kirby, Course Manager, conducted the tour around the course. Glenn showed the group several areas that are managed sustainably in order to promote and encourage indigenous wild flower species. An in-depth description was given of the practices he, and his team, use to create these areas, and the methods used to harvest seed and propagate them elsewhere around the course.

The group were also shown the systems and processes that have been developed to manage and record moisture levels of the greens and the action taken once that data is collated.

The event was drawn to a close with a look around the newly refurbished Greenstaff facilities and machinery sheds.

The South Coast Section committee, and the members who attended, would like to offer their thanks to Hockley Golf Club for allowing the visit to take place and in particular, to Glenn Kirby and his team, for their hospitality and taking time out of their busy schedule to show the group around.





# AMANDA INTERVIEWS JOHN MCLAUGHLIN



John McLaughlin

**Hi John, great to catch up with you and congratulations on your new position as Course Manager at Warrington Golf Club and the recent arrival of your baby daughter Honor Grace.**

**2015 is proving to be a good year for you!**

**AD: How many years have you been a greenkeeper and what led you down this career path?**

JM: I have been in the industry since starting a HND in Golf Course Management and Turfgrass Science at Myerscough College back in 1998. I have also been involved in the golf industry for over 20 years, which has played a massive part in my career. My passion for science and golf made this an obvious career choice for me in what I believe is the best industry in the world.

**AD: What does your new role involve?**

JM: As well as overseeing the day to day running of the course my role heavily involves inspiring, developing, training and upskilling the team. I have been busy putting into place procedures to allow each individual team member to flourish and grow. I drive the club's five-year golf course management plan and also direct the club's greens committee.

**AD: Have you made any changes since taking on your role?**

JM: I initially evaluated all of the club's maintenance procedures and then where possible, made changes to bring these up to best practice standards. The team have been extremely successful in implementing change bringing us up to a standard I am really satisfied with.

**AD: What has been the greatest challenge of your career to date?**

JM: I really enjoyed my role at my previous club but found it extremely frustrating at the limited amount of opportunities available to progress to Course Manager level. I had to

learn how to become extremely patient. I feel good things do not always come to those who wait. Good things come to those who have the drive and enthusiasm to pursue them.

**AD: Social media is dominating how we communicate these days and I know that you are pretty active, what advice would you give to anyone who wants to improve how they communicate to the wider public?**

JM: Social media is now at the forefront of the industry, like it or not. It can be an excellent marketing tool to increase brand awareness. I utilise social media as a form of education. I have learnt so much from following excellent threads, tweets and posts regarding golf course management. Personally I try to embrace anything that has a value to me and social media certainly does.

**AD: Do you participate in CPD and do think that it helps to support your career?**

JM: I am a strong believer in recording continual professional development. It is widely embraced within other industries and I am extremely pleased with how BIGGA have embraced this and developed an excellent system. In such a competitive market, when applying for jobs, being able to demonstrate CPD will certainly help set you apart. I am in the process of developing a CPD scheme within my team which annual bonuses will be based on.

**AD: Have you volunteered for any tournaments?**

JM: I worked as part of the support team at last year's Ryder Cup hosted by Gleneagles. This was a fantastic occasion, which I personally gained a lot from. More recently I supported the greenkeeping teams at Regional and Final qualifying Open Championship venues. It is a great way of seeing first hand how leading Golf Course Managers present their courses and how they manage their teams.

**AD: Do you play golf and if so, do you have a membership?**

JM: I have enjoyed playing competitive golf for the past 25 years and I am also very proud to have been a member of The West Lancashire Golf Club for the past 20 years. I have held a handicap around scratch for all of this time. Due to family commitments I am playing more social golf this year!

**Thank you John for giving us an insight to your successful career. Best of luck for the future.**

## FAREWELL DAVID



Following 40 years of service, David James Seabright will be retiring from the greenkeeping team at Kingsdown Golf Club in October 2015. David started with the club in 1975 and will be greatly missed by all of his colleagues upon his retirement. On behalf of all of all of the BIGGA membership we offer you congratulations on your contribution to the industry and best wishes for the future.

# JOIN IN THE 'BUNKER CAMP'

Following on from last years' successful bunker building camp Stuart Imeson and his team are again inviting everyone to join them on the stunning links of Dunstanburgh Castle.

Stuart is a member of BIGGA's Young Greenkeeper Committee (YGC) and has this year increased the scale of the camp to encourage more young greenkeepers to get involved.

With an average age of 23, Stuart and his team offer the perfect environment for fellow young greenkeepers to both network and learn. Last year's camp was a great start to what he hopes to continue as a yearly event.

Stuart said: "It was a great start, we received enough interest to show that it would be worthwhile but not too much where I would be overrun and I feel it was a good trial run for this year's camp. We had a good mix of lads and it was great to have so many bodies on the course.

"Not only did I benefit by completing a huge part of our winter work programme, it was great to see that there is

so much to learn from different opinions and ideas. This year with spaces already filling up we have decided to extend the camp to run over two weeks."

The camp will run from 16-28 November with ten spaces up for grabs. To join in please contact Stuart on 07808 831172 or email [s.imeson.dunstanburgh@live.co.uk](mailto:s.imeson.dunstanburgh@live.co.uk) - please advise the dates you would like to join in during this period.

The YGC will be holding a meeting on 21 November at Dunstanburgh Castle with its committee members arriving early to help with the scheduled works, travelling from all five BIGGA Regions. So, there is an option to car share and an excellent opportunity for the YGC to meet more BIGGA members. Accommodation and daytime meals are provided for the duration of the camp.

The main focus of the camp will be bunker design, building, shaping and revetting. The construction of tee boxes, designing and creating run off areas will also be part of the camp.



## BIGGA GOLF MANAGEMENT TROPHY SPONSORED BY EVERRIS

The BIGGA Northern Region Golf Management Trophy qualifier sponsored by Everris was held at Dunham Forest Golf & Country Club on a mixed day in terms of weather but a superb day in terms of course presentation, our thanks go to Course Manager Chris Gibson and his team.

The Dunham team treated us all to a superb day from all aspects of the customer experience and grateful thanks are extended to everyone at the club.

A closely fought contest took a countback to separate the leading teams.

The winners were presented with their prizes on the day by Mick Fance and Phil Collinson

of Everris.

The results were:  
**1st: Renishaw Park Golf Club**  
 83 points  
 Mark Nelson  
 Andy Smith  
 Kevin Greaves  
 Phil Walker  
**2nd: Prestbury Golf Club**  
 83 points  
 Mark Crossley  
 George Senior  
 Simon Bolam  
 Paul Allen

Congratulations to Renishaw Park and Prestbury who will compete in the Final at Frilford Heath Golf Club on the 19th October. Thanks are extended to Everris for sponsoring the event and to all the teams who supported the event.





INTRODUCING

# DISPATCH SPRAYABLE

*with three times the strength of Dispatch Penetrant!*

We often think of soil water repellency only during the stressful summer months. In reality water management is a year-round concern that should be managed consistently to maximise your growing environment and avoid turf injury.

Even during the offseason consistency, uniformity, and stability matter to the health of your soil and turf. Over the past few years, greenkeepers in the UK and Europe have used Dispatch Penetrant to manage soil moisture heading into late autumn and during the winter months.

Now that same patented chemistry is available in the form of Dispatch Sprayable with three times the active ingredient! Starting with a Dispatch Sprayable programme this autumn will have benefits that carry through the winter and into the next growing season without harming the soil.

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# TWENTY YEARS TOO LATE...

## ...TO TACKLE DOTHISTROMA ON PINES

By Dr Terry Mabbett

Preoccupied with newly arrived exotic tree diseases like chalara ash dieback, the UK Plant Health Authority has paid insufficient attention to earlier arrivals like Dothistroma needle blight of pines caused by a fungal pathogen called *Dothistroma septosporum*. The disease was first found in the 1950's and 'ticked over' for decades before 'mushrooming' out of control.

Originally the disease was more instructively called red band needle blight (RBNB) to describe characteristic foliar symptoms of reddish necrotic bands around the pine leaves or needles. However, in line with its penchant for name changing Forestry Commission (FC) renamed the disease Dothistroma needle blight.

If more time had been devoted to monitoring and managing the disease instead of agonising over what to call it then the 409 million pine trees growing across these islands in forest plantations, parks and on golf courses would not be under such a serious threat as they are today. The disease causes premature needle loss with massive defoliation and crown thinning.

First infections found on pine seedlings in a Dorset plant nursery were followed by forest outbreaks in Wales. The disease took off in the 1990's on Corsican pine (*Pinus nigra* subsp. *laricio*) an exotic conifer

first brought to Britain in the eighteenth century and which subsequently became an important source of softwood timber.

But all was about to come crashing down for Corsican pine. Spread of infection and damage caused to Corsican pine was such that FC stopped planting the species on its land and ceased to recommend planting elsewhere. There is no planting ban as such but government will no longer provide grant aid for planting Corsican pine. Given the current economic state of UK commercial forestry this essentially has the same effect as a ban.

Private landowners can still plant Corsican pine. Many golf courses have Corsican pine and some may still be planting the tree not realising exactly what it is. Corsican pine is one of a dozen sub species of *Pinus nigra* (Austrian pine) which are often difficult to distinguish.

Things were about to get a lot worse when native Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*), previously regarded as only slightly susceptible, started to go down in a big way with Dothistroma. Private sector foresters carrying out disease surveys for FC's Plant Health England are telling Greenkeeper International that in disease spread and damage caused Scots pine is fast approaching levels experienced by Corsican pine.

Panicked by the prospect of losing precious wildwood Scots pine in the Caledonian Forest, FC Scotland recently started aerial spraying trials using copper oxychloride fungicide in a belated effort

to manage the disease. The disease is also rampant on lodgepole pine of which there is a lot in Scotland.

Four years ago FC said Dothistroma needle blight was endemic in UK and that "now is the time for action" when actually it was twenty years earlier. There are well over 100 different pine species across the world. Scores of these have been planted in the UK and a significant number are susceptible to infection by *Dothistroma septosporum*.

Defra and FC carry out inspections for Dothistroma on seedling pines (all species) in UK forest nurseries which will have hundreds of thousands of plants growing at any one time. Greenkeeper International paid a visit to Prees Heath Forest Nurseries at Whitchurch in Shropshire where owner David Gwillam has thousands of pristine pines ready for sale this autumn. "There is absolutely no Dothistroma in this nursery but just a trace of infection and we would get a statutory control order to destroy all stock within that block or field and with no compensation" said David.

Given that these pine trees will be planted in the wider UK environment where Dothistroma is already endemic (prevalent everywhere) then 'overkill' is the word that springs to mind about a policy which appears to unnecessarily penalise UK nurseries. Why not approve the spraying of all nursery pines with a protectant copper fungicide to cover crops against infection and spread of Dothistroma needle blight.

## ARCHIE'S ACE HELPS CENTRAL SECTION RETAIN NORRIE WHYTOCK CUP

The 19th edition of the Scottish Region's annual inter-section competition, the Norrie Whytock Cup was held at Auchterarder Golf Club on Tuesday 25th August in glorious sunshine. The Central Section retained the cup, making it their 6th success in the competition.

Unlike last year, the competition format required each section to put forward a team of three players with all of their individual stableford scores counting towards the team total.

Central's score of 93 points held off the challenge from the North Section team by only two points. An excellent feat considering the North Team included this year's Scottish Champion, Chris Lamb!

The day belonged though to the host Course Manager, Archie Dunn, as not only did he lead the Central Section to victory but he also managed to ace the 4th hole with a sparkling 6-iron. Unfortunately no-one actually saw the ball go into the hole due to the pin placement but nevertheless, it was a great shot that deserved the outcome. Archie's four points on that hole certainly helped his team which was completed by Craig Boath (Carnoustie) and Richard Jenkinson (G-West) to secure the victory.

All competitors were very complimentary of the course conditions, particularly the greens and our sincere congratulations must go to Archie and his team for outdoing themselves yet again.

Jim Paton, Scottish Chairman, thanked all competitors for taking part and their continued support of the Association.

He also thanked Bayer CropScience for their continued sponsorship and Auchterarder Golf Club for



hosting the event and providing the courtesy of the course and use of the excellent clubhouse facilities.

Our partnership with the competition sponsors, Bayer CropScience is essential to the success of the Norrie Whytock Cup and we were grateful to Steve Bishop, National Accounts Manager for attending the day to present the prizes and provide a brief update on the new Turf Science team at Bayer.

Archie and Craig received the Cup on behalf of the Central Section and thanked everyone for making the day a success.



(l-r) Steve Bishop (BAYER), Archie Dunn (Auchterarder), Craig Boath (Carnoustie), Jim Paton (Regional Chairman)

# WHITELAW BOWL

The BIGGA Northern Region Championship for the Whitelaw Bowl sponsored by Rigby Taylor took place at Penrith Golf Club where Willie Whitelaw previously held post as both Captain and President.

As is becoming the norm the day was great for golf with that useful bit of wind that makes the day more interesting. Neil Robinson and his team had prepared a superb course and the changes over the past year were evident to the seasoned entrants of this competition.

The winner of handicap group 1-12, and overall winner, was Neil Robinson on a countback with a score of 36 points, pictured are Neil, Tracey Maddison (BIGGA) and Phil Dewhurst (Rigby Taylor) with the Whitelaw Bowl. Neil has accepted the BIGGA Northern Region Prize of entry to the National Championship at Fulford Golf Club in October where we wish all entrants the best of luck.

The winner of the handicap group 13-24 was Mick Nolan of Eden Golf Club with 36 points and winner of both Longest Drive and Nearest the Pin was Brian Story of Silloth on Solway Golf Club.

Thanks go to Penrith Golf Club for being great hosts as always, to Rigby Taylor for sponsoring the event and to everyone who entered the competition.



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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.



## BTME REGISTRATION IS NOW LIVE!

BTME 2016 is shaping up to be the biggest yet so why not save time on the doors of the Harrogate International Centre in January, avoid the queues and pre-register now. Visit [www.bigga.org.uk](http://www.bigga.org.uk) for the link to pre-registration.

**BTME 2016 dates:**

**Continue to Learn**  
17 - 20 January



**BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition:**

**Tuesday 19 January**  
08:30 - 17:00

**Wednesday 20 January**  
08:30 - 17:30

**Thursday 21 January**  
08:30 - 14:30

**Why should you visit BTME 2016? Here are three good reasons why...**

1. The exhibition covers five Halls with Hall Q of the Harrogate International Centre complementing the other

four Halls which will again be packed with exhibitors from every corner of the turf management industry.


2. BTME will again feature the best education the turf management industry has to offer with another range of fantastic speakers gearing up to present at Continue to Learn 2016, see C2L brochure enclosed.

3. This year also sees a momentous partnership with the Golf Business & Industry Convention (GolfBIC) presented by the UK Golf Course Owners Association (UKGCOA) and

### Contact Details

 **Tracey Maddison**  
General Manager  
[traceymaddison@bigga.co.uk](mailto:traceymaddison@bigga.co.uk)

 **Elaine Jones**  
Membership Executive  
[elaine@bigga.co.uk](mailto:elaine@bigga.co.uk)

 **Rachael Duffy**  
Events & Membership Executive  
[rachael@bigga.co.uk](mailto:rachael@bigga.co.uk)


Tel: 01347 833800  
(option 1 for Membership)



You can follow BIGGA on Twitter @BIGGALtd

### BIGGA Regional Offices

#### Scotland & N. Ireland

 **John Young**  
07776 242120  
[johnyoung@bigga.co.uk](mailto:johnyoung@bigga.co.uk)


#### Northern

 **Sandra Raper**  
07866 366966  
[sandra@bigga.co.uk](mailto:sandra@bigga.co.uk)  
[@BIGGANorthReg](https://twitter.com/BIGGANorthReg)

#### Midland

 **Roger Butler**  
07525 593 359  
[roger@bigga.co.uk](mailto:roger@bigga.co.uk)  
[@BIGGAmidlandREG](https://twitter.com/BIGGAmidlandREG)

#### South East

 **Clive Osgood**  
01737 819343  
07841 948410  
[cliveosgood@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:cliveosgood@yahoo.co.uk)  
[@cliveosgood](https://twitter.com/cliveosgood)

#### South West & South Wales

 **Tracey Walker**  
07841 948110  
[tracey.walker@bigga.co.uk](mailto:tracey.walker@bigga.co.uk)  
[@biggaswsw](https://twitter.com/biggaswsw)

### OTHER USEFUL NUMBERS

(Full Members only)  
**Personal Accident Helpline**  
08000 516583  
**Greenkeepers Legal Assistance**  
0800 177 7891  
**Lifestyle Counselling Helpline**  
0844 770 1036  
[www.arcregal.co.uk/carefirst](http://www.arcregal.co.uk/carefirst)





the Organisation of Golf & Range Operators (OGRO). This is a well-established and popular annual event attracting top presenters and a wide range of delegates from every corner of the golf industry.

### See us at Saltex – Stand A190

**Come and see us at the NEC Birmingham on 4-5 November 2015 on stand A190. We will be able to discuss membership benefits, education matters, BTME 2016 amongst anything else you may wish to ask regarding BIGGA.**

We also have two Seminars at the

new Learning Live programme on 5th November: -

**13:00** Presentation: How to develop the best turf management plan to really make a difference – Improve your turf quality through measuring, analyzing and effective planning with Steve Gingell, STRI

**14:05** Presentation: Primo MAXX – lessons from the past, thoughts for the future – An overview of Primo Maxx, the successful plant growth regulator, and its use in sports turf. How the product was introduced, initial strategies and their evolution, and a look at suggested strategies for future use - with Daniel Lightfoot, Syngenta; Henry Bechelet, Everris.

### About the BIGGA Greenkeepers Benevolent Fund

The BIGGA Greenkeepers Benevolent Fund, a Registered Charity and the official charity of BIGGA, exists to assist current or past members and their dependents who have suffered hardship, financial or otherwise.

If you would like to apply for a grant please contact BIGGA House or your Regional Administrator for more information. Forms can be downloaded from the Members Area of the BIGGA website.





# 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.



## LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

October is upon us, the nights are drawing in and Christmas is approaching, but never fear, there is light at the end of the tunnel.... Continue to Learn at BTME 2016!

The largest education programme ever seen at BTME will take centre stage from Sunday 17 – Thursday 21 January 2016. With four different venues required to accommodate the education events, it's certainly going to offer something for all attendees.

There are 243 hours of education scheduled over the five days of Continue to Learn 2016 an increase of 13% on 2015. The events have been selected using the Proposal to Present and Members' Choice initiatives, therefore providing education that is relevant and current to the sportsturf industry.

Continue to Learn 2016 will see the introduction of a half-day

Groundsman Conference, 11 Career Development Sessions and the launch of GolfBIC at BTME.

Full details of the programme are available in the Continue to Learn at BTME 2016 brochure, included with this magazine. It is also available at [www.btme.org.uk](http://www.btme.org.uk), [www.bigga.org.uk](http://www.bigga.org.uk) and on the BTME App, now available from your app store.

The new look programme has been split into six, colour-coded event types:

- Conferences
- Workshops
- Focus On Sessions
- Seminars
- Career Development Sessions
- Partner Events

We're trying to make it easier for you to see the range of education

that is available by giving you a Quick Guide to help you identify education events that might be most relevant to you, providing an overview of when and where the events will take place and if there is a cost attached to them.

We are once again offering Seminar pre-booking for BIGGA members providing fast-track entry into the most popular seminars. You can read testimonials in the brochure if you need to be convinced!

Booking Bundles will be available again for Continue to Learn 2016. The Bundles can provide a saving of up to £117 when pre-booking education for you or your team.

**SCHOLARSHIPS**  
 Jacobsen Higher Education Scholarship awarded to Kevin O'Neill from Muswell Hill Golf Club studying FdSc Sportsturf online at Myerscough College



**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 Newbery

**Contact Details**

Sami Strutt  
 Head of Member Development  
 07818 405606  
[sami@bigga.co.uk](mailto:sami@bigga.co.uk)

Stuart Green  
 Head of Member Learning  
[stuart@bigga.co.uk](mailto:stuart@bigga.co.uk)  
[@Stuart\\_BIGGA](https://twitter.com/Stuart_BIGGA)

Deb Burnett  
 L&D Administrator  
[deb@bigga.co.uk](mailto:deb@bigga.co.uk)

01347 833800 (option 3)  
[www.bigga.org.uk](http://www.bigga.org.uk)





Don't forget that you can use the Everris and Syngenta Turf Rewards scheme to buy a booking bundle or pay for education events.

All of our new Career Development sessions will be free of charge to BIGGA members, we're expecting places to fill up fast, so make sure you book your places as soon as possible.

Bookings can be made by completing the booking form, online through the website or by telephoning the L&D team on 01347 833800 option 3. Deb Burnett will be handling all the bookings and will update the website as events sell out.

We are expecting to welcome more than 3000 attendees through the education doors in January. Make sure you don't miss out by booking your place as soon as possible!

65% of the programme will feature new education events including:

- Basics of Soil Fertility
- Delivering Your Message With Impact
- Structure, Function and Identification of Turfgrasses
- The Business of Golf – A Course Managers Guide
- An Introduction to Scheduling Golf Course Maintenance
- Managing Upwards
- Delivering Your Message With Influence
- Fertiliser Programmes from First Principles
- Understanding Ecology Within Successful IPDM on Golf

- Courses
- Cultural Management of Turfgrass Diseases
- Health and Safety for Beginners
- Managing Conflict and Courageous Conversations
- Photography 101
- Time Management: 5 Steps to Getting Things Done Without Burnout or Stress!
- Groundsman Conference
- Preparing the CV That Gets You the Interview
- Stop Telling Your Team - Start Transforming Your Team!
- Appraising Your Mates at Work
- Putting Your Best Foot Forward - Honing Your Personal and Online Presentation Skills
- Problem Solving and Decision Making in Work Teams
- Non-Herbicidal Strategies for Poa Control
- Get In, Go Far
- The Ohio State Internship Programme
- GolfBIC
- Learning the In's and Outs
- Trailblazer Apprenticeships: The Future of Greenkeeper Training
- The Identification and Selection of Amenity Grass Species and Cultivars for Golf
- The Impact of Social Media and How to Make it Work Most Effectively for You
- Building a Modern Day Links

Plus 28 new seminar sessions presented by invited guests and exhibiting companies.

IT'S CONFERENCE TIME!

It's that time of year when the grass slows down and thoughts can turn to education.

There are some excellent conferences coming up during October and November around the UK and Ireland. So, what better time to sit with a cup of your favourite hot beverage, pie/cake/pastry and plan your autumn and winter education programme and keep building your CPD credits. Remember: Make yourself valuable, not vulnerable.

Details of all events can be found on the BIGGA website at [www.bigga.org.uk/events](http://www.bigga.org.uk/events)

**Thursday 15th October**  
Amenity Forum Conference, Leicester City Football Club

**Wednesday 21st October**  
North Wales Seminar, Royal St David's Golf Club

**Wednesday 28th October**  
North West Seminar, Myerscough College, Lancs

**Wednesday 11th November**  
South East Regional Conference, Hadlow Manor Hotel, Kent

**Wednesday 11th November**  
Highland Conference. Nairn Dunbar Golf Club

**Wednesday 18th November**  
South West Regional Conference, Somerset County Cricket Ground, Taunton

**Tuesday 24th November**  
GCSAI Education Day, Croke Park, Dublin

**Wednesday 25th November**  
Solway Conference, Smiths Hotel, Gretna

**CPD APPROVED MEMBERS THIS MONTH**

- Iain Macleod – Tain Golf Club
- Scott Roberts – East Berkshire Golf Club
- Andrew Weeks – Hockley Golf Club

## HEXHAM GO THE EXTRA MILE

Malcolm Lathan is course manager of Hexham golf club, a traditional parkland course on fast draining land on the south side of the River Tyne.

Working there for 25 years, Malcolm is justifiably proud of his achievements especially with his environmental and sustainability initiatives.

On a recent visit to the course and over a year since the club had installed one of Highspeed Group's ClearWater washpad water recycling systems, MD David Mears was invited to see what had been achieved at the club.

The ClearWater system was installed to ensure the club was compliant with legislation and, as mains water was previously used, to save water. Malcolm is delighted with the system and in his words, "it works far better than the old hose and is very low maintenance. I'm very pleased with the excellent wash-off and installing ClearWater fits in well with our sustainability program." The system is well maintained and the turf machinery really clean; a credit to the greenkeeping team.

But there's more to sustainability at Hexham than the water-saving ClearWater wash system. Out around the course evidence of the work Malcolm and his team have been working hard on was abundant. There are owl boxes high in some of the spectacular trees; all fol-

lowing expert advice, facing southeast, away from the prevailing wind direction. A recent project has seen over eighty small nesting boxes sited around the course too. Tree species spotted, alongside traditional varieties, include Hornbeam, White Beam, Red Leaved Oak, Copper Beech and Wellingtonia; a magnificent giant redwood!

Care has been taken too in the preparation of "wild areas" on the course to encourage wild life and provide a safe "stop-off point" when crossing open areas. These havens are certainly impressive as the photograph shows and, amongst the wild flowers, a native species of orchid is thriving.

Malcolm's determination to create a healthy, living soil has involved working with biotechnology companies and, over the last three years, he has been producing compost tea with an installed brewer. The compost tea is applied twice a month to greens in the growing season. The product also helps fight fungal infection organically says Malcolm.

The greenkeeping team's hard work and an organic ethos have resulted in a delightful course and a wonderful golfing experience. They do say that the course provides a tough enough test of golf to regularly host County events, not to mention the stunning views of the surrounding countryside.



## SALTEX Launch For New Toro Mower

A brand new Toro groundscare mower will be launched at SALTEX 2015.

Full details of the machine, which features a new cutting concept, are being kept under wraps until the show. But the company says the unit will have great appeal to councils and contractors looking for increased productivity and efficiency to, for example, save money by increasing the time between cuts.

The new Toro will be joined on the stand by a range of its stablemates for groundscare professionals.

They include the highly productive, heavy-duty Toro LT3340 triple, and Groundsmaster 360 zero-turn mower, with its Quad-Steer all-wheel-drive steering. Added to these will be the Groundsmaster 7210 rotary mower with the industry's toughest spindle assembly to guarantee long-term value. The

ProCore SR72 – light enough to be used on sensitive turf but tough enough to handle the most compacted soils – will illustrate Toro's aeration range.

Meanwhile, Lely will also be exhibiting the ever-popular TYM T503 compact tractor.

This model is a firm favourite with groundscare customers working on big projects, thanks to a long list of features including foldable ROPS, rear wiper, projection headlamps, dual air filter, and hydrostatic power steering.

Holly Jones, marketing manager at Lely, said: "We're looking forward to showcasing the new Toro mower at SALTEX. It promises to be a big hit with customers. The show has added excitement with its new format and location and provides the perfect launch platform. We look forward to welcoming everyone to the stand, where our specialist groundscare machinery team will be on hand to give help and advice about all our products."



## Charterhouse Cater For All

SALTEX always provides a great opportunity to get up to date on the latest products available – and there’s no better stand to do that on than Charterhouse Turf Machinery. Stand K070 will play host to a vast array of equipment for the care of natural sports surfaces.

As the autumn and winter approach, many turf care professionals’ thoughts will turn to the battles against compaction and/or drainage. Charterhouse Turf Machinery offer a number of solutions in this field, with one machine of particular note being the Redexim Verti-Drain 1513. This is at the smaller end of the Verti-Drain range and is a very fast and versatile machine that can work to an impressive depth of 150mm. This 1.3m model can be connected to a low horsepower tractor or used with the self-propelled Redexim Carrier, which will also be on show.

With regard to overseeders, Charterhouse has an extensive range from Redexim including the Double Disc Overseeder 1430 which was launched at SALTEX last year. This has a working width of 1.4m and effectively delivers the seed accurately into the soil via discs, spaced 30mm apart, which cut slits in the ground.

It drops and buries the seed up to 20mm (3/4”) deep in the ground. Also worth looking at is Redexim Rink DS800 topdresser with a hopper capacity of 0.8cu.m and a spreading width of 12m.

Available trailed or for fitting to a utility vehicle.

From the Graden portfolio, Charterhouse will also be showing the Contour Sand Injection (CSI) unit. The flagship Graden machine, the CSI has the ability to scarify to any depth between 1mm-40mm whilst simultaneously backfilling the grooves with either sand or a combination of sand and seed.

In the field of synthetic turf maintenance there are Redexim VertiArt products from simple brushing to complex infill removal, cleaning and replacement. Specialists will be on hand to give advice as to the correct machine to choose.



## Kubota Launching New Tractor at SALTEX

Market leading tractor and groundcare equipment solutions provider, Kubota, will be exhibiting its new Grand L40-II Series deluxe tractors at SALTEX for the first time to the market on Stand C070 at the NEC in November.

The new innovative Grand L40-II model features an integrated cab, designed specifically for operator comfort and increased productivity.

Kubota’s newly branded HST Plus hydrostatic transmission advanced technology also features; delivering enhanced power, performance and durability.

The tractor has been developed to suit a wide range of user requirements, ideally

suited for use by golf clubs, landscaping professionals, local authority maintenance and for the management of professional sports facilities.

Adrian Langmead, Business Development Manager for Kubota’s Groundcare division, commented: “Our ride-on mowers and compact tractors have always been popular with maintenance specialists working in the turf care and landscaping sectors, so the launch of the Grand L40-II Series will further enhance our position in this sector as we continue to invest in new product development.

“Kubota has been a market leader in groundcare products and SALTEX is a fantastic opportunity for us to showcase to visitors just how versatile our machinery is for use in areas such as sports stadiums, large estates and public parks.”

Also exhibiting at the two-day event is the 34HP STW 34 tractor, designed specifically to take on an extensive list of jobs ranging from mowing to loading work.

Users will have the benefit of standard spec power steering and a Bi-Speed Turn feature to combat the common problem of tyre drag and turf damage when wheel speeds are increased.

Kubota will also be showing its 60HP M6060 with 18x18 multi-stage transmission and hydraulic shuttle; plus the economical 26HP B2650 compact tractor, which features HST or manual transmission options for optimal control and comfort.

Kubota’s powerful KX019-4 mini-excavator will make an appearance at the two-day event, prompted by growing demand for compact construction equipment across the groundcare industry.



# SALTEX 2015



## SALTEX 2015's new date and venue gets industry approval

**The Sports, Amenities, Landscaping Trade Exhibition's (SALTEX) move from an outdoor environment into the halls of the NEC Birmingham on 4 and 5 November 2015 has been met with tremendous support from both exhibitors and visitors alike. A packed exhibitor list containing some of the industry's biggest names along with confirmation of new exciting features, has ensured that this year's exhibition is set to be the biggest and best SALTEX to date.**

The new, centrally located, national exhibition venue and the more convenient time of year has attracted more than 250 exhibitors representing forestry, play, grounds care machinery, artificial surfaces, natural turf, landscaping products, pest control, line marking, waste management, sports equipment, litter and landfill and engine fuels. In fact, show organisers had to extend the show footprint by adding an extra hall to accommodate the increased interest.

Visitors from across the UK and abroad say that the new venue, and new date are key reasons behind their decisions to pre-register for the FREE to attend event. The new look SALTEX, which also marks the 70th anniversary of the show, will feature a comprehensive programme of FREE educational seminars and will, for the first time, combine with the Institute of Groundsmanship's (IOG) annual Industry Awards dinner.

Visitors can attend any of the 47 educational seminars on the show floor, hosted by partner associations and industry experts, within the two-day LEARNING LIVE programme. The seminar theatre next to the IOG Hub will feature sports turf management

panel debates with high-profile industry professionals taking centre stage. Two further theatres will feature dedicated seminars relevant to those working in the school, play, amenity, parks, arboriculture and forestry environments.



Mark Sagers, journalist and radio presenter on talkSPORT will host the 'Gaining Ground' turf management debates. The former Sky News and BBC sports correspondent is a regular IOG conference and awards host and visitors to SALTEX 2015 will be pleased to see him reprising his role.

The Gaining Ground theatre will be of particular interest to those with interests in fine turf and a variety of sports surfaces. Visitors to this theatre will be able to choose from a range of informative seminar sessions presented by some of the industry's national and international experts including Mark Pover - national facilities manager at the FA, Lee Jackson - head groundsman at Manchester City, Chris Wood - pitch consultant for the ECB and Simon Winman - head of club development at Rugby Football Union.

From an international perspective the LEARNING LIVE programme will feature an in-depth look at the Forsyth Barr Stadium in New Zealand - the world's only natural turf playing

surface under a permanently fixed roof - by STRI's Dr Richard Gibbs.

Phil Sharples, currently the director of pitches for Gabala FC in Azerbaijan, will focus on some of the challenges he has faced while working overseas.

Bertrand Picard from Natural Grass will offer a French perspective on turf care, while Ian Craig, regional agronomist for STRI, will relay the bizarre turf management experiences he encountered while working at the Africa Cup of Nations 2015.

For young people looking to advance their career in the grounds care industry, a half-day Young Groundsmen's Conference, sponsored by Rigby Taylor/Top Green and organised by the IOG's Young Board of Directors, will offer information on educational opportunities, a guide to what some of the top grounds managers are looking for in a young recruit, and a day in the life of the 2014 Young Sports Turf Student of the Year.

Hosted on the evening of the first day (4 November), the IOG Industry Awards at the Hilton Metropole is set to be the UK's biggest celebration in groundsmanship; with 19 awards up for grabs, Alistair McGowan providing the after dinner entertainment and talkSPORT's Mark Sagers hosting the event. Visit [www.iogawards.com](http://www.iogawards.com) to book your place.

The full programme of SALTEX events will be regularly updated via [www.iogsaltex.com](http://www.iogsaltex.com). Visitor registration to SALTEX 2015 is FREE. To confirm your attendance visit [www.iogsaltex.com](http://www.iogsaltex.com). Follow SALTEX on Twitter @IOG\_SALTEX and Facebook - [www.facebook.com/IOGSALTEX](http://www.facebook.com/IOGSALTEX)



## LEARNING LIVE – SALTEX 2015

This year's SALTEX LEARNING LIVE education programme will offer grounds and open space practitioners across all disciplines, volunteer as well as professional, a daily feast of FREE knowledge-gathering sessions in a programme that has never been bigger or better!

Featuring industry-leading experts and some of the top names in European groundsmanship - including participants from some of our flagship stadia and sporting venues - this year's SALTEX presentations will educate, enthral and entertain SALTEX visitors like never before.

Familiar industry figures will be presenting, including David Snowden from BIGGA Education Supporter Agronomic Services, who are also exhibiting at the show.

His seminar, entitled 'The Importance of Oxygen', will take place on Wednesday 4 November at 1pm and he's looking forward to seeing BIGGA members and industry colleagues on Stand A110.

David said: "We are very excited to be exhibiting at SALTEX for the first time this year since the change in date and location will be more convenient for our customers."

There are three dedicated seminar theatres running at the show, plus the Young Groundsmen's Conference organised by the IOG's Young Board of Directors (and sponsored by Rigby Taylor and Top Green). All sessions are FREE to attend and do not require pre-booking - just make sure you arrive promptly to make sure you get a seat.

- The IOG Seminars - Gaining Ground - Stand A180
- Parks Play and People - Stand A010



- Technically Turf & New Product Pitches - Stand K180
- The Young Groundsmen's Conference - Concourse Gallery Suites 17 & 18
- The IOG Seminars: Gaining Ground - 4 November
- Hosted by talkSPORT's Mark Sagers
- The IOG Seminars: Gaining Ground - 5 November
- Parks Play & People - 4 November
- Parks Play & People - 5 November
- Technically Turf & New Product Pitches - 4 November
- Technically Turf & New Product Pitches - 5 November
- Young Groundsmen's Conference (sponsored by Rigby Taylor & Top Green) - 4 November

Many of the LEARNING LIVE seminars can contribute to an individual's CPD. All you need to do is reflect on your learning experience at each session and how this may impact on your role as a groundsman/greenkeeper. This reflection needs to be recorded in written format and kept in a personal file for future use. For more information please go to [www.iog.org](http://www.iog.org) and click on CPD under Learning/careers.

## BIGGA Seminars at SALTEX 2015

### NEC Birmingham

Thursday 5 November 2015

Returning for the fourth year, BIGGA will be presenting two seminars at SALTEX 2015.

13.00 – 13.50

#### Improve Turf Quality Through Measuring, Analysing and Effective Planning

All of us are striving to improve the quality of our turf, but how do we develop the best turf management plan to really make a difference? Firstly we need to understand how the surface is performing by measuring specific turf and soil profile characteristics. Secondly we need to analyse the measurement data and determine what is good and not so good about your turf performance. We can then plan effectively by assessing your budgets, resources and timelines and prioritise the most suitable maintenance activities that will result in better quality turf and the best outcome for the players.

**Presented by Steve Gingell,**  
*Agronomy Manager, STRI*

14.05 – 14.55

#### Primo Maxx - Learns from the Past, Thoughts for the Future!

This seminar will provide an overview of Primo Maxx, the successful plant growth regulator and its use in Sportsturf. Daniel and Henry will look at how the product was introduced to the market, discussing the initial turf strategies and how these have evolved. Using our experience and learns, the seminar will conclude by looking at suggested Primo Maxx strategies for future use in all aspects of Sportsturf.

**Presented by Daniel Lightfoot MG, UK Business Manager TLP, Syngenta and Henry Bechelet, Technical Sales Manager, Turf and Amenities, UK & Ireland, Everris.**

**These seminars are free of charge for any visitor to SALTEX.**

- BIGGA CPD Credits - 1 CPD credit is available for each seminar.
- A CPD code will be available at the end of each seminar.



# SALTEX

SPORTS AMENITIES LANDSCAPING TRADE EXHIBITION

4 - 5 November 2015

NEC Birmingham

GET READY TO ♥ LEARNING LIVE

# Unscrambling cation exchange capacity

Paul Miller follows up his article in August's GI with a further focus on particle size distribution and unscrambles Cation Exchange Capacity

**Sitting down to write this with The Open Championship behind us I find myself reflecting again on the extraordinary capacity of links sand to drain water, particularly on the Friday morning (albeit helped by the outstanding efforts of the greenkeeping team) and within hours, to present world-class fine turf for a major.**

In my preceding article I discussed the properties of these links sands in terms of their porosity, facilitating water movement, and them draining to a pore space distribution (air and water balance) which provides one facet of the natural habitat for bent grasses and fescues. Taking it a little bit further I suggested that links sands can be thought of as a model for rootzones and sands used in modern greens and tees construction, which mimic the particle size distribution and associated properties of the links.

Having said all of that, we know that the provision of air and water to a plant is only part of the function of any soil as a growing medium for plants, in our case fine turf. A functioning soil also provides nutrients, buffering capacity (ability to resist change to pH) and a substrate (i.e. organic matter) to support some of those all important soil micro-organisms. In other words there is a chemical and biological function to soil as a growing medium, and in order to understand these we need to look closely at a part of soil which is easy to overlook, particularly in the sands that we value so highly as it accounts for only a small percentage of the solid material in a soil.

So, let's start by again looking at the

particle size distribution of the soils that we know can support fine turf, the links sands. Picture 1 shows the upper profile of an immature links soil very near to the beach at Elie in Fife. The juvenile soil hasn't yet had time to accumulate very much humus into the profile, and remains light in colour.

By contrast, picture 2 is also from Elie, this time showing a more mature soil with humus incorporated through the profile giving the dark colouration. The dark surface layers (topsoil) and lighter layers beneath (subsoil) will be familiar to all of you who have ever dug a hole, and comes about as a soil matures over time – the surface material undergoes chemical weathering and accumulates organic matter which decomposes to form humus, giving the surface layers a darker appearance. In soils that don't have much in the way of fine particles to begin with i.e. sands (in contrast to many clay-rich heavier soils) this process is fundamental in converting a sand (technically a parent material) into something which can support plant growth (technically a soil) albeit one with a pretty low value in terms of agricultural potential.

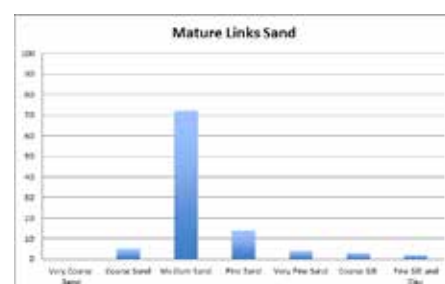
Below the humus-rich sand, which is our topsoil in a links environment, we find unweathered sand. When we take a typical links topsoil and conduct a particle size distribution test we get a graph as shown. When we last looked at these we concentrated on the percentages of fine and medium sand as these set up the physical framework for air and water movement, but now we need to concentrate on the last three columns to the right i.e. the very fine sand, silt and clay

fractions, as in terms of nutrient retention and chemical activity this is where the action is! Typically, when we add these three columns together we find something between 8-11%, which might not sound like a lot, but it's crucial in nutrient retention and chemical activity.

So let's now get a bit more technical, and discuss Cation Exchange Capacity (CEC), which is one of those things everyone has heard of but no-one really knows what it is – in my experience it's not a number we ever hear used in our industry, but I have a feeling that is going to have to change. So what is it all about?

Well, CEC is a property of two soil components, clay minerals and humus, and in order to get a grip of it as an idea we need to go back to some 'schoolboy' chemistry. The fundamental building blocks of matter are atoms, which, when found in their 'elemental' form, are often electrically charged. Those which are positively charged are known as 'cations', the negative ones are 'anions'.

The way that nature has created the situation leads to many important plant nutrients being absorbed from the soil as the cation, including





Soil Fraction	Particles per gram	Surface area per gram (cm <sup>2</sup> )
Sand	90 – 722,000	11 – 227
Silt	5,776,000	454
Clay	90,250,000,000	8,000,000

potassium (K+) Magnesium (Mg<sup>2+</sup>) Calcium (Ca<sup>2+</sup>) Aluminium (Al<sup>3+</sup>) and many of the trace elements. So from the plant nutrition point of view it would be advantageous if these nutrients could somehow be stored in the soil in the available form; that's where our soil 'fines' come it – so lets go back and have a look at those 'colloidal' materials - the clay and humus.

There is an idea that we can apply to thinking about soil particles, which might seem a bit random, but please stay with it, and that is the concept of 'surface area'.

In "Sports Fields: Design, Construction, and Maintenance" by Jim Puhalla, Jeff Krans and Michael Goatley, there is a table that gives us information on the surface area per gram of the individual fractions of soil i.e. the sand, silt and clay - I reproduce that table as shown above.

What we can see is that the clay fraction i.e. the very smallest particles have the highest surface area per gram by a long, long way, which is partly a result of their small size, and partly the result of their structure. Breaking rock fragments into smaller and smaller pieces increases surface area per gram, and can form clay particles, but surface area is further increased by something more subtle than that.

A process known as chemical weathering produces clay minerals, which have a layered structure, causing an exponential increase in surface area. Think about a Kindle or similar reader packed with e-books – as an object it has a surface area consisting of the back, front and edges.

However, think about the equivalent physical books on a bookshelf; because they are layered structures – both sides of each page – the surface area held within each is huge compared to the Kindle.

So, what I am trying to convey is that the small percentage of the smallest particles in a soil has a high surface area, but that's not quite the end of the story, because, and this is the amazing bit, during their formation the layered, microscopic clay minerals end up being electrically charged, with a negative charge.

The second soil component with a high CEC is humus, which is a

stable end-product of organic matter breakdown. It isn't cellular in form and it's not possible to recognise its nature in the way that we can with, for example, leaf litter or sphagnum moss peat. However, importantly it also possesses a high number of negative charges and therefore a high CEC.

Now we need to 'join the dots', as it were. The part of the soil with the biggest surface area carries a negative electrical charge; a large number of essential nutrients carry a positive electrical charge; we all know that opposites attract, so the cations stick to the 'exchange sites' and form a 'reservoir' of available nutrient in the soil. The total number of negative exchange sites is known as the Cation Exchange Capacity; pure sands have a very low CEC; humus-rich sands e.g. a links topsoil will score a bit higher thanks to the accumulation of humus, and provide the natural soil environment for fine turf grasses; agricultural loams will have an optimum CEC for farming, of course balancing nutrient retention against the negative impact of too much clay on soil porosity. (The unit of measurement of CEC is 'milliequivalents per 100g', which is a measure of the electrical charge).

The strength of the 'sticking' is sufficient to resist leaching by water passing through the soil, but is not so strong that nutrients end up being unavailable to the plant. To summarise, let's just say that the nutrient retention abilities of a soil are in direct proportion to the percentage of clay and humus, and that in any practical sense it is only these components that have any significant

role to play in nutrient retention.

To emphasise this, if we do the maths on it, and we take a soil of 99% medium sand and 1% clay, then the surface area of the particles is distributed 99.75% to the clay. In other words, in terms of cation exchange capacity (nutrient retention) the role played by sand is insignificant.

So where does this leave us? Well I am a firm believer that Mother Nature has found a solution to a great many (all?) biological problems; there is a clear 'match-up' in nature where soil is very sandy but contains up to 10% 'fines', and the natural presence of fine turf grasses, and although there is variation this is a consistent finding on the old links.

In the way that the modern constructed green emulates the physical properties of a natural sand it also tries to emulate the nutritional properties by allowing for 8–10% fines; the only problem of this in my experience is that we tend to view these fines as an inconvenience because of their potential negative impact on porosity and percolation, and act to minimise them. Picture 4 is from a modern construction in China, showing a pure sand devoid of fines. I would argue that the fines content is recommended for a reason, and that including it brings sufficient nutrient retention and a degree of chemical stability to a growing medium. In the coming days of further measures towards sustainable turf management I think we could do a lot worse than to develop a deeper understanding this fraction of the soil and allow it to work naturally for the grass plant.

So why did I say that CEC is a number that we're going to need to get to know? My feeling is that future sustainable turf management, where we rely less on artificial inputs and more on ecological principles, has a principle that we try to grow grass as close to its natural habitat as we can, and for me nutrient retention and release through CEC is a fundamental part of that.





# Course Conditioning and Training in Fife

**Turfmasterone, Laurence Pithie visits the Ladybank Golf Club and discovers a historic course with a contemporary approach to course management**

**Ladybank Golf Club in north east Fife is widely recognised as a very popular and traditional club with a long history, and next year it will host the BIGGA Scottish Golf Championship.**

**Also, their desire to introduce more 'in-house' staff training is an innovative step forward. Laurence Pithie met up with Head Greenkeeper David Gray to find out more...**

Old Tom Morris laid out the original six holes on Ladybank's existing site in 1879, which was later extended to nine holes in 1910. It wasn't until 1958 that another nine holes were added and since 1961, the layout has remained much the same. Designed in two loops of nine holes, the course extends to just over 6800 yards from the Championship tees.

Holes are played in every direction possible and since 1978 Ladybank has been used as an Open Championship Qualifying venue on seven occasions. In 1983, the club hosted an exhibition match between Nicklaus and Ballesteros.

Regarded as a challenging course, Ladybank demands accuracy and course management of the highest order. Course definition may have changed dramatically in the intervening 136 years, but its character remains intact. If you stray off line, expect to be punished! The following extract from the Dundee Evening Post in 1903 makes note of this; 'But woe be unto the Man with the exaggerated slice or pull! He may not again see his ball and the only consolation will be that probably nobody else will find it!'

Ladybank is situated 15 miles west of St Andrews. The course is a mix of heathland and woodland and with an abundance of heather, scots pine, birch and beech, there is a premium on accuracy. It is blessed with a sandy, loam topsoil overlying a gravel base, providing enviable natural drainage.

For an inland course to have only two main drains is remarkable. The superb and natural greens are predominantly Colonial Bent, whereas tees, fairways and roughs consist mainly of Fescue with smaller amounts of Bent, Poa annua and Rye; the latter introduced

for strengthening wear tolerance on tees.

The 65 bunkers are revetted in style with the turf faces sprayed off. Wildlife is in abundance with red squirrels finding scots pines as an ideal nesting habitat. The club emblem features this creature, which sadly is in sharp decline, but thrives at Ladybank. Other fauna include roe deer, foxes, buzzards, bats and various woodpeckers.



**The Team**

Tasked with managing the site is Course Manager Colin Powrie who has been at the club for 25 years – he was promoted to his current role last year. Head Greenkeeper is David Gray who



has been at Ladybank for eight years and he too was promoted last year.

Five other full time staff include Mike Herd who maintains workshop operations, complementing the maintenance team, all of whom are trained to at least NVQ level 2 and enrolled onto the BIGGA CPD scheme. A management committee consisting of the General Manager, The Professional, Colin and David work together to ensure that the course is managed and maintained in line with the club's objectives.

Colin explained: "We pride ourselves on our attention to detail, precision and careful planning to ensure that anyone playing the course experiences the same quality, regardless of day or time. A key objective is to provide dry and firm playing conditions which are indicative of a heathland environment and to do so within a sustainable environment. We are fortunate to have a full membership and the luxury of still having a waiting list which means that the club are able to continually invest in the course."

### Conditioning & Presentation

Colin continued: "To help achieve our course objectives, we work closely with STRI in regards to testing greens surfaces for OM, soil moisture, firmness, smoothness and pace. Constant monitoring and recording of information allows us to communicate results to the club while enabling us to fine tune our working practices. Greens are triplex cut daily at 3.75mm and rolled frequently to give us a desired speed of 9.5 feet which can be tweaked upwards for major events. We have a regular aerifying program using tines of varying depth while applying around 150 tons of sand per annum.

"Nitrogen input is usually around 80kgs per annum while a PGR is applied fortnightly and tank mixed with foliar Nitrogen. We are currently overseeding



with 100% Fescue to improve sward composition, albeit this is a long term goal. Disease control is usually limited to just one application per annum; this being a contact fungicide, since our Bent greens have good disease resistance.

"We walk mow the collars for added presentation and improved turf firmness while tees, fairways and roughs are cut as normal with varying ride-on mowers. Although the main focus of attention is the playing surfaces, the next priority is managing our environment. This means trimming and removing trees, invasive broom and other forms of vegetation that inhibit either heather or fescue establishment in areas of rough."

### Training

Having walked the course and seen at first hand the turf quality on the main playing surfaces and previous work programmes in areas of heather

and rough, I was keen to find out more about staff training and how this 'in-house' idea started.

David said: "Our aim is to ensure that our team have a clear understanding of what we are trying to achieve and why. If team members are asked questions they should have the knowledge to respond with appropriate answers. They need to keep up to date with ever changing products, techniques and technologies while helping to advance their careers.

"Since benefitting from the BIGGA Delegation sponsored by Bernhards to the US, attending BTME and local seminars within the Scottish central section, it encouraged me to become more involved within BIGGA. Meeting experienced Course Managers reinforced my belief in developing training which was supported by Colin.

"The other key factor was during team appraisals; staff responded positively to the idea and asked to submit topics that would be of benefit. Colin and I put training plans together for two afternoon training sessions which were held in January and April; the first of which was on 'cutting performance and grinding angles'.

"This was largely workshop based and hands on with part of the training being hosted by Mike, who is experienced in this area. The second topic was on bunker sand analysis and this time it was a mix of classroom and sampling various sands which is pertinent to our current work on the course."

Colin added: "After our initial workshop, the club have been fully supportive and are keen for us to continue when opportunities arise. We have a training budget and it is our decision as how best to utilise it. On completion of each workshop, BIGGA are contacted and CPD credits are added, since all staff are enrolled on this scheme and encouraged to achieve



set targets.

“Training is very much at the heart of our business since we have great networking opportunities within our industry. With a combination of in house training and educational events locally, it means that everyone within our team can keep abreast with latest trends and technology and then put this into practice on the course so everyone can benefit.

“Following David’s attendance at a seminar on PGRs at the Golf Industry Show, we implemented a change in our programme to switch to 200ml every fortnight rather than 400ml per month. This had immediate results as it eliminated the ‘rebound period’ when the chemical runs out and releases the carbohydrates stored. Our aim is to run further half or part day workshops during the winter. We also hope to further develop our relationship with Elmwood College and have regular visits from students, offer placements and work experience opportunities since we have a great golf course within a diverse environment’.

**Communication & Feedback**

David added: “I produce a Head Greenkeeper’s blog sent out via email to all members every fortnight, along with



the pro’s newsletter which is also posted within the clubhouse and our canteen. It’s a great way of communicating directly and reviewing past work, future plans and any explanations where necessary, such as the removal of invasive broom and why we need to take such action.

“So far the feedback has been excellent and we are encouraged by the club to continue. We have already adapted presentations for committees to give an insight into frost policy and bunker sand selection’.

Colin and David have demonstrated that, with both club and employee support, staff training can be both fun and informative, while helping in career development. It encourages further learning, helps to instil pride into daily work routines and bring about intuitive thinking. This ensures that the course remains at the forefront of modern technologies while maintaining the delicate balance between golf and the environment for future generations. The fact that the club already have a sand silo installed to improve top dressing efficiency is testament to their forward thinking.





# Are you ready for Autumn?

ProTurf  
12-5-20  
↙ tees

Effect  
Iron  
fairways →

K-Step  
6-0-27  
greens  
↙

Instrata  
- sept/oct ↗  
Medallion  
- nov  
greens

See full list of rewards at

**Turf**  
REWARDS.com

Benefit from better turf. Collect points for a great range of rewards!

**Instrata**  
Fungicide

3 x 3 Litres =

5  
POINTS

**Medallion<sup>TL</sup>**  
Fungicide

1 x 3 Litres =

5  
POINTS

**Sierraform<sup>GT</sup>**

20 x 20 Kg =

5  
POINTS

K-STEP 6-0-27 +2MgO +TE

**ProTurf<sup>®</sup>**

25 x 25 Kg =

5  
POINTS

12-5-20 +2CaO +2MgO

**Greenmaster<sup>®</sup>  
Liquid**

1 x 200 Litres =

10  
POINTS


Effect Iron Fe

TurfRewards scheme only available in UK & Ireland. See TurfRewards.com for Terms & Conditions. All rewards are subject to availability. Use plant protection products safely. Instrata contains chlorothalonil, propiconazole, fludioxonil. MAPP 14154 PCS 05186 MedallionTL contains fludioxonil. MAPP 15287 PCS 04188 Always read the label and product information before use. Instrata<sup>®</sup> MedallionTL<sup>®</sup> registered trade marks of Syngenta Group Company Sierraform<sup>®</sup> ProTurf<sup>®</sup> and Greenmaster<sup>®</sup> registered trade marks of Everris International B.V. or its affiliates © Everris International B.V.

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# Ecology in Action

Anthony Darker is First Assistant Greenkeeper at Elsham Golf Club, who won the 2015 Syngenta Operation Pollinator Award supported by STRI and Syngenta for its outstanding ecological work. Here Anthony explains the work the greenkeeping team have put in to transform the site into a thriving wildlife habitat

**Britain's countryside has been shaped and influenced by man over time but many of the traditional practices responsible for maintaining it have stopped, resulting in a loss of important wildlife habitats.**

Elsham Golf Club here in Lincolnshire is a part parkland, part heathland 18 hole course. Things have changed over the last three years - we are restoring and reconnecting with the environment. This might sound like a big undertaking but it doesn't have to be.

A good start for us was relaxing our rough cutting regimes. This saved us time and money and gave us much-needed refuge for the wildlife on the course. Obviously it's a tricky balancing

act. But, attracting more wildlife to the course can be done in a way that doesn't slow play and won't impede the higher handicapped players. So, we decided to cut the rough back to 50mm.

Our rough is a fine wispy brown top fescue, perfect for small mammals and insects alike to live in. To achieve this wispy finish we sprayed Rescue to remove the broad leaf grasses, once the Rescue had taken effect we then scarified to help remove the dead grass - in turn fining the sward.

We are lucky to have quite big areas of rough in parts of

the course which allows us to do this. It's obviously trickier if you don't have the space, but if this is the case maybe look for an out of play tree line on the side of a tee or a car park border. You could try out a wildflower mix as well to bring a hint of colour to the course.

It's fair to say that for the first 18 months, we didn't see any revolutionary change, with just some areas of Birds-Foot Trefoil and Red Clover flowering. It could have been disappointing, but we remained patient and the results over spring and summer 2013 were certainly worth the wait. What were



once bland, colourless areas became awash with colour and crawling with bees, butterflies, moths and no end of insects that we had never seen prior to the Operation Pollinator habitats being created.

The winter clearly requires a different approach. An easy way to help small mammals and insects on the course survive the winter is to make log and brash piles. They don't have to be huge, just find an out of play area and spread the brash out. Small invertebrates can live quite happily in log piles but find it hard to move from one to another, so by spreading the brash you are creating a corridor for them to move between.

Dead wood is not useless, it can become a home to woodpeckers, tree creepers and flying invertebrates, although you must make sure if you are leaving dead wood on the site that it is done safely. One option is to remove the top of the tree to reduce the chance of falling debris.

Be inventive - use materials lying around the yard. In my opinion there's no need to buy hedgehog homes or insect hotels. If you have a pile of bricks or slabs make a box-like shape, cover it in soil, add some dry bedding material and you have a hedgehog home.

We all have pallets left behind from deliveries - keep them and make insect hotels. Also, something new I tried this year was a bee hotel made out of breeze blocks and an old hosepipe dug into south facing tee banks filled with wood chip.

Try and get the members at

your club and/or the owner involved! When you start telling them what you are doing you will be surprised by their response. Ours have been very positive, they all seem keen to help in their own way.

We've got some members who are keen birdwatchers we've discussed ideas with, some of their family members have even come down to have a look at what we've been doing, and it's all great for us to increase the profile of the greenkeeping team. Some generous members have donated bird feed and equipment and materials to help us build new animal habitats.

Ongoing management of the wildflower areas involves waiting until the end of September for bees and butterflies to move away and take refuge in the over winter log piles, then cutting back and removing the vegetation. The aim is to reduce the fertility and keep the sward open, allowing wildflowers to set seed and regenerate. The area is cut and baled by a local farmer, but we only cut down to 15cm and take care to start in the middle and work outwards, to give small mammals and invertebrates in the sward a chance to escape. The farmer typically gets 20 bales, and we keep two or three placed on the edge of the area to provide a further food source and nesting area for birds.

Being involved in this project has been incredibly exciting for me, and has generated a wave of enthusiasm within the greenkeeping team and the club to do more. If we all try and do our bit, whether it's on a small or large scale, we can help dispel the negative publicity golf clubs sometimes receive regarding the environment.

Caroline Carroll, Syngenta Operation Pollinator Manager, commended Anthony on his passionate enthusiasm that has made such a success of the environmental work at Elsham Golf Club. She said: "He has ably demonstrated how the Operation Pollinator initiative has made it possible



to enhance the environmental attraction for both wildlife and golfers.

"The array of practical ideas he has incorporated demonstrated how ecological enhancement can be successfully integrated directly alongside management of the golf course to provide great playing conditions.

"Elsham, like all of the clubs involved with Operation Pollinator, is proof that golf courses and the skills of the greenkeeping teams can provide a superb ecological resource. Far from being the ecological deserts that some would like to portray, they are an environmental oasis to enjoy and for which the industry should be justifiably proud."

***If you would like advice on how to incorporate some of these ideas on your course, or have some ideas of your own, please contact Anthony on [antdarker@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:antdarker@hotmail.co.uk)***





# A heathland evolution



**Jonathan Knowles visits Oakmere Park Golf Club in Nottinghamshire to see how a team of BIGGA members are implementing various course developments including re-establishing heathland.**

**Nottingham Castle is perched on an impressive lump of Sherwood sandstone with caves, dwellings, hideouts and even a medieval boozier – ‘Ye Old Trip to Jerusalem’. No doubt many local icons from DH Lawrence to The Sherriff of Nottingham have supped a few ales in there. This substrate forms not just the city’s heritage, but also the landscape in the north and west of the shire. Rolling valleys, ancient woodlands, pine forest plantations, arable farmland, heath and reclaimed mining areas are synonymous with the county. The overlying soils have largely arisen from friable sandstones forming Bunter soils (sandy soil with pebbles and cobbles). These free draining soils provide dry, lowland heaths and are characteristic of a number of golf courses in the county.**

Ten miles north of the castle is a popular 27-hole facility: Oakmere Park covers 160 ha with a texture of woodland, bracken, gorse, wispy grasses and heather. The well-established facility attracts many locals and far-flung visitors with a driving range and new FootGolf course to boot. It is surely a contender as one of the region’s busiest venues.

But there is no complacency here, as course development and long-term conservation initiatives are transforming this captivating environment for golf.

The greenkeeping team is a blend of experience and apprentices. All nine have varied responsibilities to maintain the estate. Course Manager Richard Bond started his career in the mid nineties. His first challenge was to establish a new 45-hole venue at East Horton near Winchester, as well as completing a HND in Golf Course Management. After eight years at East Horton he relocated to the Midlands for a new challenge to raise the status of Oakmere as a venue for national tournaments. Now, after eleven years at Oakmere, a heathland initiative and course developments are bearing fruit. Oakmere has made great strides in diversifying its heathland credentials, as well as playing quality. Richard told me how the team has managed to establish the heath over the years. “The process of establishment has involved scraping off topsoil to remove the inherent nitrates. The exposed sandy profile is ideal for heather. “Once excavated to the sandy substrate, locally sourced heather brashing is harvested after seeding



(December) and evenly spread, preferably with fine grasses and birch branches to help nurse germination and create a micro-climate for establishment. It can take years for heather to establish, some areas have taken up to four years.”

The locally sourced brash has been supplied by neighbouring heathland course Sherwood Forest. Richard added: “Head Greenkeeper Kim Kirkham has been invaluable as a source of brash and advice”. This initiative has been transformational.

The original site of the 1980s has evolved from pine forest plantation with open agricultural land, into a



diverse natural heathland course. It is an absolute credit to the vision of the team and management at this Notts haven of heathland.

A diverse and beautiful heathland ecology is only part of the story. This environmentally sympathetic approach has transcended into turf management with tangible benefits, such as reduced disease incidence and fungicide applications year on year.

The greens are routinely dry and firm. Recent data has revealed the composition as 43% annual meadowgrass and 51% bentgrass, the remainder being fescue and Yorkshire fog. Stimpmeter readings are consistently fast with an effective cutting height of 5mm combined with spells of rolling. To increase the predominance of Browntop bent, a regime of overseeding in spring and autumn following a verticut and topdress with cultivars Egmont, Greenspeed and Manor have been applied at 6g/m<sup>2</sup>.

Richard pointed out that firmness is likely to be attributed to a change in coarser top-dressing material and regular aeration to increase water infiltration. This also reduces iron build-up in the rootzone. A regime of vertidrainage with no more than 4% iron and seaweed treatments are supplemented with Breaker BioLinks fortified with plant growth hormones. Richard has worked closely with a number of agronomists, gleaning their knowledge to enhance the courses.

Particular guidance from Brian Robinson has led to a programme of Rigby Taylor treatments and fertilisers - Microlite Activ8 with ERD and XL bio-stimulants "the greens respond well to these products, especially applied as light applications". This diligent programme of nutrient treatments, aeration and sand dressings has seen reduced pathogen activity and increased root zone porosity. These are proven factors in maintaining playability, agronomy and importantly golfer satisfaction. A real true example of how sound greenkeeping can contribute successfully to the running of the facility. This is reflected in the sizeable 800 membership and 60k rounds per year.

Richard pointed out planning and whole team involvement is a key aspect in preparation. "I spend a lot of time working on the courses with different members of our team. I keep notes on all settings, application rates and heights of cut. We then work together to compare and contrast previous years' results. For example, the logs on irrigation audits, soil analysis and

rooting depth date back to 2004. We all evaluate how these are working and use experience of the team to sort out problems and improve techniques too. The general philosophy is little and often with almost all tasks on the golf course whether irrigation, top dressing, fertilising or aeration".

There are also examples of the team having to solve problems such as insect pests. While the sandy site is ideal for maintaining a dry golf course, it is also an ideal habitat for chafer grubs. At Oakmere Park it is the juvenile Garden Chafer (*Phyllopertha horticola*) that can cause problems on the fairways and approaches. It has proved a major pest that has needed an integrated approach. With questions over the future of the insecticide imidacloprid, Richard and the team have had to source new control methods. Currently they are trialling pheromone traps, and early indications i.e. the lured number of adult beetles, are good.

Ambitious planning and teamwork has extended beyond the greenkeeping team. The management have recently initiated a major enhancement project for the whole site. After consultation with architect Tom MacKenzie of MacKenzie & Ebert, a detailed catalogue of proposals was drawn up. The MacKenzie style fits perfectly with the transforming heathland of Oakmere Park.

Earthworks started early in the year with alterations to topography and re-bunkering of the 11th green. There was no major upheaval as such, the work was meticulously carried out with minimum disruption. Changes have resulted in a well-defined new style. Admittedly, naturalistic links style bunkers are unusual in this part of the Midlands, but here they seem entirely fitting. The surrounding swales and borrows of the green enhanced the approach shot into the green.

Work continued into the spring, altering a number of fairway bunkers and two greens and tee complexes on the nine hole Commander's course. The whole design concept and execution of the development is refreshing. For the greenkeeping team it has been an opportunity to initiate and develop new practices. The edging of the naturalistic bunkers has been described as '3D turfing' by the team. Blocks of turf cut from the rough and placed on the bunker edge, greenside facing in the bunker and the upper side seeded to form the edge. This method instantly resulted in appealing naturally formed bunkers, important in showcasing to the members how the new design will evolve.

Greens construction also needed an innovative method to rapidly establish the grass. Recycled cores from 14mm



diameter hollow tines were taken from the greens of the Admiral's main course, then spread and consolidated on the new greens, followed up by bentgrass overseeding as per the main greens. Richard praised the guidance received from Ian Kinley, Course Manager at Royal Porthcawl.

"I received invaluable information how to do this. Without Ian's step-by-step photos, I would have struggled to get the finish we have now". This method has led to an outstanding result and close to playing conditions within a few months. Essentially, the mature grasses have hastened establishment for play. These developments will also see replacement of the 1980s irrigation system with the TORO Lynx, complete with infinity sprinklers and weather station. Shrewd turf management and greenkeeping are raising the standards with cost-effective investment.

These are excellent examples of how sustainable turf management can ultimately benefit the club, members and future of the business. Nottingham Forest icon Brian Clough once remarked that management is 90% the same for all football managers up and down the country, but it's that special 10% that makes the difference.

Isn't good course management 90% the same for all Course Managers/Head Greenkeepers? Agronomy and course presentation have fundamentals that we all adhere to, but it's what happens in the remaining 'special' 10% that makes the difference. Oakmere has now been selected as county course for 2020, confirming progress is clearly working towards that objective of a tournament venue. The vision is becoming tangible via a good range of sustainable practices.

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**CX, John Deere ProGator 2020**  
**and Electric Buggies x2**



#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jonathan Knowles has been in greenkeeping for around 25 years. Having completed a decade in greenkeeping at Rufford Park GC, he moved to a role delivering sports turf education and more recently turfgrass research. Following a number agronomy articles for GI this is his first course report.







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# Game of Thornes

Steve Thorne, Student

greenkeeper of the year 2015



**TORO**





**Steve Thorne was crowned the 2015 Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year at BIGGA House after a keenly contested Final. Steve, who is Deputy Course Manager at Rushmore Golf Club near Salisbury was nominated by Nick Lush of Myerscough College and came out on top after a gruelling 24 hours packed with discussions, exams, presentations, interviews and birthday cake!**

A relative latecomer to greenkeeping, Steve - who celebrated his 43rd birthday during the Final itself - has had an unusual career journey. Here, in his own words, he describes how a round the globe trip led him into the world of greenkeeping

## About the Winner

Steve grew up on a farm in rural Dorset, with his Dad, Mum and younger sister. He enjoyed the outdoor life and helped out on the farm in school holidays during busy times. During his school days, he felt like he was steered towards an academic career, and, after completing GCSE's and A-Levels he went onto college to complete an HND in Building Studies. Once he had graduated from college, he initially worked as a junior Quantity Surveyor for a national housebuilder and from there, onto a Building Supplies chain where he was eventually promoted to the position of General Manager for the South West region of the company. Steve says "Although these roles were interesting, I never really felt happy or fulfilled. It just seemed like the right thing to do."

Things changed when Steve's wife's father died unexpectedly at a young age. "This event was obviously a great shock to Rachael and I and the whole family. But time is a great healer, and after coming to terms with the loss, Rachael expressed an interest in getting away and seeing some of the world." So, almost 18 months later, Steve resigned from his job and the pair set off on a

six month adventure around Canada, USA, Australia and New Zealand. Steve recalls "These were great times. Seeing and experiencing new people and places. But it also gave me time to think and reflect upon what made me happy. I knew things had to change when we got home."

So on their return, Steve started work on the farm where he grew up. Working alongside his father on the mixed arable and dairy estate. "I really enjoyed work on the farm. I was working with machinery and was outside, all of which made me happy. However the compromise was that the hours were incredibly long and the work/life balance was too uneven! I knew once again, it was time for a change".

Steve heard of a position coming up at Salisbury and South Wilts Golf Club and joined the team as Assistant Greenkeeper. "At Salisbury, I worked under Course Manager Darren Lee and his Deputy Jon Oostendorp, who were both inspiring characters. Darren for his attention to detail and emphasis on presentation and Jon for his technical knowledge and ability." It was while here at Salisbury that Steve completed his level 2 qualification.

While working here, Steve was doing some private lawn care work in the afternoons and evenings which soon became something far bigger. "The private work snowballed into something significant in a really short amount of time. I felt like I had to explore its potential. So I left Salisbury and South Wilts and set up my own business."

"Two Men Went to Mow", his lawn care business, kept Steve busy for six years where he acquired valuable skills such as managing his own time, meeting customers and managing their expectations. "The business was a great experience, but after working for so long predominately on my own, I yearned to be part of a team again and wanted to



BIGGA Chairman, Les Howkins MG presents Steve Thorne with the coveted TORO student greenkeeper of the year award 2015





get back to greenkeeping and make a career of it."

Steve's local golf club, Rushmore, had three, long serving, members of staff retiring in the same six month period. "With such a change, I suspected that there were exciting times ahead at Rushmore, and was lucky enough to join the team in August 2012."

Since then the Club and the greenkeeping team have built upon the good work of their predecessors and forged ahead with improving the course. Steve says "Having Jaime (Acton) as Course Manager has been great, we've really gone from strength to strength. As a team, we've been encouraged to learn, with two of us, including myself, undertaking our level 3 qualification through Myerscough College. Jaime also encourages the team to attend BIGGA educational and networking events. These events are a great opportunity to meet other greenkeepers and discuss work related issues. It's always interesting to hear that similar experiences and problems are encountered by many golf clubs, regardless of their size or reputation."

In January 2014, Steve was promoted to the position of Deputy Course Manager at Rushmore. "This has been a great opportunity to assist Jaime and hopefully alleviate him of some of the day to day tasks of Course Manager". Steve has also enjoyed the winter projects that the team have completed over the last two years. "We've completed several good projects over the last couple of winters, with some new tees and several new pathways being built around the course. I really enjoy the variety of jobs you get to do as a Greenkeeper, it's what makes it such a great career!"

Since February of this year, Steve has been serving on the South Coast Section committee as Secretary, and also pens the notes for the Around the Green section of GI Magazine. The committee has been through some changes re-

cently and are currently increasing the amount of educational events on offer to compliment the well-established calendar of golf fixtures. Steve commented, "I really support what the Section are trying to achieve at the moment. By offering a wider range of events we can appeal to a wider range of members. The more people become involved, the more they can see the benefits of educational events and the networking potential on offer. This can only be a positive thing and help to promote professionalism within our already great industry".

At home, Steve has been busy renovating his home in Cranborne, Dorset. He recalls "we had just completed a big renovation on our last house when we sold it to move here. I thought our new home was just in need of a little decorating, but somehow we've ended up taking down walls, re-plumbing, re-wiring and re-plastering most of it! I feel as if I've done enough DIY for a while!" He has recently started learning to play the drums and has bought an electric drum kit which is set up in the office at home. "I'm no Dave Grohl, but it's something I've always wanted to do. Being electric, and using headphones, there is hardly any sound made when playing it, which I'm sure the neighbours appreciate!"

On winning the TORO Student Greenkeeper of the Year award, Steve commented "This has been a great experience from start to finish. It's a real honour to have won, especially when you're up against such knowledgeable and passionate people. I was so proud to have got to the final six, an achievement in itself, but being crowned the winner is still sinking in. It was great to get to know the other finalists over the couple of days, I'm sure we'll keep in touch. And all the staff at BIGGA House made us feel so welcome. Deb (Burnett) had even baked me a birthday cake on the day we arrived, a really nice touch!"

Steve added "I'm so excited about America. To go and be part of the pres-

tigious Winter Turf School in Massachusetts will be amazing. I can't wait to see the TORO HQ, and understand more about the place where the machines we use almost everyday come from. And also, to experience the Golf Industry Show first hand will be fantastic, I've heard so much about it."

"I'd like to thank Rushmore Course Manager Jaime Acton, the General Manager Declan Healy and the whole team for their fantastic support, Nick Lush, my tutor at Myerscough College for nominating me, my wife Rachael for her constant encouragement and BIGGA's South West & South Wales Regional Administrator Tracey Walker for setting up the public speaking and presentation course at Hockley Golf Club I attended recently which was a great confidence booster heading into the final. Special thanks to the sponsors Toro and everyone at BIGGA House for making me so welcome."





## THE 2015 FINAL

Winner: Steve Thorne, Rushmore Golf Club (Myerscough College)

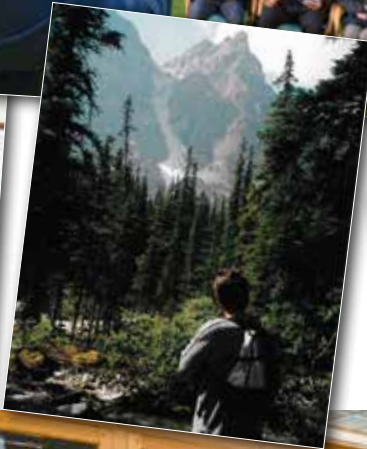
Runners up: Susan Reeve, Castle Royle Golf Club (Oaklands College), Sam Sweetzer, West Hill Golf Club (Myerscough College).

Finalists: Stefan Carter, The Wentworth Club (Myerscough College), Jon-Jo Pitts, Royston Golf Club (Oaklands College), David Stewart, Walmley Golf Club (Pershore – Warwickshire College).

The final consists of a series of tasks beginning with a debate and discussion panel. This is followed by a multiple choice technical test, an essay question requiring a response of 500 – 750 words, a 5-10 minute formal presentation and an in-depth interview.

BIGGA Chairman Les Howkins MG, Course Manager at The Richmond Golf Club, chaired the discussion panel. The candidates were asked first of all to take sides in debates on grass species and chemical or biological inputs and then to give their own views on further hot topics in the industry.

Following the multiple choice and essay tests the final stage of the competition featured the students delivering a short presentation about themselves before they were interviewed by Sami Strutt, BIGGA Head of Member Development, golf course consultant Bruce Jamieson, BIGGA Chairman Chris Sealey and Jeff Anguige, Lely Turf Division Sales Manager.





# The Prince...



# ...of Persia

**BIGGA member Jordan Fairweather has had an extremely varied career taking him from Scotland to Bahrain via America and Bulgaria.**

**He is now Director of Agronomy for Troon Golf at The Royal Golf Club in Bahrain. Here he explains the many challenges present ranging from scorching temperatures to managing a course on an oil field.**

**Managing turf is a small portion of what the modern day turf manager undertakes. Project management, procurement, customs clearance and product registration, health and safety, multiple human resource tasks, communication with members along with bench marking/ data capture, budgeting, reporting, environment and ecology and even in some cases sales, marketing and social media are all areas which require daily involvement. But we're all working towards the end goal of customer satisfaction through agronomic excellence. Here, this has to be achieved on an island with daily average temperatures in summer of 48C.**

Bahrain is an island in the Arabian Gulf which is 55% desert. The Royal Golf Club, managed by Troon Golf, is Bahrain's largest piece of green space. It was redesigned by European Golf Design in 2008 to make way for a new housing development and is still the only green golf course open for play in the country. Bahrain has two other nine hole grassed courses which are for private use by the Royal Family. There are two other nine hole golf courses which are sand courses with

browns rather than greens! Like all golf courses on islands it takes a lot of work due to changing environmental conditions and the ordering and importation of materials. We are open for play 365 days a year with Sea Isle Supreme paspalum in the summer months and overseeding in the cooler months, greens with Poa Trivialis and Perennial Ryegrass on all other surfaces. Approximately 45,000 rounds are played annually.

Although only a one-hour flight from Dubai and Abu Dhabi, our temperatures are generally around 5C cooler than the UAE. This, coupled with high winds coming from Iran and the Arabian Gulf tend to put the Paspalum completely dormant for around four to eight weeks in January/February with its growth completely slowing in late November until late April.

In Dubai and Abu Dhabi they may only overseed for aesthetics or in roughs where they require a higher height of cut for tour events, but we overseed wall to wall. The dormancy with the drying winds would make greens unplayable if not overseeded. Overseeding means we have year

round mower usage, topdressing and fertiliser applications resulting in higher machinery hours and increased operational costs. Workshop management and staff holidays are two areas which require very well planned coordination to ensure that overseeding, the spring transition back to Paspalum and summer renovation dates are all covered with renovation being an extensive programme on warm season turf.

As with most greenkeepers, the weather is the main concern with the wind, fluctuating humidity and the occasional rain shower from November–February testing us, but the main concern is scorching summer temperatures of up to 50C.

Wind actually increases our daily watering more than the high 40's temperatures due to the warm season Paspalum coping with the heat. Wind speeds of over 30kmh are common and on occasions get up to 75kmh so night shifts are undertaken to spray fertilisers or pesticides. Cover booms and air induction nozzles are used but at times this is not enough.

To give an example of the heat the



mechanics wear wool gloves in summer to stop their hands being burnt on metal tools. The wind also gives us work through washing turf and salt burn. The desert here has a very high salt content due to Bahrain being an island and winds blow natural desert sand all over the course which requires washing of turf and flushing of the sodium build up.

Salt is also a concern coming from our water source. Our water source is from four wells on site. This water is then put through our own Reverse Osmosis plant. We have a team of six operating the plant all year round. Daily we apply around 2.5 million litres of water.

Bahrain gets on average ten days of rain a year totalling 70mm. Being an island, topdressing sand is not available so we import silica sand for greens but all other surfaces are top dressed with double washed marine sand. All of the above means we have to have a flushing program. After each aerification we apply Calcium Sulphate (gypsum) at 500kg ha in the holes as a long term solution to help cation exchange capacity and reduce sodium build up, but monthly we apply Calcium Chloride, Wetting Agent and Seaweed in a solution which we then flush through the profile.

The salt content in the natural sub grade (the course is capped with 400mm of double wash marine sand) along with the salt content in the water corrodes the irrigation system. We are currently replacing all backing rings on valves that were steel with HDPE and all metal ball valves with PVC. Remember the course is only seven years old so this clearly shows the extreme corrosion in a short space of time. A team of five irrigation technicians keep the system operational including taking moisture readings from greens and fairways daily with a spectrum TD300 moisture meter.

All materials must be imported to Bahrain. We have to register all products with the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Environment. This registration lasts two years and we must get an import permit for every delivery. In practice, this means when you register a product you will more than likely stick with that supplier for two years and cannot just order ten bags of something when you run short!

Approximately 15% of our operational budget is on customs and delivery costs. To try and combat this we have an agreement with our Toro distributor to hold stock so all significant items







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are stocked by us - but not charged to us until we use them. This way we replace all items at the end of each month in one delivery. PLC control parts, spare pumps and motors must all be kept in stock for the Reverse Osmosis plant and irrigation system as water out here is more valuable than petrol and is five times the price. Petrol price is currently 100 fills (17p) per litre and water 500 fills (85p).

Running a golf course in the middle of an active oil field also means very strict regulations to be followed. Simple things such as not working within five metres of an oil pipe (all pipes run above ground for easy access, to reduce erosion and ensure if a leak no material gets into the pipes) even though our irrigation lines cross under them. Also no burning waste material or starting fires, no storage of carbon waste and separate store rooms for Nitrate fertilisers.

We have 12 oil wells on site and three gas dehydration plants surrounding the property. Daily, we meet with the oil companies to sign off access permits for maintenance work to their systems. Often they will request 24 hour access to bring in work over rigs to re-drill or clean wells which are rather large pieces of equipment! We have very limited ability to say no to work over rigs and for those of you who manage tour events with contractors it is similar.

**Annual turf renovation consists of five main events:**

**April**

Four way verti cutting (we always verti-cut up and back on the same stripe to eliminate grain) at minus 3mm and 8mm hollow coring to promote transition back to Paspalum

**June**

Four way verti cutting at minus 1mm and 8mm hollow coring

**July**

Graden scarification to 18mm deep with 10mm deep tine aerification

**August**

Four way verti cut at minus 1mm then 16mm hollow coring

**October**

Four way verti cut at minus 3mm to prepare a seed bed followed by 8mm solid tine aeration before we overseed.

Seed rates are 450kg ha on fairways/roughs and 400kg of poa trivialis on greens. Regular verti-cutting at minus 1mm and topdressing is carried out to greens approximately every 14 days

during the Paspalum growing season and we try to needle tine with 5mm slid tines every month to all surfaces from October to March. Rolling of greens is undertaken three times per week. The greens profile records volumetric moisture content of around 24%.

Managing of the Paspalum turf is our main focus and even when the winter grass is dominating we are thinking about the base grass. Weekly foliar fertilising and Primo Maxx applications are made every fortnight at 300ml per ha on all areas with granulars only being used directly after overseed or renovation with a granular potassium always applied after aerification. Paspalum is an abundant user of calcium and sees great benefits from zinc and magnesium towards reducing stress.

Only one fungicide application was applied in 2014 but monthly applications of a biological fungicide called companion are applied to greens. We have seen great results with this product which has allowed us to near eliminate fungicide use.

We have 27 holes of which 18 are floodlit, the first tee time is 6.30am and the last 9.30pm. Having floodlights has pros and cons. We see increased wear and increased insect activity but on the plus side do all our solid tine aerification and some major projects throughout the night. We have a team of 51 including three mechanics. Arabic, Hindi and English are all spoken.

Troon Golf took over management of The Royal Golf Club in late 2012. A year later the club were awarded Troon Golf's Facility of the Year. Out of over 200 courses around the world this was a great achievement by the team. When working in a tough culture with tough environmental conditions it is greatly satisfying to receive such awards.

The biggest thing I have personally learnt from my experience here is that you have to surround yourself with the right people, adapt to change and realise that there is no single method in the turf industry that is right.

Break down the bigger departments into small areas and get the right people so you can train them and share. Even with larger budgets and larger manpower than most European courses it does not mean the challenge is any less. When the smallest step forward and smallest achievement is made it is greatly rewarding and makes you look for that next step, challenge or enhancement you can give the members.



#### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Jordan originates from Scotland and spent seven years at Loch Lomond Golf Club. He graduated in Golf Course Management and Agronomy from Rutgers University in the USA.

After working at the 2007 US Open at Oakmont Country Club and 2008 Ryder Cup at Valhalla Golf Club he then moved to the Middle East as Construction Superintendent, building the world acclaimed Yas Links along with Dubai Golf City.

He then moved on to Bulgaria where he finalised the construction and opening of Pravets Golf Club which then hosted two EPGA European Championships.

For three years he has been Director of Agronomy for Troon Golf at The Royal Golf Club in Bahrain responsible for not only their 27 hole golf course but an external landscape contracting company and cart fleet sales and service company.



Jordan Fairweather



# Light fantastic



**Congratulations to Darren Chisholm, Greenkeeper at Castle Stuart Golf Links, who has won the BIGGA Photographic Competition 2015 with the fabulous shot of the Northern Lights over the club's iconic clubhouse.**

Keen amateur photographer Darren took the winning image at around 11pm on a clear night in February – with a little help from his car headlights!

His shot attracted the most votes from BIGGA members, with the next 11 being included in next year's BIGGA Calendar.

He explained: "I usually try and take pictures of the Northern Lights about half a mile away from the golf course, but on that particular night I thought I'd have a go at taking one with the Lights and the clubhouse in too."

"I wasn't sure how it had worked out and I never expected to win, but I'm very happy people liked it. I'm shortly heading off to work at a club in Australia for six months which will be great experience, and the iPad should keep me occupied on the long flight!"

Darren used his Nikon DC100 camera with a 15 second exposure. He used an ISO setting (which controls the sensitivity of the shot) of 500 with a specification of F5.

Thank you to everyone who entered, and also thank you to all the members who took the time to vote - we received over 500 votes this year.



2nd: James Bledge - Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club



3rd: Leigh Powell - Hockley Golf Club





4th: Chris Brown - Gleneagles



8th: Graeme Roberts - Camberley Heath Golf Club



5th: Ross Jones - Billingbear Park Golf Course



9th: Grant Stewart - Sunningdale Golf Club



6th: Ian Chenery - Woodbury Park Golf Club



10th: Ian Brodie - Duddingston Golf Club



7th: Noel Smith - Burnham & Berrow Golf Club



11th: John Parry - Wrexham Golf Club



12th: Ryun Holden - Golf Club Wylhof



# Species management



**As part of his Turfgrass Management Studies at Askham Bryan College, Ben Morgan, Assistant Greenkeeper at Sandburn Hall Golf Club in York, has looked at species management of rough grassland on golf courses. Here he explains his findings...**

A typical golf course in the UK comprises, on average, of about 60% rough grassland. This means these areas can have a potentially serious impact on a golfer's score during a round. (Witteveen & Bavier, 2005)

A golf player survey conducted by Syngenta revealed that thick unplayable rough containing coarse grasses was a main grievance for golfers.

Over 50% were dissatisfied with the quality of the rough, and 70% stated that improving the playability of these areas was one of their main priorities. (Sanderson, 2012)

Well-managed rough grassland can challenge the golfers to play the course strategically and provide the opportunity to find their golf ball and play a good recovery shot. By maintaining the rough to this standard we can keep the speed of golf at a reasonable pace and improve the golfers' experience. They will be provided with the opportunity to make mistakes but also enjoy the challenge of being able to play recovery shots.

The problems occur when rough grassland becomes infested with coarse grasses such as Ryegrass (*Lolium*) and Yorkshire Fog (*Holcus Lanatus*). They form a thick impenetrable layer that makes it virtually impossible to find the ball or play a shot. If we develop a programme to remove these undesirable grasses and encourage finer leaved grasses such as Fescue (*Festuca*) and Bent (*Agrostis*) instead - they will perform to a much better standard.

## **Rough Grassland Management Programme**

To improve these areas we must develop the appropriate management strategy using







the correct technique to encourage a better playability standard.

#### Grassland Survey

To determine the quality of the rough we must survey the grassland in question to identify the percentages of undesirable grasses and gauge whether alteration is required. Having the ability to accurately identify turf grasses at this stage becomes very important because we need to determine if the coarse grass species are dominant and if the modification programme is required. (Arthur, 2003)

If fine-leaved grasses exist but are being outcompet-

ed by coarse grasses we have the option to apply a selective herbicide and remove the undesirable grasses to encourage fine-leaved grasses.

So, how do we control broad-leaved grasses?

#### Rescue Selective Herbicide

One of the most efficient herbicides available to tackle coarse grasses is Rescue - produced by Syngenta. This product is designed to kill broad-leaved grasses so finer leaved grasses can be established. The effects of this chemical are transient so you do not observe a sudden death of the grass and receive adverse reactions from the golfers. The advantage of this product is that you can allow the rough grassland to remain long but keep the visual definition on the course - without slowing down play or upsetting golfers with constant lost golf balls.

#### Successful Trials Using Rescue

The Course Manager of Loch Lomond Golf Club, David Cole MG, found success using Rescue to thin out his rough. He explained that the following programme helped him to improve the rough at his golf course:

- Application of Rescue
- Iron (Fe)
- Fertilizer (NPK)
- (PGR) Primo Maxx
- Over seeding with fine grasses
- Installing drainage

He stated: "We are getting back to rough areas that can be used to define the design of the course, without impinging on the players' game too severely. It all looks better and is playing better."

The evidence suggests that during trials Rescue proved itself to be a very efficient tool for selectively removing coarse grasses from the sward. Removing these grasses can encourage fine leaved grasses establishment and improve playability.

#### How Does Rescue Work?

During treatment coarse grasses in the sward absorb greater amounts of the product than fine leaved grasses because their leaves have a larger surface area for the chemical to adhere to. Once Rescue has been absorbed it

travels through the grass plant systemically from the leaves down to the plants roots. The active ingredient in this product 'Pinoxaden' targets specific enzymes in the plant and stops cell division leading to death. The effects of Rescue can be seen on Ryegrass (*Lolium*) 10 days after application and after three to four weeks you can expect full foliar dieback.

The reason grasses like Fescue (*Festuca*) aren't affected by rescue is their fine leaf structure does not allow the chemical to adhere to them, therefore they are not affected. Some fine grasses such as colonial and brown top bent can show signs of discolouration but showed fast recovery during trials.

#### PGR Application and Over-seeding

Trials conducted by STRI proved that an application of the plant growth regulator (PGR) Primo MAXX five days before over-seeding increases the success of seed establishment by up to 200%. The product will suppress competition from other dominant species in the sward and allow fine grass species to establish successfully. (Sanderson, 2009)

If you are planning to over-seed after the application of Rescue there is a technique designed to help determine the correct time to apply the seed. Three to four weeks after the application you should perform 'The Rescue rub test'. This technique involves placing a few strands of the affected grass blades into the palm of your hand and start rubbing them together using your fingers. If the leaves are desecrated and crumble then the timing is perfect to start over seeding - preferably with a Fescue (*Festuca*) mix.

#### Summary

The evidence suggests that in order to keep rough grassland to a satisfactory playing quality we must manage it using the appropriate technique. If we do not manage these areas efficiently we can expect to get infestations of coarse grasses that make it impossible to play shots from. There are a number of different options open to the turf grass manager to improve these areas including:



- Mechanical scarification
- Selective herbicide control
- PGR application
- Over seeding with Fescue (Festuca)

Sanderson (2014) describes how trials carried out at Bowood Golf & Country Club proved that using a singular autumn application of Rescue achieved a result just as successful as combining mechanical scarification and Rescue application together. Therefore, it makes good economic sense to use Rescue on its own if your only objective is to thin the sward by removing broad-leaved grasses.

However, if your objective is to encourage wild flowers as well as thin out the sward then scarification should be included as part of your programme, because trials have shown that the removal of accumulated thatch by mechanical scarification can increase wild flower recovery rates.

To encourage fine leaved grasses such as Fescue (Festuca), an application of a PGR helps to slow down growth of

the competing grasses and will give the slow growing Fescue (Festuca) a chance to get established.

If you watched The Open at St Andrews and feel inspired to emulate the fine-leaved Fescue rough, you might consider developing a grassland management programme at your golf course this autumn.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Ben previously completed his Level 2 in Sportsturf and Amenity while working at Whitby Golf Club.

He then joined the Ohio State University programme at Pinehurst Golf Resort, and had a spell on the Old Course at St Andrews.

He then attended Askham Bryan College, graduating in 2011. He studied a foundation degree in Sports Surface Management then a BSc in Sustainable Land Management.



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# Hard choices for trees in Hertfordshire

Dr Terry Mabbett joins a team attempting to preserve ancient trees while simultaneously ensuring the health and safety of golfers

From left to right:  
Shane Lanigan, Michael Watts and  
Billy Ryan of Urban Forestry

**Golf courses are custodians of very old native trees although many don't realise the true value of those flanking the fairways. Most are English oaks which at 500 years or more old clearly qualify for official 'Ancient Tree' status.**

English oak like common beech, of much shorter natural longevity and with many trees now at the limit of their normal life span of 200-250 years (for maidens), are relics of the farmland and country estates on which golf courses were traditionally built. A wide range of tree species have been planted across the nation's golf courses over the last two hundred years. Where they can thrive (and survive) trees become essential features for playability, aesthetics and biodiversity.

Golf courses are public places and safety is paramount. Maintaining the environmental and ecological value of trees, while ensuring structural integrity and therefore player and public safety, often presents golf course managements with conflicting demands and situations that require compromise. Such problems are most acutely felt and difficult to resolve when old trees at their ecological peak require drastic remedial work.

## Hard decisions in Hertfordshire

On a superbly sunny day I accompanied a team of arborists to a tree-rich course in West Hertfordshire. Urban Forestry at Abbot's Langley (West Hertfordshire) is contracted to maintain the trees on Rickmansworth Municipal Golf Course, a membership and pay-as-you-play course owned by Three Rivers District Council and adjoining Moor Park Golf Course.

Rickmansworth Municipal Golf Course is one of the most tree-rich courses I have seen in South East England. From age and form the oldest English oaks have 'roots' going back to the seventeenth century when a mansion was built in the deer park of the 'Manor of More'. More recently established tree stock is down to three decades of dedicated planting by Graham Warne who is about to retire from the greenkeeping team. The Three Rivers District Council made a good choice in securing the services of Urban Forestry to look after their trees. The company has a well-earned reputation for doing the right things for the environment, ecology and biodiversity, while not compromising on the safety issues that always accompany trees in public places.

Having spent many days with arborists from all over the English Home Counties and beyond, I can safely say that Urban Forestry is a prime example of what I would call the 'thinking man's' arboriculture company. On site at Rickmansworth that day was owner and director Shane Lanigan, specialist climber Billy Ryan and ground operator Michael Watts.

## A tale of two beech trees

As the landowner with a large population of old trees (including Ancient and Veteran specimens) Three Rivers Council finds itself in a 'Catch 22' situation, needing to balance the preservation these living foundations of environmental and ecological integrity with health and safety requirements. The two big beech trees we saw that day presented a classic example of this dilemma.

A serious major branch failure a year earlier on one these trees flanking a fairway is what had prompted the latest course-wide tree survey at Rickmansworth, carried out by an arb consultancy, and subsequent retention of Urban Forestry to do the remedial work.



The beech tree in question was approaching 30m in height and estimated by Shane to be between 150-200 years old. In spring 2014 the tree lost a substantial part of its crown, during the day and within falling distance of a fairway on one side and a golf green apron on the other. Magnitude of the failure and collateral damage caused was visible from a massive rupture half way up the tree and scarring caused by falling debris still evident in the turf some 15m out from the base of the tree.

The arb consultancy had recommended substantial reduction to the 17m height initially agreed by Urban Forestry and endorsed by them after Shane identified an active *Meripilus* fungal infection in the collar region of the tree in autumn 2014. The now dried up 'bracket-like' sporophores (spore bearing structures) were still evident between the root flares in spring 2015. *Meripilus* fungal infections are common in old beech trees and frequently the single most important factor contributing to significant height reductions and frequently felling, especially in safety sensitive situations.

Before climbing the tree Billy measured its CBH (circumference at breast height) at 4.7m which according to standard tables put this tree at around 200 years old and as an open-grown maiden beech clearly nearing its 'sell by date'.

Billy lost no time in scaling the tree. His Stihl MS 200 saw equipped with a 12 inch bar is able to cut clean through anything up this diameter and enabling him to remove the ends of the top most branches with no trouble at all. With this complete and now presented with the much thicker lower ends of scaffold branches he called down for the company's bigger Stihl 46 saw.

The tree reduction was complete in no time at all with debris now strewn around the tree. With no woodchipper on site that day I asked Shane how they intended to dispose of the wood. Shane replied: "I successfully persuaded the golf course owners to deposit the debris in the 'dell' as part of an eco-friendly programme" as he pointed towards a wide and deep depression in landscape no more than several metres from the tree. 'Dells' are common features of the west and mid Hertfordshire landscape and relics of chalk and flint excavation going back to medieval times.

Being historically associated with witches and hobgoblins, dells were

historically allowed to tumble down into woodland and this dell was home to half dozen more beech trees of the same vintage. Debris was deposited in the dell, using the company's John Deere 6920 tractor to winch the heavy branches into position.

Next on the agenda was one of the beech trees growing in the dell. It was similar size and age to the one just worked on but was covered with dense woody ivy from ground level to 20 metres up the trunk and 'threatening' to make things much more difficult for Billy.

Reason given for felling was significant die-back of the crown coupled with a precariously close *Meripilus* infection which had already resulted in the loss of an adjacent beech tree. In this condition and towering over a golfing green the tree clearly presented a significant safety risk to players, while casting dense shade over the turf during summer. Dense persistent shade prevents turf from drying out thus providing ideal conditions for the proliferation of bryophyte weeds (mosses and liverworts) and fungal diseases like *Fusarium* Patch.

Leaf geometry (shape of leaves, angle at which they are borne on the stem and arrangement in relation to each other) makes the shade cast by the beech tree the densest of that caused by any British native deciduous trees. This, together with the beech tree's intrinsically shallow root system, is why it is able to shade out virtually all plant competition to form pure beech woods. It was these dual public safety/turf management issues which underpinned the decision to cut down the tree.

"Dense ivy can be a nightmare for climbers" said Shane as Billy started his ascent up the tree, adding how he would have to clear the ivy 'piecemeal' during his climb. "As you can see the ivy is extending at least one metre out from the trunk".

All the safety measures were in place or lined up. This included a fixed capstan around the base of the tree used in preference to a flying capstan because it offers less room for error and is therefore safer. Billy called down for the 'wire core flipline' which is more rigid and therefore easier to use than a 'soft rope strop'. Also lined up for use was 'cambium saver'. A cambium saver is normally used on trees that are not being felled because it stops the rope around the tree heating up the bark and destroying the cambium beneath. In this instance it would have caused less abrasion on the climbing line

because "modern ropes being braided are very susceptible to damage" said Shane.

In the event none of this was to be when we saw evidence of nesting Jackdaws higher in the tree. The team, in accordance with The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, stopped all work on the tree. "We will return at the end of the nesting season to complete the work on this tree", said Shane.

### Preserving Ancient Trees on golf courses

Rickmansworth Municipal Golf Course is just one of many golf courses in the country which are custodians of some very old native trees, of Ancient Tree status and therefore intrinsically valuable. In my view the Ancient Tree Forum should do the rounds of the nation's golf courses and put down markers on these trees.





The beech tree scheduled for reduction had suffered a severe damage event with the loss of virtually half its crown in spring 2014

With tree reduction complete the debris was deposited in the adjacent dell for eco-friendly reasons

The beech tree was successfully reduced from around 30 m to 17 m

Billy Ryan completes the last stages of the beech tree reduction

Billy Ryan cuts off the final branch and 'down she goes'.

The second beech tree located in the dell showed significant canopy die-back and was overhanging the adjacent golf green.

The tree was scheduled for felling primarily for safety reasons. However, due to the presence of nesting birds (jackdaws) work was stopped and postponed until the officially recognised bird nesting season (1st March to 31st August) had ended.

Ancient English oaks and many hundreds of years old on the Rickmansworth golf course.







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# Royal North Devon

## choose Durabunker

**The oldest golf course in England, affectionately described as ‘The St Andrews of the South’ and famed for its bunkers, in particular the 15ft tall, sleeper faced beast, known as ‘Cape Bunker’, recently demonstrated its willingness to break with tradition by committing to a major bunker renovation using the synthetic bunker product, Durabunker.**

Durabunker uses re-cycled synthetic material to build durable, maintenance free bunker faces and edges, offering many benefits over established yet maintenance heavy natural turf construction. Durabunkers can now be found at various venues in the UK, Europe and USA and was first commissioned at Royal North Devon Golf Club (RND) in May 2015.

Mark Evans, General Manager and former Head Greenkeeper at RND, who was instrumental in bringing the product to the club, commented:

“Bunkers at RND have long suffered from sheep damage and we felt it was time to trial an alternative solution. After attending a Durabunker demonstration at St Enodoc GC, and seeing how good the bunkers looked there, we decided to trial them on the golf course with a small introductory project in May 2015. The results were really pleasing and we received overwhelmingly positive feedback from the membership following the phase one project.

We decided shortly after the initial project that we would like to undertake a major bunker renovation and began the second phase of work in September, under a licence agreement with, allowing us to use our own staff to install the product. Durabunker Director, Rhydian Lewis was on site for the duration of the first phase and again at the start of the second phase and we certainly benefited from his input and knowledge, both of the product and bunker construction in general. We are re-shaping many of our bunkers with a view to increasing the gathering areas, so although the majority of the bunkers themselves are relatively small, they will actually gather the ball from a much wider area than they would have done previously. We discussed these ideas with Rhydian and felt it important to agree a clear design methodology before the start of the second phase of the project, particularly as the bunkers will be here for many years to come. It is important we get it right.

The bunkers built thus far look so neat and for a golf course like ours we believe they will be a strong investment for many years to come.”

Synthetic bunker faces and edges are growing in popularity as the benefits begin to be more widely understood. Durabunker now have on-going renovation projects at courses including Seaton Carew GC, Budersand GC (Ranked No.

3 in Germany), Frosaker GC (Ranked in the top 10 in Sweden) and have just completed the first phase of a major bunker renovation at Tiburon GC, Florida, a Greg Norman Design, which hosts the LPGA Tour Championships and the PGA Tour event known as ‘The Franklyn Templeton Shootout’.

Rhydian Lewis, co-inventor of all design patents and registered designs associated with Durabunker commented:

“To have recently made ‘bunker history’ through the installation of the first ever synthetic bunker faces at a PGA Tour venue and now to be embarking on a major renovation at RND is real privilege. It is a bold step for RND to embrace and implement synthetics on such a traditional golf course. The role of synthetics in golf and sport in general is a very emotive subject and as such to have the oldest club in England adopt synthetic bunker faces is a great validation of our product and company”.

“We have understandably met resistance along the way. When I first introduced the





er



will be debated for many years to come and Durabunker is certainly a product at the forefront of that discussion.

Lewis concluded: "We are not promoting the use of synthetic playing surfaces; nobody will ever play a shot off our bunker edges. The vast majority of members don't even realize that the bunkers they are playing from are synthetic!! We are promoting a solution to an array of problems associated with bunker faces and edges and hope that many other courses will continue to follow in the footsteps of Royal North Devon and explore the benefits our product could bring them".

concept of building synthetic bunker faces to the executive committee at my home club, I was met with large amounts of scepticism. It was only after much persuasion that the club agreed to build the world's first ever synthetic revetted bunker face. I think it's fair to say that when Mark and I first met at BTME many years ago, he shared that scepticism but on seeing the product, how natural it looks and how it performs, that resistance softened somewhat and we were able to win him over".

"At RND the main issues are caused by exposure to seaside elements, coupled with the particular problem of damage caused by sheep. Our product has proven a solution to these issues, along with many others, over a number of years. As well as providing a much more sustainable method to build classic links style bunkers, Durabunker is equally at home on inland courses where clubs are looking to produce much shallower edges to offer fixed shaped and sized bunkers. The savings on edging work alone is huge"

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## Section Notes

Please email your notes to [steve.castle@bigga.co.uk](mailto: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

## Scotland & Northern Ireland

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



**CENTRAL**  
Craig Boath  
cboath@  
carnoustiegolflinks.  
co.uk

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Section



**SOUTH WEST OF SCOTLAND**  
Amanda Dorans & Ian Smith  
amanda.dorans@lochlomond.com /  
iansmithgm@hotmail.co.uk

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**NORTH**  
Paul Sharp & Neil Sadler  
paulmsharp@hotmail.com  
gkneil@sky.com



**WEST**  
Stuart Taylor  
stuart.taylor@  
glasgowgolfclub.  
com



**NORTHERN IRELAND**  
Chris McArthur  
cmcarthur66@hotmail.co.uk

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## Events Coming Up

### EAST

The East Section AGM will take place at Dundas Park Golf Club on the 27th October with a demonstration of the Air2G2. Any proposals for the meeting should be forwarded to a member of the committee.

If anyone has any ideas and proposals for a Xmas day/night out or any other social event, please get in touch.

### NORTH

Alistair Matheson, our Education Convenor will be looking to organise some seminars for the section over the next few months. Obviously this takes time and planning to make it happen, so any help or ideas about what the members would be interested in, would be a huge benefit to All. Please get in touch with Alistair or via the email addresses above.

This years AGM will be held on the 22nd of October at Deeside golf club. There will be a 11.00am shotgun start with the AGM to follow. The cost of the day will be £10 which will

include soup & sandwiches. Please can you arrive for 10.15/30 am, to allow time to get to your allocated hole.

### SOUTH WEST OF SCOTLAND

We look forward to seeing you at the upcoming AGM being held at Irvine Bogside on 29th October and the Ecology walk with Bob Taylor at Powfoot on 10th November.

### NORTHERN IRELAND

Everyone should have received their invites and the first ever BIGGA Northern Ireland Golf Championship will have taken place on the Dufferin Course, Clandeboye Golf Club on Friday 2nd October. Prior to this a meeting will take place to discuss future events for the section.

Top prize is the Championship Cup, which is awarded to the player with the best gross score on the day with the Challenge Cup awarded to the player with the best nett score. I'm very much looking forward to posting results in next months GI mag with a couple of pics. It promises to be a terrific event with greenkeepers battling it out on the course before heading to the clubhouse for dinner on the Friday evening.

May I also make an appeal for venues to host our golf days in 2016 and also venues and ideas for educational purposes. We'll always appreciate it when a club gives us a venue as it isn't easy to fit us in on their busy schedules.

## News

### CENTRAL

Main prizewinners at our Autumn Outing at Drumoig GC wer David Gray - best scratch score and best aggregate for the spring and autumn combined, Richard Devlin.- best stableford score, Kenny Mitchell - best stableford in section one.

A Special Prize of green tea went to Pat Allan who is retiring at the end of the month. All the Best Pat!!

There were 46 players in total. Thanks to all the Patrons for their continued support and to everyone at Drumoig Golf Club for hosting us, the course was in great condition.

The Section Pairs event is down to the semi-final stage:

James Naylor and Ian Scott v Scott Robertson and Stuart Griffiths, Paul Murphy and Ian Menzies v Neil Ballingall and David Gray.

Well Done to Richard Jenkinson, who will be receiving the section's Patrons Award.

Finally, I hope everything went well for St Andrews, Kingsbarns and Carnoustie during the Dunhill Links Championship.

### EAST

The Willie Woods competition was hosted at Broomieknowe Golf Club on August 20th, many thanks to Broomieknowe for their hospitality. The winners were Sean Cunningham and Colin Mc Arthur from Craig Hempseed and Robert King, all from Mortonhall Golf Club, longest drive Keith Burgon and closest to the pin Steven Henderson, well done folks!

Just as it looks as if we are getting an Indian Summer we get this!! These pics were taken 48 hours apart in Edinburgh, hope the weather has been kind to you.





Massive congratulations to Blair Shearer, Dunbar Golf Club, for being this years East Section Patrons Award winner, we look forward to hearing all about your visit to BTME 2016.

East Section now has a twitter account @BIGGA\_ES add us and keep in touch.

#### **NORTH**

Hopefully the weather will have given us all the chance to get the autumn renovation work completed. It's been a tough season regarding weather, which made it very important to complete these tasks.

Well done to Phil Don and his staff for presenting Kemnay GC in excellent condition for the Section's autumn outing on 10th September. 45 members played in the event with scoring higher than normal due to the windy conditions. Well that's my excuse anyway!

Top golfer of the day was Chris Lamb from Newmacher GC who must get bored of winning all the time! He registered a gross 73, which would be an average scorecard for Chris until you notice the 10 at the 8th hole! Chris also won the Scottish Championships recently at Portlethen GC, as well as the spring outing at the beginning of the season. That means Chris picks up our annual Mark Main Trophy for the combined total from both our outings. Well done to all who attended and continue to support our section.

Results from the outing are as follows;

- Scratch – 1st C. Lamb (73 BIH), 2nd A. Lindsay (73)
- Class 1 – 1st P. Marshall (71), 2nd R. Macrae (72), 3rd N. Sadler (75)
- Class 2 – 1st M. McLaren (74), 2nd D. Middleton (76), 3rd G. Hamilton (77 BIH)
- Class 3 – 1st D. Robertson (78), S. Frost (82), 3rd G. Beattie (94)
- Apprentice Winner – C. Lamb (74)
- Veterans – 1st J. McCormack (76), 2nd D. Robertson (78)
- Committee Winner – R. Macrae (72)
- Trade Winner – K. Liddell, TAS (79)
- Sweep – 1st P. Marshall (71), 2nd R. Macrae (72), 3rd A. Lindsay (73), 4th C. Lamb (74)
- Nearest the Pin – P. Sharp (6th), C. Lamb (10th)

Our 200 Club has been a huge success again this year. Our quarterly winners are Robert Lamb (£30), Mark Thain (£30), William Findlay (£50) and Mrs P. Morrison (£100). Well done to all the winners.



#### **SOUTH WEST OF SCOTLAND**

The greenkeeping industry is in mourning on hearing the news that George Brown has sadly passed away. George was without a doubt a legend in his own time and he will be greatly missed. Our thoughts are with his family, friends and the countless people who worked with George throughout his successful career.

Thank you to Keith Aitken and his team at Brodick for providing a wonderful venue and superb hospitality for the Section's Autumn Outing. The sun was shining and the day was enjoyed by all. It was also great to meet two of Arran's other course managers Jim Mackenzie and Dave Jeffries and hear about their respective highs and lows of island life. A more detailed account of the day and winners will feature in next month's edition.

Thank you to Graeme King for sponsoring the new South West Of Scotland's trophy and also congratulations to Graeme who is the first to achieve his name on the back as well as the front – well done Graeme, you played some great golf!

The Section outings and education days have been well attended this year, so thank you to everyone for their support.

Congratulations to Iain Barr and his wife who have just celebrated their Silver Anniversary – hope you both had a lovely day!

Good luck to Ian Scott who is leaving Largs G.C. for a sunnier climate – best of luck in Oz!

#### **NORTHERN IRELAND**

Our section events will soon be up and gaining momentum, with some key dates for your diary. Check out the events section on the website or log into the members area and select 'Regions and Sections'. Hopefully all members will endeavour to attend these events and encourage their staff to do so, as we are all capable of learning something new.

As a new section to get up and running, BIGGA Northern Ireland welcomes those companies involved in the greenkeeping industry to participate in the patronage scheme. The Patrons will provide an opportunity to support the association while increasing their profile throughout the region. Anyone who would like to discuss the Patronage scheme then please contact John Young on 07776 242120 or by emailing johnyoung@bigga.co.uk

## **Thanks to Sponsors**

#### **EAST**

Thanks to Thomas Sherriff Groundscare for the demonstration during the Willie Woods tournament at Broomieknowe.

## Northern

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



**NORTH EAST**  
Glen Baxter  
glen.baxter@rigbytaylor.com  
Find us on Facebook  
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**CLEVELAND**  
Anthony McGeough  
amcgeough@aol.com  
Find us on Facebook  
BIGGA Cleveland Section



**NORTHERN**  
Chris Goodall  
christophergoodall11@hotmail.com  
Find us on Facebook  
BIGGA Northern Section



**SHEFFIELD**  
Ian Whitehead  
admin@hillsboroughgolfclub.co.uk  
Find us on Facebook  
BIGGA Sheffield Section  
@Sheffield Bigga



**NORTH WALES**  
Pete Maybury  
petemayb66@aol.com  
Find us on Facebook  
North Wales B.I.G.G.A.  
@Bigga NorthWales

## Events Coming Up

### CLEVELAND

Bring a Bottle 2015 Fun Day Cleveland GC on 8th December 2015, 11.00am tee off. This is always a well-attended day and hopefully we will not have the snow they're predicting. The cost for the day is £18.00, it would be lovely to see you. As a bit of fun I will be putting on a prize for the loudest dressed player, go on have a laugh and let's make it a fun day.

### NORTH EAST

Our Christmas Bring-a-Bottle, Win-a-Bottle will take place at Dunstanburgh Castle Golf Club on Friday, 11th December where merriment may take place well into the evening. Camper vans and tents can be accommodated if arranged with Stuart Imeson in advance!

### NORTH WALES

The Christmas tournament and A.G.M. take place at Nefyn Golf Club on 26th November; this is always a popular event so please make sure you return your entry form to Carl by 18th of November.

### NORTH WEST

We have our autumn seminar coming up at Myerscough College on the 28th October, one of the speakers is Steve Chappell, Course Manager of Gleneagles.

### SHEFFIELD

The Christmas Competition will take place on Thursday, 10th December at The Waterfront so look forward to seeing as many of you there as possible.

## News

### CLEVELAND

September is always a busy maintenance month for most of the clubs in the Cleveland section and I bet we have all heard this at least once during maintenance week "why are you doing that to the greens they are perfect now?" Or words to that effect! I like to pride myself in being able to pre-empt the question and look to provide the information for the members through all the mediums we have at our disposal nowadays, be it Twitter, Facebook, Course Blog and the good old fashioned notices on every single notice board that I can find in the clubhouse! I don't think I'm alone in this and I'm sure there are guys out there that get more than just the odd comment during top dressing week and if you are one of those guys I feel for you. On the bright side though in a weeks' time, when all the work has repaired and the greens are performing as well as they have ever done, you are once again a grass god!

Our very own Ian Pemberton completed the Great North Run with his son Tom, 13 miles is no easy task and everyone who competed I tip my hat to you.

The Whitemoss trophy where the mighty Cleveland section were defending their title did not go according to plan and, unfortunately, this time around the dream team of Richie Hood, Paul Legg and Dave Cuthbertson couldn't hold on to the trophy.

BIGGA Northern Region Inter Section sponsored by Whitemoss Eco. The competition took place at Middlesbrough Golf Club, Brass Castle on a superb day. The winners with 94 points were Sheffield Section Thanks must go to Whitemoss Eco, John Talbot and team for a superb course and to Karen Smith and the house team for looking after us all so well and to everyone who travelled to take part in the competition.

### NORTH EAST

The Autumn Seminar at Whitley Bay Golf Club proved to be a really enjoyable and informative day with course walks and presentations from Jonathan Gaunt and James Hutchinson, a fantastic presentation on pollination and bee keeping from Eddie Ainsworth and a great presentation from Paul Lowe. Thanks go to all the speakers, sponsors, Whitley Bay Golf Club for hosting the event and to all who attended.

The Autumn Tournament was kindly hosted at Ponteland Golf Club where Paddy Hetherington and his Team had prepared those greens to their usual pristine condition, running at an incredible 12+, sunshine and toil all the way. Thoroughly enjoyable day guys, thank you. The results were winner of Handicap Group 1-12 1st on countback with 34 points Jordan Gibson, 2nd with 34 points Jack Friar, 3rd with 32 points Craig Kilgour. Handicap Group 13-28 1st on count back with 31 points was Alex Robson, 2nd with 31 points John Moutrie and 3rd with 30 points was Alan Smith. Thank you to Ponteland Golf Club, our sponsors and to everyone who attended.

### NORTHERN

Thanks to David Hannam MG for sending this photo of BIGGA member Adrian Robertson, retired former Head Greenkeeper at Ilkley Golf Club, standing next to a Redwood at Ilkley. He said: "Greenkeepers, being custodians of the landscape, are largely responsible for what does or does not grow on the golf club estate.

"This fine specimen of a Dawn redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*) was introduced to the site with future planning to the 4th green region at Ilkley in the mid 1970s. Its girth is now fully 4 feet in diameter."



## **NORTH WEST**

We would like to congratulate John McLoughlin of Warrington Golf Club and his wife Alex on the birth of their daughter Honor Grace, fantastic news and we are all delighted for you.

We would also like to wish Richard Stephens now of Ringway Golf Club all the luck in the world in your new role. With that in mind we would like to wish Jim Granger, who is retiring from Ringway Golf Club, an enjoyable and relaxing retirement. You've been a fantastic member of the greenkeeping industry and you deserve all the happiness in the world.

The summer started with 24 entrants for the first North West Knockout sponsored by Campey Turfcare. 23 rounds of golf later and the Final was played at Hillside Golf Club between Jim Grainger of Ringway Golf Club and Chris Harding of Prestwich Golf Club. Despite the weather predictions the evening was warm and sunny with just enough wind to create a little more challenge. The course, prepared to Martin Twist's exacting standards, really was stunning. The result was that Chris Harding won, pictured from left to right are Chris Harding, Ray Walker (Club Captain Hillside Golf Club), Jason Lord (Campey Turfcare), Jim Grainger and Tim Johnson (North West Section Chairman). Thanks must be conveyed to Campey Turfcare for sponsoring the event and Hillside Golf Club for hosting the final.

Congratulations to Trevor Davies of Southport Old Links Golf Club for winning the Rigby Taylor Classic, the event took place at Preston Golf Club, thanks must go to Andy Merry and his

team for preparing an excellent course and to Rigby Taylor for organising the event.

## **SHEFFIELD**

The Autumn Tournament took place at Tankersley Hall Golf Club, thanks must go to Tim Greenfield and his team for preparing a great course, to Russell Groundcare for sponsoring the event and to everyone who attended. The winner was Wayne Lazenby with 39 points, second went to Neil Peters on count back with 37 points, third place went to Mark Crawshaw with 37 points and fourth place to Matt Holden with points. Matt Holden also won the longest drive and Steve Wragg won nearest pin.

## **Thanks to Sponsors**

### **NORTH EAST**

Thank you to our 2015 sponsors, TLS, Rigby Taylor, Greenlay Ltd and Rickerby Ltd.

### **NORTH WEST**

The North West section would like to thank all of the section sponsors for the continued support that they provide throughout the year.



## South West & South Wales

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



**SOUTH WEST –**  
Jaey Goodchild  
j.goodchild@bowood.org



Bigga South West  
@BiggaSouthwest



**SOUTH COAST –**  
Steve Thorne  
biggasouthcoast@hotmail.com



Bigga South Coast  
@BIGGAsouthcoast



**DEVON & CORNWALL**  
Cameron McMorris  
cjmcmorris@gmail.com



Bigga Devon and Cornwall



**SOUTH WALES**  
Andrew Hatcher  
andrewhatcher1@msn.com



Bigga South Wales  
@BIGGASouthWales

## Events Coming Up

### DEVON & CORNWALL

The Section AGM will be held at China Fleet on October 15th where the golfers will be competing for the Toro cup with a tee off at 8:30am, the non-golfers will be led on a course walk by Nathan O'Sullivan.

### SOUTH COAST

This year's South Coast Section AGM is scheduled for Wednesday 11th November at Barton on Sea Golf Club, Hampshire. Following the success of last year's event, we will follow a similar format with the AGM being followed by lunch and then afterwards, a course walk. Tony and the team at Barton have undertaken a huge amount of construction and changes around the course and this is a great opportunity to see what has been happening. As ever, the AGM is free to attend to all members, so, if you would like to book a place, then please contact [biggasouthcoast@hotmail.com](mailto:biggasouthcoast@hotmail.com).

### SOUTH WALES

On Wednesday 21st October we head to Swansea, to play at Langland Bay Golf Club with breath taking views across the Bristol Channel. The tee is booked for 11.00 am, coffee and bacon roll on arrival, followed by a three course evening meal after golf. It's also your chance of making your voice heard within your section at our AGM.

### SOUTH WEST

Our South West Section AGM is Thursday 8 October being held at Worlebury Golf Club, near Weston Super Mare. In addition to our meeting we will have two speakers giving presentations on topical issues and following our meeting golf will be available for those keen for a few holes.

8 October South West Section AGM at Worlebury Golf Club  
18 November Regional Conference at Somerset County Cricket Club

15 December Christmas Tournament at Marlborough Golf Club

Entrants in the South West Section Countrywide Knockout please stay in contact with Joe Curtis [greens@gloucestergolf.com](mailto:greens@gloucestergolf.com) to ensure the draw and results are up to date.

## News

It's been a busy time down here with plenty of grass to cut due to the incessant rain during August but everyone seems to be coping well.

The last month has seen both Mike Ellis and Cameron McMorris resign their positions on the committee due to personal reasons. They will be missed and we wish them well. The committee would like to thank Ron Skinner for taking over Mike's role as secretary in the interim period until the AGM in October.

Someone on the move from our section is Shaun Tuffin. Shaun has worked as a greenkeeper/mechanic at Falmouth for 4 years. He studied at Duchy College where he achieved NVQ level 2 and was regional finalist for student greenkeeper of the year. He volunteered at the BMW Championship at Wentworth, it was during this time that he showed a keen work ethic and attention to detail that led to him being approached by Wentworth to work there permanently. He will be working on the East course. He leaves Falmouth with the best wishes for the future from Simon and his team. Shaun is looking forward to his new challenge and some peace and quiet at crib time!

The section would like to congratulate our regional administrator Tracey Walker on her recent wedding.

### SOUTH COAST

Our third Turf Club event was held at Hockley Golf Club, Hampshire. This event proved hugely popular, with around thirty Section Members taking up the opportunity to be shown around the course by Glenn Kirby and his team. A full report of this event can be found in the "Newsdesk" section of the magazine.

### SOUTH WALES

Two opportunities are still open to any member to receive a sponsored place at BTME 2016. It includes three nights accommodation, the benefit of education and networking with other greenkeepers, our section has sponsored one place and also one by the Region.

### SOUTH WEST

A fantastic opportunity for South West Section members to attend BTME in Harrogate in January 2016 is available. For your chance to attend the flagship event for greenkeeping and turf management with accommodation and the opportunity attend the outstanding education programme please email our section address with a short mail telling us why you would like to attend and what you hope to achieve from visiting BTME and Continue to Learn. ([southwestsectionbigga@outlook.com](mailto:southwestsectionbigga@outlook.com)).

## Thanks to Sponsors

### SOUTH WEST

Many thanks to our South West Section 2015 Patrons: Headland Amenity, Countrywide, Farmura, H Curtis & Sons, Ecosolve, T H White, Greensman and Irritech for their continued and valuable support of the BIGGA South West Section. Without their support we would not have the opportunity to provide the level of training and section events that we provide.

### Welcome New Members

Tom Glover, Greenkeeper, Lyme Regis Golf Club  
James Matthewman, Greenkeeper, Maesteg Golf Club  
Nathaniel Riddett, Greenkeeper, Shanklin & Sandown Golf Club  
Steve Waddell, Assistant Greenkeeper, Carlyon Bay Golf Club  
Dale Headech, Assistant Greenkeeper, Tidworth Garrison Golf Club



## Midland

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



**BB&O - The Stick**  
bboscribe@gmail.com or Matt Nutter  
bbosecretary@gmail.com  
Find us on facebook.  
BB&O Greenkeepers  
@bbogreenkeepers



**MID ANGLIA**  
Darren Mugford  
d.mugford@rigbytaylor.com  
Find us on facebook.  
Bigga Mid Anglia



**MIDLAND**  
Dave Collins  
greendave2004@hotmail.co.uk  
Find us on facebook.  
Bigga Midland Section  
@BIGGA Midlands



**EAST OF ENGLAND**  
Steve Beverly  
steveimingham@aol.com  
Find us on facebook.  
EastofEnglandbigga



**EAST MIDLANDS**  
Matt Gilks  
gilksmatt@farol.co.uk  
Find us on facebook.  
East Midlands BIGGA  
@biggaeastmids

## Events Coming Up

### B, B & O

The Autumn Cup proudly sponsored by Rigby Tayler at Beaconsfield on the 21st October.

Following the huge success of the 2014 Turkey Trot we will return to Frilford Heath again this year on the 2nd December for the sponsored by T H White and Ransomes Jacobsen.

### EAST OF ENGLAND

The Autumn golf day and AGM will take place on Thursday 15th October at Peterborough Milton Golf Club. Please contact Bruce Hicks at bthicks@gmail.com if you wish to enter. Full details are on the BIGGA website.

The Christmas competition this year will take place at Immingham GC on Friday 11th December. Make a note in your diary. Full details to follow soon.

### EAST MIDLANDS

The autumn Golf Tournament and AGM is at Willesley Park, on 28th October, £20 entry 9:30am tee off, AGM at 15:30pm.

Christmas Tournament at Birstall 3rd December, it's a pairs tournament so get your guest ready.

### MID ANGLIA

The Section will be running a Seminar on November 25th at John O Gaunt GC with the guest speaker being Dr Mark Pawlett from Cranfield University. Entry forms with full details of the day will be e-mailed out shortly. There will be a small charge to members, however we have secured some funding from the Learning & Development fund from BIGGA to make this possible, so please support us.

The Christmas golf day will take place at John O Gaunt GC on Wednesday 9th December so please make a note in your diary. Entry forms will be available to download soon from the BIGGA website.

### MIDLAND

Wimbledon Day Trip - 14th October

A Day out to Wimbledon for only £10 including coach transport and food provided, sponsored by Everris, limited to a maximum of two staff per course to make sure its shared out equally, get in contact quickly as this will be very popular. Contact Gary Watkins on 07738199374.

Winter Tournament Blackwell Golf Club - Wednesday 9th December

Start: 10:00 - Cost £27 Closing Date: 21st November

Prize Sponsor - Campey Turfcare  
Partners To Be Drawn On The Day

## News

### B, B & O

Congratulations from all of BB&O to Susan Reeve on finishing as Runner Up in the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year.

East of England

Sleaford GC hosted the biennial BIGGA vs GCMA match last month. It was a glorious day and the golf course was in superb condition so many thanks to Ian Batty and his team and to the club for having us. The GCMA team came out on top this year so congratulations to them on this occasion.

### EAST MIDLANDS

The Headland Amenity pairs final was played on 24th September at The Belfry, a special thanks to Angus and the team, the Brabazon Course was in great condition. The final was played between Rothley Park's Asa English & Nigel Colley and Market Harborough's Chris Weir & Ken Bonser, after an excellent front nine Market Harborough were 4up and then Chris drove the famous 10th hole to go 5up with eight to play. Then the turnaround began and they came to the 18th all square, Nigel dumped it in the water piling pressure on to Asa which he handled admirably to take the match to extra holes. Unusually these were on a different course - the PGA National! Ultimately a birdie from Nigel on the 20th secured the title for Rothley. well done Nigel and Asa.

Special mention and Congratulations to Asa English running a PB of 1hr 32 in the Robin Hood Half Marathon.

If any club in the Section are keen to host golf competitions next year or beyond please contact Asa English to discuss.

### MIDLAND

Hello everyone as I write I'm preparing for a 60 mile walk along with fellow committee members Harvey Brooke and Mal Mitchell along with five other members walking from Sheffield to York to raise money for the BIGGA Benevolent Fund, a great charity that could benefit anyone of us, if you see any of us please donate a quid and make us happy :)

Kidderminster was a great day for the autumn tournament and Rod and his team had the course in great condition. Simon Banks and his team of Simon White, Adam Jones, and Andy Wood coming out victors on the day, over 40 people attended which was a great turn out for the third event on the trot, thank you to everyone who came along and please if you're unsure come along and we will do our best to make you all welcome, also at Kidderminster the AGM was held and Mal Mitchell, Harvey Brooke and Kim Blake were voted on to an already growing and strong committee, please if you have any ideas for education or golf days speak to a committee member and everything will be looked at. If you have any info for the magazine let me know.

## Thanks to Sponsors

### MIDLAND

Thanks to calendar sponsors for October North Staffs Irrigation, contact them on 01785 811747.

## South East

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



**SURREY**  
Mark Day  
mark@daylinks.co.uk  
  
Surrey BIGGA  
@surreybigga



**KENT**  
Rob Holland  
premiorgolf2012@hotmail.co.uk



**SUSSEX**  
Joe Dormer  
josephmichael.dormer@gmail.com  
  
BIGGA Sussex Section



**EAST ANGLIA**  
Mick Lathrope  
lil.lathrope@ntworld.com  
  
BIGGA East Anglia  
@BIGGA EastAnglia



**ESSEX**  
Arnold Phipps-Jones  
essexbigga@talktalk.net  
  
Essex Bigga  
@essexbigga



**LONDON**  
John Wells  
j.wells1@sky.com  
  
Bigga London  
@BiggaLondon

## Events Coming Up

### ESSEX

AGM and Christmas Team Texas Scramble  
PlayGolf Colchester  
Wednesday 25th November  
Entries to:- Antony Kirwan  
07887-780065  
antz16@btinternet.com

### KENT

Redlibbets Golf Club on 26th November

### SURREY

18th November Match vs Secretaries The Berkshire GC  
3rd November England vs Scotland Hankley Common GC  
4th December Turkey Trot Guildford GC

### Education

15th October Merrist Wood College Free Seminar  
11th November Hadlow Manor Hotel Kent Regional Conference

### SUSSEX

Sussex section AGM - November 4th, 2pm Crowborough Beacon Golf Club  
Ever popular Turkey trot at Worthing GC on Friday 27th November  
Contact Pete Smith for further info

## News

### ESSEX

As I sit and write my last insertion into "Around the Green", I am reflecting on the many years that I have been actively involved as a member of this great association. Through my years within the greenkeeping profession I have sat on many committees at section, region and national levels in the Midlands and Southeast. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those that I have had the privilege to know over the years, also to those that have helped me through the tough times when all has not been as it should be, my wife and family who have stood by, when things don't go quite right at work and in life, supporting me, listening and understanding.

To the staff at HQ I would also like to thank them all, for the help with things related to our section and the association.

One last thank you, to the Essex section for their support over the fifteen years I have been on their committee in various roles, and for the generous gift the section gave me, presented by Section President Martin Forrester, I will forever treasure those memories.

Life for me in semi-retirement now moves to Talsarn, Mid-Wales where I hope I can make a small contribution to the association if needed.

Enough of me, the Essex section have just held their Autumn Team Trophy event at Colne Valley golf club on Tuesday 29th September, this event had to be re-arranged due to extreme weather conditions being forecast for the middle of September and just as well as we had somewhere in the region of 40mm over a couple of days.

Over twenty members managed to make the re-scheduled date on a fantastically sunny day that meant quite a few members cried off at the last moment, I suspect taking the opportunity to catch up on jobs that were held back due to the bad weather of late.

First prize went to Team Colne Valley, 107points. Tom Smith, Peter Craig, Adi Cox (40points) Shaun Granshaw.

Second team - Team Banks, 104points. Simon Banks, George Grimms, Sam Young, Mark Bishop.

Nearest the Pin

11th Mark Bishop  
17th Shaun Granshaw

The Section would like to thank the Smith family and staff for their hospitality and courtesy of the course at Colne Valley.

### Arnold Phipps-Jones

### KENT

The first thing I have to say about our event at Walmer & Kingsdown Golf Club is to congratulate the attendees for their strong support (as ever) and their fortitude and perseverance in finding the very hidden gem!

The location of the course seemed to be something of a mystery. All of our phones had long since switched over to the most local French network provider and Satnav was demanding/pleading that we made multiple 'U'-turns on the same stretch of straight road.

However, once found Walmer & Kingsdown Golf Club is one not to be forgotten. Despite the rain we encountered on arrival, once the best bacon rolls in the county had been devoured, the sun broke through and shone down on the righteous Kent souls who took on the challenge of this undulating course. Situated on the very precipice of the cliffs and boasting some fantastic views over the South Downs and the English Channel, the course certainly tested the athletic abilities as well as the golfing attributes of Kent's finest. Despite a stiff breeze blowing into our faces no matter what way we turned scoring was surprisingly good.

Many thanks to Ernest Doe & Sons for providing on course refreshments. Much appreciated.

Results as follows:

1st Dan McGrath 41 points  
2nd Mark Roach 37 points  
3rd Anthony Stockwell 36 points  
Nearest Pin and Longest Drive by Ryan Hyder

Finally, on a sad note, I'm sure we were all shocked to hear of the passing of George Brown who had returned to Kent last year after a very illustrious career at Turnberry. It was a pleasure to meet George and our profession has lost one of its finest. God Bless.



## SUSSEX

The section would like to thank Joe Dorner for his efforts in trying to get us noticed on facebook and for his short stint writing for the section in GI.

Thanks for the efforts of Simon Wells and his team at Pyecombe and Eric Green and his team at Beauport Park, and for their fantastic hospitality and for allowing the section to use their fantastic golf courses.

On a nice calm day the section played its summer golf day at Pyecombe Golf Club, with 33 in attendance, format for the day was a stableford with a twist! Each player was able to use three mulligans and there were also three double point holes, this proved too much for some to work out, but for those with an abacus and good memories good scores were to be had! There are too many prize winners to mention all but the category winners were Simon Wells 47pts, Pete Smith 52pts, Steve Philp 50pts.

The Section then moved its attention to its late summer golf day at Beauport Park, the format for the day was a four ball team stableford, 28 souls turned up to brave the tree-lined mountainous course, refreshments were provided before, during and after, with particular attention drawn to a full three course meal at the 9th! I can only assume this weighed heavily on some as scoring varied wildly between front and back nines for some teams that clearly filled up too much!

Top 3 teams: Lister Wilders 78pts, Birch Grove/ESN 91pts and the hosts won with 104pts (Eric Green, Glynn Pollard, Rob Wallis, Tony Wolley).

## Thanks to Sponsors

### SUSSEX

Thanks to all our sponsors but especially extra thanks to Godfreys for the refreshments at Pyecombe and to Lister Wilders for the refreshments and BBQ at Beauport Park.



## East Midlands Section Headland Amenity Pairs Knockout Finalists

Chris Weir, Ken Bonser, Nigel Colley and Asa English

# Welcome New Members

## Scotland And Northern Ireland

Michael Bussey, Head Groundsman, Strathallan School  
Nicholas Menzies, Assistant Greenkeeper, Portstewart Golf Club

## Midland

Paul Fowkes, Greenkeeper, Rothley Park Golf Club  
Nicholas Smith, Greenkeeper, Rothley Park Golf Club  
Jonathan Davies, Assistant Greenkeeper, Ghyll Golf Club  
Stuart Maddison, Assistant Greenkeeper, Delapre Golf Complex, Callum Hutchinson, Assistant Greenkeeper, Kidderminster Golf Club

## Northern

Adrian Keys, Greenkeeper, Wortley Golf Club,  
Gareth Williams, Assistant Greenkeeper, Pleasington Golf Club, Nathan Cockcroft, Assistant Greenkeeper, Bradford Golf Club, Ryan Templeton, Assistant Greenkeeper, Wortley Golf Club, Chris Ashton, Assistant Greenkeeper, Moortown Golf Club

## South West and South Wales

Tom Glover, Greenkeeper, Lyme Regis Golf Club,  
James Matthewman, Greenkeeper, Maesteg Golf Club,  
Nathaniel Riddett, Greenkeeper, Shanklin & Sandown Golf Club, Steve Waddell, Assistant Greenkeeper, Carlyon Bay Golf Club, Dale Headech, Assistant Greenkeeper, Tidworth Garrison Golf Club

## South East

Stuart Bedford, Greenkeeper, Wyke Green Golf Club  
Daniel Graham, Greenkeeper, Links (Newmarket) Golf Club, James Gotts, Greenkeeper, Ransomes Jacobsen Ltd, Adam D'Allesio, Greenkeeper, Mill Hill Golf Club,  
Terry Redwood, Mechanic, Royal Mid-Surrey Golf Club,  
Charlie Smith, Assistant Greenkeeper, South Herts Golf Club, Ryan Archibald, Assistant Greenkeeper, Burnham-on-Crouch Golf Club, Callan Gent, Assistant Greenkeeper, Dale Hill Hotel Golf Club, Ryan Noades, Assistant Greenkeeper, Addington Golf Club Ltd (The), Martin Green, Assistant Greenkeeper, Wyke Green Golf Club Richard Cutts, Assistant Greenkeeper, Dale Hill Hotel Golf Club

## International

Allan Devlin, International Member, City of Rockingham



# Greenkeepers Training Committee

This month David Golding, GTC's Education Director, releases more exciting news in the world of greenkeeping apprenticeships and qualifications

**David Golding, GTC's Education Director invites Ron Skinner, a leading turf tutor at the Duchy College and Rob Dunn, Head of Land-based and Food at Duchy and Bicton Colleges, to explain how, as one of GTC's Quality Assured Centres, collaboration with the local industry representatives, especially the BIGGA Devon & Cornwall Section, their education and training provision can meet the needs of both employer and employee.**

Duchy College has worked closely with the GTC to deliver greenkeeping apprenticeships across Devon & Cornwall since 2004. Since that date virtually every golf club & greenkeeper in the region has been involved in approved training through the college. The majority of greenkeepers have a Level 2 qualification; many have a Level 3 and some a Level 4.

Ron Skinner takes up the story of how it all started, "In 2004 I was asked to coordinate greenkeeping training from the college. A very important part of the success of the college has been its strong relationship with the BIGGA Devon & Cornwall Section and some amazing personalities from the industry.

The initial offer by Duchy College to deliver greenkeeping courses was encouraged by Billy Mitchell (Course Manager, Perranporth Golf Course) on behalf of the Devon & Cornwall Section. Billy and the Section members were keen to have a local college provider supporting the industry. In these early days Billy, with his well-known passion for greenkeeper training, spent many hours assessing greenkeepers across Devon & Cornwall and refusing payment. The involvement of the Section led to Bill Pile, Retired Head Greenkeeper and Section Committee Member, being invited to work with the college. Terry Farkins, Course Manager at Dartmouth Golf Course, was also consulted and has continued to be involved with the college for many years. Together a timetable and quality programme including assessment and verification for the Level 2 & 3 apprenticeships were developed. The aim was for the college provision to follow the National Occupational

Standards and tailor all courses to suit the employer's needs. This we did and continue to do. The aim is that the college offers quality programmes and this has been supported by both the GTC and City & Guilds through its External Verifiers. Quality is at the heart of all the colleges turf provision and if ever there was an "issue" with our delivery we would soon know about it, such is the superb greenkeeping network!

Wherever possible we use GTC trained assessors both at the golf courses and within the college quality assurance team. The college has also used guest speakers from the industry, which has provided added value to the courses. Local Course Managers and employers have regularly encouraged visits to their clubs to see a vast range of projects being undertaken which some apprentices may never have seen at their home course. St Mellion, Yelverton, Portmore, Trevose, Woodbury Park, Burnham & Berrow Golf Clubs to name just a few have provided great support. The trade is also very generous supporting the college, especially John Palfrey. Proposals for all courses, and the work of the college-based team are monitored through regular communication and an annual Industry Meeting which is invaluable to the college turf staff and management.

It is perhaps wrong to mention individuals and apologies to any person who has supported the Duchy turf team who has not received a mention but some notable contributors are certainly worthy of recognition:

Steve Evans, when Course Manager at Yelverton Golf Club and Section Committee member had a real passion and drive to support greenkeeping education. Brian Summers, then Course Manager at Carlyon Bay Hotel & Golf Club whilst being Section Chairman also started to carry out some work for the college. Inevitably Brian retired but not before he had trained up Roger White who has, like myself, been adopted by the industry as "honorary greenkeepers".

Rob Dunn, Head of Land-based and Food since joining the College in October 2014 commented "the focus of the team in actively engaging with the local Greenkeepers



Ron Skinner (r)

is evident. The Industry should also be recognised and praised for its extraordinary contribution in developing the new apprenticeship standards through the Trailblazer process. With the approvals now in place it is our intention to run the new Golf Greenkeeper standard for starts from 2016. The further work that the GTC and Industry are doing in relation to the Advanced Golf Greenkeeper and Golf Course Manager Standards are very welcome additions. It is essential to demonstrate to new entrants into an Industry that there is a potential for career development and progression."

He added, "we believe the new standards represent a major opportunity to further develop how we work with Devon and Cornwall Greenkeepers to meet their needs in developing the skills of their workforce."

David Golding adds, "as we go to print the GTC understands Ron is leaving the college but is doing so having done a fantastic job over the years and the college now has the opportunity and is keen to continue to work with this amazing local industry group, a true exemplar of a college working closely with a BIGGA Section!

**The Duchy College contact is Sarah Chafer, 01209 722111 sarah.chafer@duchy.ac.uk**

#### The GTC is funded by:



#### Contact Details

**David F. Goulding**  
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  
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**MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES** To prepare and maintain lawns, tennis courts, sports turf and golf greens as well as artificial surfaces / Working with various types of machinery and equipment / Undertaking general maintenance of equipment.

**EXPERIENCE** Previous experience as a Groundsman/Greenkeeper / Understanding and performing annual turf maintenance schedule / A full understanding of field markings / Knowledge and experience of working with synthetic surfaces / The ability to work well as part of a team / A flexible, committed and enthusiastic approach to work. Must be able to work without supervision and prioritise work load according to fixture lists and weather conditions. Relevant qualification in turf management (NVQ or similar). Spraying certificate is desirable. Full, clean driving licence.  
**START DATE:** ASAP.

*PLEASE NOTE* Any offer of employment will be subject to the receipt of satisfactory references and medical clearance.

Please send email application, plus qualifications plus experience and general details to Becky Francis [becky@gchcapital.co.uk](mailto:becky@gchcapital.co.uk)

## Fulwell Golf Club – Head Greenkeeper



We are looking for an ambitious Head Greenkeeper who will work under the direction of our Head of Golf Course Development. They should have the desire and ambition to help drive through these changes, whilst maintaining the course to the highest standards for our members and guests.

To be considered for the role the applicant should have the following:

- NVQ Level 3 in Greenkeeping or equivalent (essential)
- Current UK driving license (essential)
- PA1, 2 and 6a spraying certificates (essential)
- Relevant IT Skills (essential)
- Irrigation experience including repair and maintenance (desirable)
- CS 30 and 31 chainsaw certificates (desirable)
- Good working knowledge of fine turf machinery (desirable)
- Construction experience (desirable)

Remuneration will be based on skill level and experience. Accommodation will be available with the role.

To apply, please forward your covering letter and C.V. to Greg Evans MG at: [gregevans@fulwellgolfclub.co.uk](mailto:gregevans@fulwellgolfclub.co.uk) Closing Date: 16th October 2015

## Turf & Amenity Technical Area Sales Manager Southern England

### About you

Due to the continued growth of our business, we are looking for a high-calibre individual to join our expanding turf and amenity team in this exciting role covering the South of England, primarily London, Surrey and Hertfordshire, (however specific counties are flexible and can be agreed depending on the candidates experience and location).

With exemplary technical and sales skills and a proven background within our industry, the ideal candidate will relish the opportunity to deliver first-class technical and sales support to end-users and distributors of our range of fertilizers, plant protection products and grass seeds. You will be highly-motivated and able to hit the ground running, developing the customer base in your area and driving new initiatives. You will also be IT literate and have excellent interpersonal skills, engaging confidently and professionally with people in a range of environments. Detailed knowledge of turf management practices and an industry-recognised qualification, such as BASIS/ FACTS and/or a HND/BSc in a relevant discipline, is preferable, as is a comprehensive understanding of the marketplace in your designated area. There will be a requirement for flexible working and spending time away from home on occasion.

### About us

You will know our brands, but you might not realise the strength of the business behind them. Everris® is an ICL Specialty Fertilizers Company, part of the ICL group that employs more than 12,000 people globally. We are world-leaders in the ornamental horticulture, turf and amenity, and specialty agricultural sectors. Our market-leading brands – including Sierrablend, Greenmaster, SierraformGT and Sportsmaster are used and trusted by turf professionals around the world. Our team is passionate about optimising plant and turf performance. We are a customer-orientated organisation and take great pride in the integrity and precision of our world-class product portfolios, and our commitment to research and development has resulted in the development of unique technologies which have transformed the way turf is managed.

### If you're the person we're looking for:

We offer a substantial benefits package including:

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To apply, please send a résumé and application letter to: **Matthew Hart, Senior HR Manager, Everris Ltd, Boulby Mine, Loftus, Saltburn, Cleveland, TS13 4UZ** or email the same to [matthew.hart@icl-group.com](mailto:matthew.hart@icl-group.com)





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# Recruitment

## ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

Established in 1920 Thorndon Park is a prestigious members club and is situated in Essex 10 minutes from J29 on the M25. Applicants will be working under direction from the Head Greenkeeper and Deputy Head Greenkeeper and is able to demonstrate positive and assertive skills and to be able to lead by example to carry on the high standards that are required.

The following qualification skills held by the candidate will be an advantage:-

- NVQ level 2, aspiring to do level 3
- Up to date spraying and Chainsaw certificates
- Knowledge of Health and Safety regulations
- Knowledge of irrigation systems
- Good communication skills
- Good turf management



This is an excellent opportunity for the right person to work closely with the green keeping team and further their skills and training. We have a very motivated team that aspire to high standards and good team moral. Salary negotiable depending on experience and qualifications.

Please apply in writing or email together with C.V to

Head Greenkeeper, Robert George, Thorndon Park Golf Club  
Ingrave, Brentwood, Essex CM13 3RH or office@thorndonpark.com Closing date: 17.10.2015

## Assistant Greenkeeper - Rookery Park Golf Club, Suffolk

We are seeking to recruit a highly motivated and enthusiastic Assistant Greenkeeper to join our experienced team. He/she will be involved in the daily presentation of the parkland golf course, project work and all other aspects of turf maintenance. The ideal candidate will need to possess the following qualifications, experience and skills:

- 2 years minimum greenkeeping experience
- Qualified to NVQ level 2 in Amenity Sportsturf or equivalent
- PA1, PA2 & PA6 spraying certificates
- The ability to work individually and as part of a team
- A flexible approach to work as early starts and weekend work is required
- Reliable and hardworking with excellent presentation skills and attention to detail
- A positive attitude with good time management and communication skills
- Preferred but not essential qualities include:
- Chainsaw certificates
- A good understanding of the game of golf

In return a competitive salary will be offered along with BIGGA membership, staff uniform, restaurant discount card and Club contribution pension scheme.

Applications, including a CV and covering letter should be sent to:

Mark Henderson, Head Greenkeeper, Rookery Park Golf Club, Beccles Road, Carlton Colville, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR33 8HJ Or e-mail: office@rookeryparkgolfclub.co.uk

## Head Greenkeeper ~ Farrington Park GC

Farrington Park Golf Club is a busy 27 hole proprietary club complete with a driving range and extensive practice facilities. Within 20 minutes' drive of Bath and Bristol, the business includes a large clubhouse with bar and restaurant, function rooms and a health and fitness club.

**The Role** - An opportunity exists to join this forward looking team to help to further develop the already high standard of the golf courses. Reporting to the Director, the Head Greenkeeper is one of four key management roles at the club, with full responsibility for maintaining the golf courses and all other areas of the site to a high standard. The ideal candidate will be a highly motivated individual with strong interpersonal skills, a passion for green keeping and high personal standards.

### The Individual

To be considered for the role you should have the following qualifications and attributes:  
NVQ Level 3 in Green-keeping or equivalent / PA1, 2 and 6 spraying certificates / The ability to lead, motivate and develop a team / Be an excellent team player with strong communication and customer service skills / Irrigation repair and maintenance experience / Excellent practical skills including some building work and technical knowledge relating to machinery maintenance / Good understanding of Health & Safety relating to golf course operations / Working knowledge of Outlook, Word & Excel / A first aid qualification would also be an advantage / Flexibility is vital for this full time five out of seven day a week role, and will include weekend working.

We offer free golf or gym membership as well as 28 days holiday (including bank holidays) and free uniform. Remuneration will be based on skill level and experience. Please note that accommodation is not available with the role.

How to Apply: Please send a cover letter and CV to Jon Cowgill, Director, Farrington Park, Marsh Lane, Farrington Gurney, Bristol or email to jon@farringtonpark.co.uk  
Closing Date: 30th November 2015

## Greenkeeper/ Mechanic

### Strathaven Golf Club, South Lanarkshire

Strathaven Golf Club are looking for an individual to take responsibility for the day-to-day maintenance and upkeep of all our ground care machinery, therefore the ideal candidate will possess a level 3 or above in land based technology/engineering.

### The successful candidate will be required to:

Possess an in depth knowledge of hydraulic systems, electrical circuits, fabrication, cylinder grinding and unit set-up / Exhibit a strong knowledge of Health & Safety requirements / Demonstrate a strong understanding of the latest amenity equipment and the ability to analyse how their performance affects playing surfaces / Present effective ideas that will help improve the efficiency of the golf course maintenance operation / Keep accurate maintenance logs and service records.

**The ideal candidate will:** Have at least 3 years' experience as an amenity mechanic / Proven practical Greenkeeping experience / Level 3 or above in land based technology/engineering / Basic IT skills / A knowledge and understanding of the game of golf is desirable.

Salary negotiable according to experience and qualifications (in line with BIGGA recommendations)

Applications with CV and covering letter can be made via e-mail to [gm@strathavengc.com](mailto:gm@strathavengc.com) or posted to:

Ian F Neil, General Manager, Strathaven G.C., Overton Avenue, Glasgow Road, Strathaven ML10 6NR

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS 11th October 2015

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## Loch Lomond Golf Club Mechanic



Closing date: 23 October, 2015

Location: Loch Lomond Golf Club, Dunbartonshire

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To apply you should send your cover letter and CV to Mary Danielsen GCM Office Manager at [mary.danielsen@lochlomond.com](mailto:mary.danielsen@lochlomond.com) detailing why you should be considered for this position.



## The Royal Sydney Golf Club Workshop Manager

*The Royal Sydney Golf Club is one of Australia's most prestigious golf clubs. It provides a supportive workplace that values hard work, talent, enthusiasm and respect for traditions.*

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The Workshop Manager reports directly to the Course Superintendent. Under the Course Superintendent's supervision, the Workshop Manager directs and participates in the operation, management and maintenance of the Workshop to ensure the maintenance of the equipment is performed to the highest standard.

### The key tasks include:

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Managing machinery training for all staff to ensure that staff are trained on machinery before use  
Supervising and training direct reports to ensure duties are carried out safely, to a high standard and in an efficient manner  
Record keeping  
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Assisting with the preparation of annual operating and capital budgets  
Managing expenditure to ensure set budgets for are being adhered to  
Managing live storeroom stock levels  
Ensuring E-Par EMS and other Sportsturf management programs are followed  
This is a full-time position and sponsorship will be considered for the right candidate.  
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A thorough understanding and experience with petrol, diesel and electric powered equipment, the proper methods of servicing golf course/ or similar equipment and the repair and adjustment of power mowing equipment  
Previous experience managing staff and the training of staff on equipment  
Sound record keeping skills  
Strong oral and written communication skills  
Ability to maintain a clean and safe work environment  
Working knowledge of the hazards and safety precautions of the profession  
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### About The Royal Sydney Golf Club

The Royal Sydney Golf Club is a private members club which was founded in 1893. It is recognised nationally and internationally for its world class facilities which include two golf courses, 17 tennis courts, bowling greens, croquet lawns, a squash court, a gym, two pools, several cafés, a fine dining restaurant, accommodation rooms and multiple function rooms.

While upholding the important traditions of the Club, all staff members are encouraged to strive for constant innovation, excellence, leadership and enjoyment in all they do.

### How do I apply?

*If you are interested in the role and would like to join our team, please view the Careers Section of The Royal Sydney Golf Club website.*

## Assistant Greenkeeper

Brampton Heath is a progressive 27 hole golf centre with both a thriving membership and pay and play customers. The course is known for the quality of the playing surfaces throughout and regular course improvements.

The successful applicant will need to be able to work as a team member but also be able to follow their own initiative.

Full driving licence required.

Some experience necessary. Further training towards qualifications is available for the right candidate.

Weekend work by rota. Good Salary plus overtime.

Please reply to [info@bhgc.co.uk](mailto:info@bhgc.co.uk) with CV and covering letter.

## Greenkeeper - Corfu Golf Club, Corfu, Greece

Well qualified and experienced Greenkeeper required for a mature 18-hole golf course (since 1971) with full responsibility to maintain the course and all areas of the site to a high standard.

*Working (sometimes personally) with various types of machinery and equipment*

*Understanding and performing annual turf maintenance*

*Irrigation repair and maintenance*

*Practical skills and technical knowledge relating to machinery maintenance*

*Work without supervision and prioritise work load according to fixture lists and weather conditions*

*Team player with strong communication and customer service skills*

### Benefits:

A two bedroom villa with paid expenses next to the Club House  
Staff lunch for 7 months

Application stating qualifications, experience, general details and a recent photo to [ktsausoglou@corfuholidaypalace.gr](mailto:ktsausoglou@corfuholidaypalace.gr)

Closing: 13th October 2015  
Website: [www.corfugolfclub.com](http://www.corfugolfclub.com)



## require an Assistant Head Greenkeeper

The ideal applicant will possess the following attributes and qualifications:

- Minimum 5 years' experience
- Minimum NVQ Level 3
- PA1, 2, 6 (Spraying)
- Flexible and able to work at weekends when required
- Excellent interpersonal skills and an ability to communicate with members as well as colleagues
- Self-motivated, but with strong time management skills
- A strong work ethic and ability work as part of a team and as an individual
- Flexible annual working hours
- Full driving license

Please forward a C.V. along with a covering letter to: The Club Secretary, Cherry Lodge Golf Club, Jail Lane, Biggin Hill, Kent, TN16 3AX

Alternatively, please send via email to [secretary@cherrylodgegc.co.uk](mailto:secretary@cherrylodgegc.co.uk) 'Greenkeeper Vacancy' as the subject line. Closing date for all applications is Monday 12th October 2015

## Head Greenkeeper Horton Park Golf Club

Horton Park Golf Club is a busy 27 hole complex in Epsom with a Driving Range, Footgolf and Adventure Golf courses.

Reporting directly to the proprietor, the Head Greenkeeper has full responsibility for maintaining the golf courses and other areas of the site to a high standard. The ideal candidate will be well motivated with strong interpersonal skills, a passion for green keeping and high personal standards.

Remuneration will be based on skill level and experience.

To apply, please go to [www.hortonpark.com/careers](http://www.hortonpark.com/careers) for a full job description and application form.

Closing Date: 9th October 2015

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## Nelson Golf Club Assistant Greenkeeper

Nelson Golf Club is a private members club situated in East Lancashire and 5 minutes from Junction 12 of the M65. Working under the Course Manager or deputy you will be responsible to ensure the course and practice facilities are maintained in a first class playing condition, completed within timescales and to budget. Candidates should have:

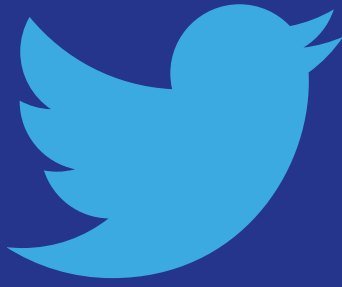
- Minimum of 3 years golf course Greenkeeping experience
  - Level 2 NVQ or above
  - Knowledge of Health and Safety regulations
- Preferably hold current spraying and chainsaw certificates
  - A flexible approach to working patterns
- Be able to work without supervision and within a small team

This is an excellent opportunity for the successful candidate to further develop their green keeping career.

The salary is negotiable depending upon experience and qualifications.

Closing date: Friday 23rd October 2015 Please apply with CV & covering letter providing a brief summary of your reasons for application to:

Richard M Lees Business Manager Nelson Golf Club Kings Causeway Brierfield Nelson Lancashire BB9 0EU or [secretary@nelsongolfclub.com](mailto:secretary@nelsongolfclub.com)



# @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...

**@GKdavid\_s**

Proud to be apart of the Young greenkeeper committee @BIGGALtd #Representingtheyouth

**@GKdavid\_s**

Thanks for the selfie @leshowkins #takeleswithyou @BIGGALtd #croppedversion #TSGOTY

**@kevodale76**

All systems go this morning @MuswellHillGC as the greenstaff emerge from the mist #realgreenkeeping @BIGGALtd

**@avrogreenkeeper**

Our very own Sandra Raper @BIGGALtd helping out with green construction at Whitley Bay GC

**@broadstonegc**

@BIGGALtd @the\_iog nice morning for it! orange thing in sky back again!

**@plestee**

There seems to be something at the bottom of the rainbows! #stoneham

**@paulseverngolf**

The guys are battling through the weather @SimpsonCupGB @SimpsonCupUSA @OnCourseCharity Royal St Georges

**@gavinwhiteNI**

Ballymoney, Northern Ireland Very honoured that I get to use this @striturf can't wait for the data set to come back @greenkeepingire @BIGGALtd

**@TheToroCompany**

"The only thing that has lasted longer is my wife..." #snowblower #MyToroStory <http://toro.biz/6013BKHU1>

**@daire\_paddy**

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