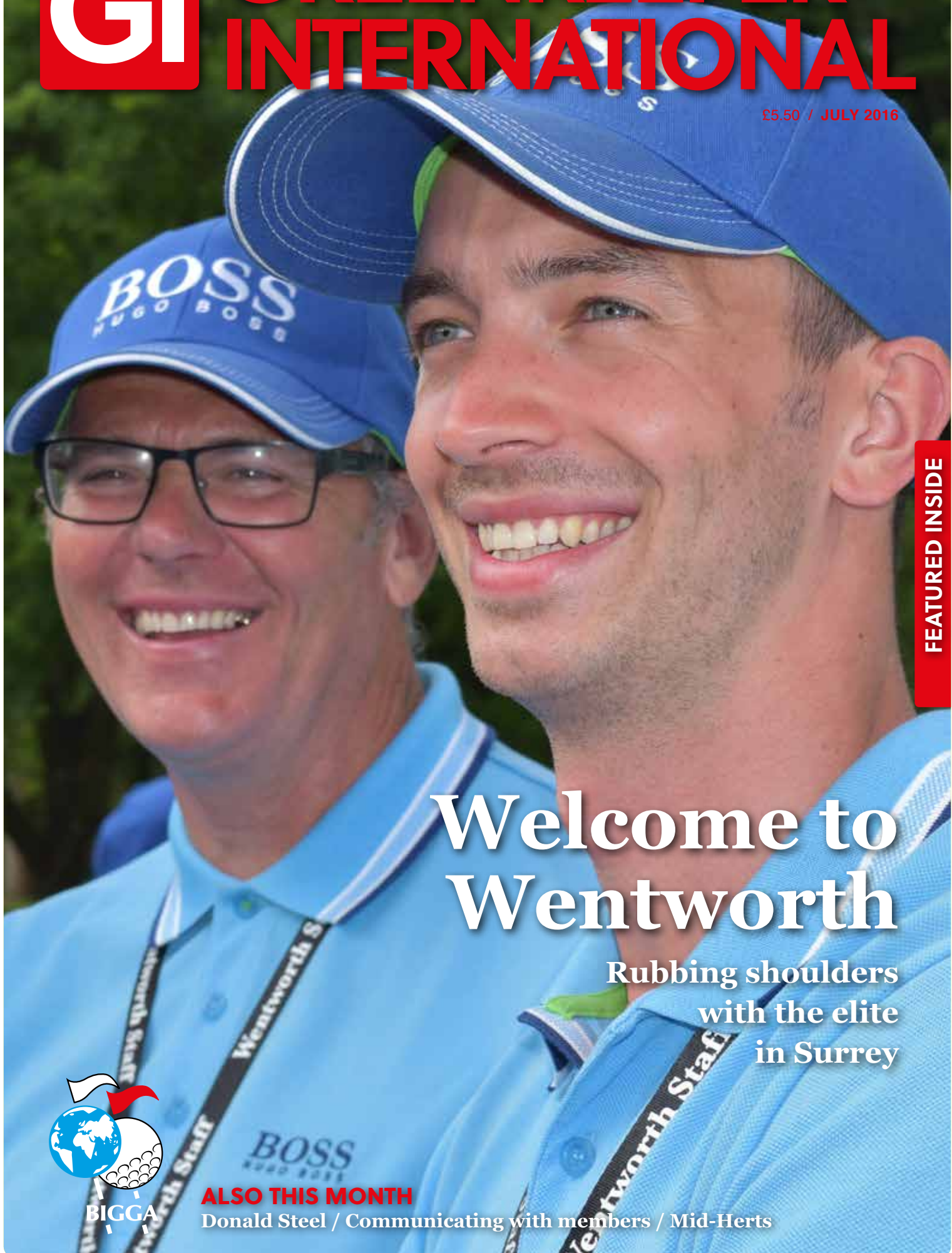




GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

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FEATURED INSIDE

Welcome to Wentworth

Rubbing shoulders with the elite in Surrey

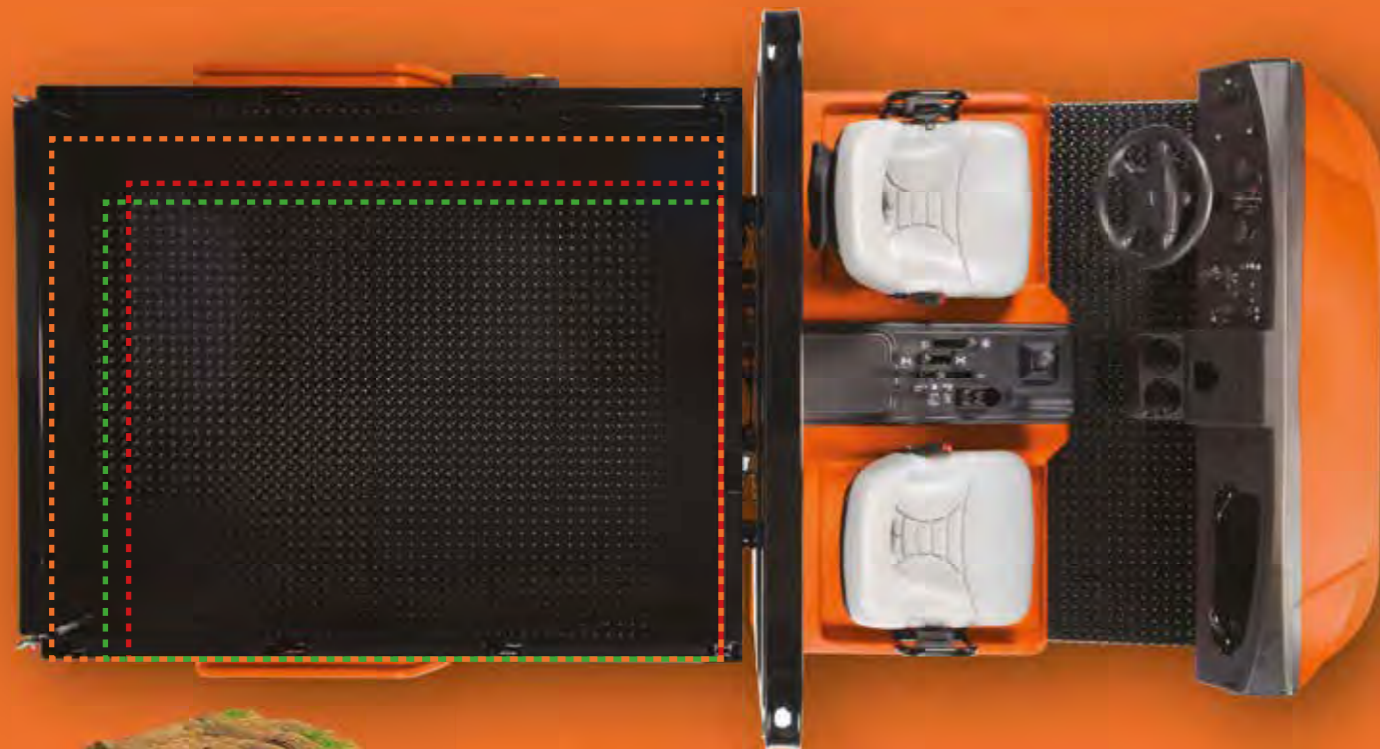


BIGGA

ALSO THIS MONTH

Donald Steel / Communicating with members / Mid-Herts

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GI GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

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WELCOME



The 2016 BIGGA Delegation that travelled to San Diego this year



Chief Executive Jim Croxton

The Open, Oakmont, and opportunities

This month's welcome is brought to you by the letter O, starting with...

Oakmont: Watching the US Championship last month, it was encouraging to see so many references to the outstanding course conditions, though the extreme pace of the greens is not something I'd like to see replicated too often for all our sakes.

There were also many images of the enormous maintenance team that was on hand. Seeing a group of at least 10 greenkeepers involved in preparing one green - four mowing, two rolling and four manoeuvring boards around the edge of the green for the mowers to turn on - demonstrated clearly what resources it takes to present a course for a Major championship.

I would recommend any greenkeeper to find these images online, and those of the whole greenkeeping team at any large event, and use them in your communications to show what an incredible job you do with such comparably tiny teams.

Open: July is Open month and is always a thrill. Royal Troon will be a marvellous host venue with its iconic Postage Stamp short hole and classic 'out and back' layout that offers two distinct challenges when the wind is up. We have covered Billy McLachlan and his team's preparation for the

event in this magazine and I'm sure the course will be superb for the world's best.

It will be very different without the traditional BBC coverage, but I know Sky Sports will elevate the quality of the coverage to a new level and I believe the move to the commercial broadcaster will present opportunities, in time, to showcase some of the course management activity to a huge audience.

Naturally we look forward to playing a small role in proceedings in the form of the BIGGA Open Support Team and I know all of the volunteers are keenly looking forward to it.

Opportunity: This magazine contains details of one of our most exciting member opportunities - the BIGGA Delegation to the Golf Industry Show, sponsored by Bernhard & Company.

The 10 BIGGA members who come through the application and interview process will enjoy a career-defining experience, make friends for life, grow their network considerably and learn a huge amount.

Combined with the thrill of travel and new experiences, it is a wonderful opportunity for members at all stages of their careers. I urge you to apply.

And finally, OMG: That was my reaction when I woke on the morning of Friday 24 June to the news that the referendum was heading for a victory for the Leave campaign. Personally I was, and remain, incredibly disappointed with the result. But more importantly, it has created professional concerns as in the immediate term there is likely to be economic uncertainty.

Therefore, we must do all we can to support our members.

We must also continue our work within the golf industry to ensure clubs understand the importance of investing in their courses and course management staff to ensure they remain attractive to customers.

Our members have just as critical a role to play in tough times as they do when the game is booming.

I hope you enjoy this month's magazine.

WELCOME



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FROM THE EDITOR



An overview of this month's edition of Greenkeeper International, with your editor, Karl Hansell

How to make yourself heard

Out on the course at the break of day, there's hardly a sound.

The fairways are peaceful, with just the hum of a mower breaking the still morning air.

Yet greenkeepers no longer work in isolation and effective communication with golfers and the club management structure is more important than ever.

That early morning peace affords people like Gordon Brammah, at Hallamshire, time to think about the message they want to get across to their members.

Like many of you, Gordon has embraced social media and also sends a monthly bulletin out to his members, informing them of upcoming projects on the course or other disturbances and points of interest.

It's a changing tactic, from the time when golfers would be left asking questions such as "Why are they hollow-tining again?" Or "How come the fairways aren't running as fast as usual?"

With higher standards expected each and every day, greenkeepers now understand that if they are to influence those who set the budget and dish out resources, they must be innovative in the ways they get their message across.

Effective communication skills may in fact be among the strongest tools in a greenkeepers' shed and this month we have put together a feature that will hopefully give you some ideas on how best to tackle this challenge, whether you are new to the whole thing or if you are just looking to refresh your offering.

Elsewhere, BIGGA members have been out and about, volunteering at major events such as the BMW

PGA Championship at Wentworth, which swiftly followed the John Deere TPC Sawgrass programme and precedes the Open at Royal Troon.

Speaking to the guys, it's amazing how many of them tell me they never expected to actually be chosen. There is a perception that these opportunities are only for those who work at larger clubs, but each year many discover this isn't actually that case.

If you would like to have a go volunteering, it's always worth applying and the benefits are numerous.



▶ Gordon Brammah and, below, the BMW PGA Support Team with Chris Wood

We also recently undertook an online survey, which asked members what they thought about Greenkeeper International and calling for suggestions and improvements that we could make.

The feedback has been fantastic. We've taken on board your suggestions and you will see some of these implemented over the coming months. Thank you so much to everyone who took part.



CONTRIBUTORS

Geoff Fenn ▶

With over 20 years' experience in the sports turf industry, and 14 as a golf course manager, Geoff attained a first class honours degree in Sports Turf Science in 2014. He now advises turf managers in economical, sustainable turf management with Countrywide Turf & Amenity

page 28



◀ Terry Mabbett

Dr Terry Mabbett is a pest, disease and weed control specialist with 40 years of international experience covering research, consultancy and journalism in subjects such as agriculture, horticulture, forestry. This month he talks about the importance of effective tree surveying

page 32



Donald Steel ▶

The only writer or architect to have played in the Open as an amateur, Donald has designed more than 600 courses, including every course on the Open championship rota. He spoke to GI about how the needs of greenkeepers influences his choices when designing a course

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◀ Michael Astrop

Principal at Coach the Mind, Michael has a wealth of academic and commercial expertise. He lectures in marketing and management at York St Johns University and this month he talks to GI about the importance of an effective communications strategy

page 38



ACROSS THE BOARD



Les Howkins

This month BIGGA Chairman Les Howkins talks about how a major presence at the Golf Forum, alongside the game's biggest governing bodies, means the association is representing members on the biggest stage possible.

In addition to his role as chairman of BIGGA, Les holds the Master Greenkeeper qualification and has been course manager at The Richmond in Surrey for seven years.

I can't believe it has been three months since my last update – time just keeps flying by.

The longest day has been and passed, as the nights start drawing in to Christmas. But wait a minute, what has happened to summer? It feels like we have experienced the longest autumn in history, with no real winter and just wet, wet and more wet.

I have found some of the pictures on social media of washed out bunkers, flooded greens and torrents running down fairways quite depressing to look at.

I feel for the teams that have had to endure these horrific weather events. However, greenkeepers the length of the country kept showing unbelievable resilience and produced great quality courses for the golfers.

Back home at Richmond, my new team members have settled in well, which is just as well with the amount of events we have had on at the club.

As we have been celebrating 125 years, there has



BIGGA met other industry bodies at St Andrews

been something special on every week and the club have also completed the purchase of the freehold from the crown estate, so it has been a busy time.

As I settle in to the new chairman role, the demands on my time have been a lot less onerous compared with 2015 and I have enjoyed spending more time at work and with the family.

But there is still an important role to play within BIGGA, the focus of which recently has been building relationships within the wider golf industry.

Our attendance at the Golf Forum in St Andrews immediately after the March board meeting was a key moment for BIGGA, meaning we are now involved in every UK golf industry discussion group.

A couple more visits to the Houses of Parliament to meet up with other members of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Golf has afforded me the opportunity to build relationships with golf's governing bodies and really spread the word about what it is BIGGA and greenkeepers do on a daily, weekly, monthly and yearly basis.

Plans are in place to communicate directly with clubs and golfers to help educate them about the

difficulties of golf course maintenance. This will be an ongoing process that should, in time, help ease the burden and pressure from the sometimes unrealistic expectations of committees and owners.

For those of you that are computer savvy, or even those that just surf the web a little, you will be glad to know that the next big project for the HQ team is to completely renew our website, www.bigga.org.uk.

This will not be a touch up or a lick of paint, this is going to be a fully redesigned website built from scratch to include new features, be a lot more user friendly and better reflect our professional image.

Finally, one of the things that your board of directors would really like to see is more engagement from all of you, the members.

By getting involved at local events you become part of a network, part of a family, and it is these networks that all pull together in times of trouble and can then help support each other to achieve bigger and better things.

I wish you all a great summer, if it ever arrives, and I will be in print once again in October.

Funding your future

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



JOHN DEERE



Bayer CropScience



ARC legal assistance



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GI Newsdesk

The latest greenkeeping news

Young managers given lesson on working with greens team

Alastair Higgs recently invited a group of young club managers to Windlesham to discuss the role of modern course manager.

Windlesham Course Manager Alastair and BIGGA's Jim Croxton hosted a workshop with members of the Golf Course Managers Association's Young Managers Group South region.

Jim said: "We all know the importance of having an effective relationship between club managers and

head greenkeepers or course managers and it was great to see so many of the younger generation willing to embrace this new culture."

The meeting looked at the role of the modern course manager, and attendees were invited to bring along their head greenkeeper.

High Post's James Friend said he wanted to be brought "into the 21st Century" and attended with the club's general manager, Peter Hicking. James added: "We don't expect an immediate impact,

but it's a journey and we are right at the beginning. We just need to make sure we learn and grow together."

With a mix of managers and greenkeepers in the room, topics ranged from practical tips, such as not striping up fairways and instead cutting the left half one way and the right half the other, which saves thousands of pounds a year but still looks great, to bigger issues such as the changing role of a course manager or head greenkeeper in a progressive club management structure.



Alastair Higgs speaking at the YMG South meeting



Liam Irons

Liam bound for Rio Games

Talented Mid-Herts greenkeeper Liam Irons is preparing for some samba action after securing a place on the Great Britain football squad for this year's Paralympics.

Liam, who has cerebral palsy, is part of a squad of just 14 players who will be heading to Brazil hoping to challenge for a medal - and with Great Britain ranked 5th in the world, he will be hopeful of a successful tournament.

Liam said: "I am delighted to be part of such a big

event, and this opportunity to represent my country. I am also very appreciative for the support from Mid-Herts for allowing this to happen."

Cerebral palsy football is played with seven players on each side. There are no off-sides and each half lasts just 30 minutes.

Excitement builds as BIGGA Awards return



Jack Groves, winner of the Young Greenkeeper of the Year Award 2015

The BIGGA Awards are returning for their third year and once again, three prizes are up for grabs.

Nominations are now open online for the awards, which will be presented during the BIGGA Welcome Celebration, held at BTME in Harrogate on 17 January 2017.

The three awards are: BIGGA Young Greenkeeper of the Year, Championship Greenkeeping Performance of the Year, and BIGGA Greenkeeping

Achievement of the Year. Chief Executive Officer Jim Croxton said: "Each year we are seeing the BIGGA awards grow in popularity.

"This is great to see as it means the very best greenkeepers in the UK golf industry are pushing each other on to achieve better and better results.

"I'm proud that once again we will be able to honour their achievements.

"From the largest championship course to the

smallest municipal, we want to hear golf's success stories and we look forward to choosing our favourites and announcing the winner at BTME in January."

To enter the awards, use or smartphone to scan this QR code or visit www.bigga.org.uk



SCAN THIS QR CODE TO APPLY

Resounding victory for Scottish team

A strong performance by every member of the BIGGA Scotland team ensured a whitewash over GCMA Scotland.

The greenkeepers secured a 6-0 victory at Glenberrie, with the competition sponsored by St Andrews

Management.

BIGGA Scotland hosted the match, with chairman Jim Paton praising Paul Todd and the greenkeeping team for their hard work and dedication in providing an excellent playing surface for the match.



BIGGA Scottish team outside Glenberrie with the trophy and competition sponsor Kate Bond



Farol is sponsoring the Midland golf championship

Farol support Midland event

Farol has agreed to become sponsor of the inaugural BIGGA Midland Regional Golf Championship.

Farol Golf and Grass

Director James Moore said: "We are always looking for opportunities to support BIGGA members and this event will provide a platform for us to do so."

Players will be competing for the Pete Larter Trophy

to recognise the retired regional administrator.

BIGGA's Roger Butler said: "Northants County is a wonderful course and will prove to be an excellent test. I am delighted Farol are sponsoring the event."

THIS MONTH
@BIGGALtd



Mortonhall Golf
@mortonhallgolf
A mother and her two
new junior members this
morning



Jonathan Wood
@jonwood1978
New addition to
#TheCastleCourse
#greenkeepingteam
#wildlife #birdsofprey
@TheHomeofGolf



Hollywood GC Greens
@GHGCGreens
What are these GK's up
to? @Hollywood_Golf
Enter your caption.
Funnist wins a round of
applause



Langland Bay GC
@Langland1
Our Greens Team at
Langland Bay divides the
task and multiplies the
success #golf @GCMAUK
@ThePGA @BIGGALtd



Gavin White
@gavinwhiteNI
All new @ToroGolf
@LelyUKTurfcare
equipment has arrived.
Good investment from the
club @greenkeepingire



Rob Sandilands
@RobSandilands
@Ecology1BIGGA
@golfenvawards Royal
Fern @FormbyLadiesGC
(we think!) can you
confirm?! #environment



lucasdamrow
@DamrowLucas
New areas are getting
closer to the opening!!
#golfclubKasselWilhelms-
hohe #greenkeeping
#althause #potter



Fraser Chisholm
@fraser78
The #postagestamp
@RoyalTroonGC cut half
an half today. What a hole
this is
@BIGGALtd @bigga_sws



Craig Boath
@CraigBoath
20 years on the links
of @carnoustiegolf
Where have the years
gone? @BIGGALtd
#greenkeepinglife
#Carnoustie



Last year's BIGGA delegates

BERNHARD grinders

Open the door to a world of opportunity with Bernhard

The application process for one of the industry's most enduring and life-changing initiatives has opened – read on for how you can join the 14th BIGGA Delegation, sponsored by Bernhard Grinders, to Orlando, Florida.

An all-expenses paid trip to Orlando, Florida, awaits 10 BIGGA members from 4-9 February 2017.

The successful members will be invited to the 2017 Golf Industry Show where they will man the BIGGA stand and have the chance to explore the huge exhibition, which showcases state-of-the-art turf management products.

They will also attend aspects of the superb educational programme, which involves a wide range of seminars and workshops.

The trip is also a priceless networking opportunity, giving the opportunity to form friendships with other BIGGA members.

By chatting to greenkeepers and superintendents from across the world, there will also be the chance to increase your knowledge and abilities.

Applicants must be current and full BIGGA members.

The closing date for applications is 18 September 2016.



Field visit



BIGGA National

BIGGA National Championship, Bowood Hotel, Spa and Golf Resort, 10-11 October 2016

Please select the relevant category:

- Full Member
 Affiliate Member

The entry fee of **£95** includes all golf fees, lunch both days and dinner on Monday evening. Please note that there is no accommodation provided.

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Golf Club

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Card number

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Start Date Expiry Date

Last 3 security digits

Issue No. (Switch/Delta only)

Signature.....

Date.....

Or email your details to:

rachael@bigga.co.uk
Ensure you receive confirmation of entry by return email.

Deadline for entry is
2 September 2016

Completed entry forms should be sent to:
BIGGA National Championship, BIGGA House, Aldwark, Alne, York YO61 1UF

The main tournament for the Challenge Trophy will be played over 36 holes, medal play, with the best overall gross score producing the BIGGA National Champion, who must be a greenkeeper member.

The greenkeeper player with the lowest nett score will be presented with the BIGGA Challenge Cup.

There will be prizes for the first five over 36 holes in the gross category. The top three in the nett competition will also receive prizes. After each day of 18 holes there will be prizes for winners of handicap divisions.

The BIGGA Regional Team Cup and prize will be calculated from the 8 best nett scores over the first day of play. There will also be various nearest the pin and longest drive competitions, featuring prizes.

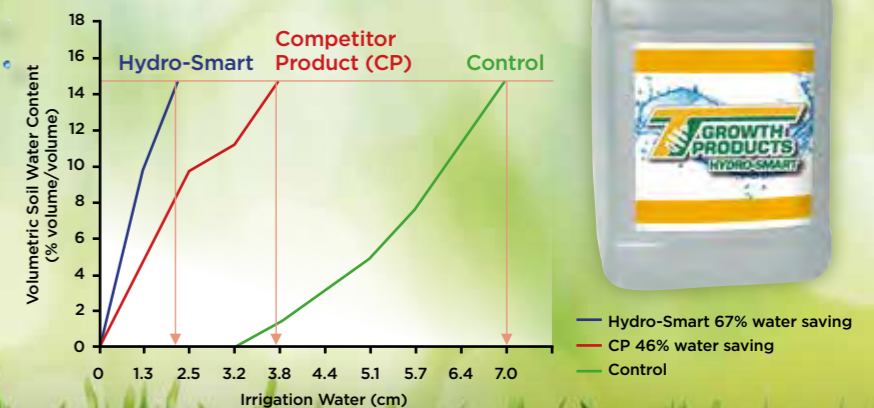
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GI ecology

By James Hutchinson - BIGGA's Sustainability Executive



The UK's golf course wildflower populations are performing fantastically well this past month with many of you sending in some smashing orchid sightings.

Orchids are notoriously difficult to correctly identify as they cross breed with ease. Look at this one (right) – we're leaning towards a northern marsh orchid – drop us an email if you think otherwise.

While I'm on the subject of flora, be sure to leave small areas on your course for brambles. These act as a great site for small ground nesting birds, whereas its autumnal berries see many species through the cold months.

Wildlife finds other uses for this thorny smasher, including using its flowers for a source of nectar - this bee at Ringway agrees.

Meanwhile, John O'Gaunt are looking to break records with their count of 97 nest boxes used out of the 125 they have in place. A grand total of 468 chicks, including stock doves, jackdaws and kestrels have fledged - can anyone beat that number?

Elsewhere on the courses, Gleneagles is a hive of feathered activity, with a family of nine tiny cygnets and these ducklings charming golfers.

Moving away from feathers, take a look at this muntjac deer snapped at Stoneham. These are also known as Reeves' muntjac, Chinese deer or barking deer for their call, which sounds suspiciously like a dog in full voice.

Keep the sightings coming!

Can you identify this orchid?



Bee at Ringway

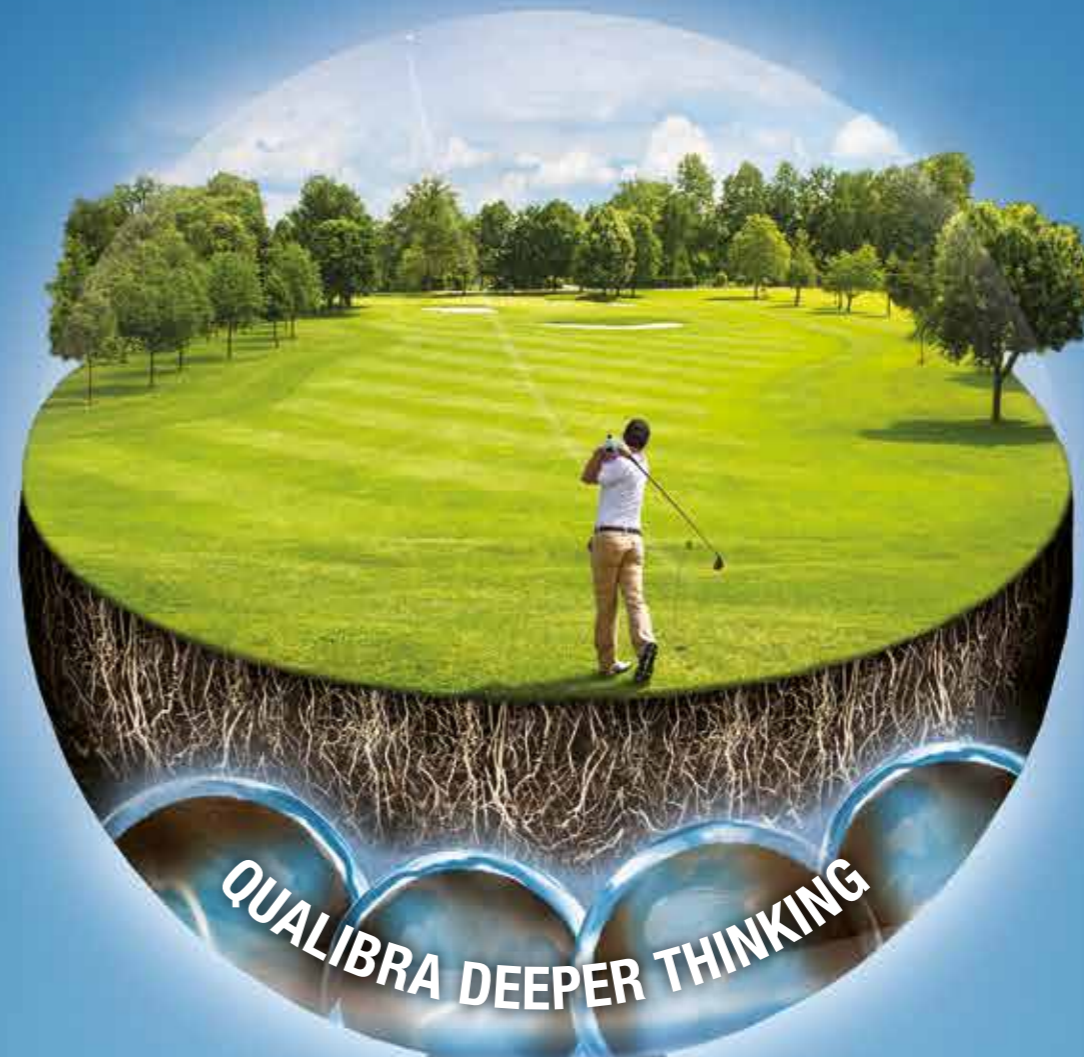
Muntjac deer



A family of ducks at Gleneagles



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MEMBERSHIP

Latest news and information from the BIGGA membership team



BIGGA Brexit pledge to members

Thursday 23 June was a day which split families, the country and the greenkeeping industry.

The nation spoke and the majority, by a margin of just 1.2million among the 33.5m who voted, decided the United Kingdom would quit the European Union.

The politics and economics of the matter are incredibly complex, and greens teams found themselves on both sides of the debate - heated discussions will no doubt have been heard during tea breaks the length and breadth of the UK.

But what is certain is the value of the pound plummeted by around 10% in a single night, while the UK's credit rating was also downgraded. This kind of economic shrinkage is not without consequence, even if the long-term prospects of a Britain free from the shackles of Brussels eventually

lead to a positive change.

It was for this reason that in the aftermath of the result being announced, we issued a statement reaffirming our pledge to support our members and a commitment to work harder than ever to ensure no matter what the future holds, we are here to help.

In a statement issued to the UK golf media, BIGGA Chief Executive Officer Jim Croxton said: "The UK golf industry is still in a delicate position on the back of the last economic downturn.

"The decision to leave the EU will have an impact on people's pockets and within the golf industry this can manifest itself in reduced greenkeeping budgets.

"We will redouble our efforts to ensure we support our members throughout this period and work closely with the rest of the golf in-

dustry to keep the sport as buoyant as possible."

One of the questions raised in the aftermath was how Brexit would affect BIGGA's relationship with the Federation of European Golf Greenkeepers Associations.

However, Dean Cleaver, FEGGA executive officer, said: "From a UK perspective, BIGGA are a very prominent member of FEGGA, and FEGGA very much supports their comments regarding the upcoming period of uncertainty within the economy, and also the commitment they have made to their own members, and also the golf industry as a whole."

If you have concerns about your role or would like information about how we can support you, contact any member of BIGGA staff, including our team of regional administrators.

NEW!

From the makers of
Revolution
and Porthcawl



A complete, balanced plant stress and turfgrass health enhancement package

A balanced growing environment is necessary to produce healthy turf that can withstand abiotic stresses and less than ideal weather conditions. Strengthening turf and maximizing the growing environment before the onset of stress is the only way to ensure consistent, high quality turf when conditions begin to deteriorate. With that in mind, we are pleased to introduce Providian, a complete, balanced plant stress and turfgrass health enhancement package.

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Greenkeeper Training

BIGGA is actively involved in raising the standard of Greenkeeper Training. The association is a member of the Greenkeepers' Training Committee and strives to enhance the level of education through various means, including section, regional and national workshops, seminars and conferences.

The range and quality of training available throughout the UK means there is a training course for every greenkeeper. This should improve the quality of greenkeeping and help to produce better quality golf courses to the benefit of all within the industry. Course managers should ensure their staff are trained to the highest standards. This begins by selecting a training provider that meets the criteria laid down by the GTC. There is a clear link between education, training and economic success and all clubs should invest in the education of their staff. There are now a number of GTC Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers identified by the GTC Quality Assured logo.



Plumpton College
East Sussex BN7 3AE
Contact: 01273 890454
www.plumpton.ac.uk



Apprenticeships at Level 2 & 3: Greenkeeping (New trailblazer programme), Groundsmanship, Hard Landscaping, Horticulture and Production Horticulture.

Full Time: Diploma in Horticulture, Levels 2 & 3. Part time courses: RHS and City & Guilds Levels 2 and 3, practical. Short courses include: FEPA Spraying and Chainsaw. Bespoke Training, e.g: Manual handling, Mower use and Maintenance. Risk Assessment. Strimmers and Hedgetrimmers.



Reaseheath College
Nantwich, Cheshire CW5 6DF
Contact: 01270 613242
Enquiries@reaseheath.ac.uk

Industry tailored, block/day release Level 2 and Level 3 Apprenticeships in Horticulture, Greenkeeping and Groundsmanship. NPTC and other short courses including pesticide application, chain saw operation, safe use of mowers and manual handling. Full time Level 2 and Level 3 Extended Diplomas in Horticulture with turf modules. Full-cost bespoke training courses in Amenity & Commercial Horticulture and Turf management also available. £8.5 million national centre for Horticulture, the Environment and Sustainable Technology open.



Smallford Campus,
St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL4 0JA
Contact: Andrew Wight 01727 737735
andy.wight@oaklands.ac.uk
www.oaklands.ac.uk



Oaklands College offers on-line work-based learning for City and Guilds diplomas and apprenticeships at Level 2 and 3. We also offer an on-line Higher National Certificate in Greenkeeping and Sports Turf Management throughout the south east. In addition we offer Monthly PA1/2 and 6 certificate of competence courses. Full time horticultural courses on offer include Entry 3 to Level 3.



Scotland's Rural College
Cupar, Fife, KY15 4JB
Contact: 01334 658969
Michael.clark@sruc.ac.uk
www.sruc.ac.uk/elmwood

Full-time National Certificate Greenkeeping, block release or fast track and work-based learning options for SVQ Levels 2 & 3 Sports Turf. HNC/D Golf Course Management (full time and distance learning), HNC/D Golf Facility Management (full time and distance learning). Short course in chainsaw, tree climbing and rescue techniques, plant operations, pesticide spraying and Noroso certification/courses



Hadlow College
Tonbridge, Kent, TN11 0AL
Contact: 01732 853163
Anthony Stockwell: Anthony.stockwell@hadlow.ac.uk
Paul Copsey: Paul.Copsey@hadlow.ac.uk
www.hadlow.ac.uk



Hadlow College are proud to be the first approved centre in the UK to be able to deliver the new Level 2 Golf Greenkeeper Qualification. We offer Level 3 Greenkeeping, our traditional land based courses and industry short courses. Hadlow is also looking to offer the new Level 5 Course Manager qualification in the future. If you want to study at an Ofsted rated "outstanding" college then please contact us for more information.



GOSTA Training
Glasgow, G40 2AB
Contact: Lesley Lowrie 0141 556 3999
Learn@gostatraining.co.uk
www.gostatraining.co.uk

SVQ Level 2 and 3 and Modern Apprenticeship in Greenkeeping/ Sportsturf and Landscape. Attendance day release or distance learning. SVQ Level 4 Management is available with flexible learning options. Lantra and NPTC Industry related short courses with certification include Pesticide courses, Chainsaw, full range of Machinery training, First Aid, Defibrillation training and more.



Merrist Wood College
Worplesdon, Guildford, Surrey, GU3 3PE
www.merristwood.ac.uk



Courses include Sports Turf Management NVQ Level 4 - on-line distance learning, Sports Turf Diploma Level 3 - on-line distance learning, Sports Turf Apprenticeship Diploma Level 3 and Sports Turf Apprenticeship Diploma Level 2 (October to the end of March only), NPTC Safe Use and Operation of Mowers, Tractor Driving, Hedge Trimmers, Turf Maintenance Equipment & FEPA Spraying, Safe Use of Aluminium Phosphide for Mole Control. Funding is available for apprenticeships for Level 2 and 3, 16-18 (fully funded), 19+ (partially funded).

L&D NEWS

Latest news from the BIGGA Learning and Development team



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Congratulations to the following members who achieved CPD Approved status this month:

John Entwistle, Beaverbrook; JonJo Pitts, Royston; Jamie Smith, Ochil Developments; Stephen Hopkins, Burghley Park; Stephen Lawlor, The Duke's St Andrews; Derek Wilkerson, Highland Springs; Craig Swindells, Chipping Sodbury; Blair Shearer, Dunbar; Yannick Asaf, Golfpark Nuolen. The following members also achieved their Milestone this month: Steven Tierney MG, Golfpark Nuolen



Sweetzer celebrates after becoming Baroness scholar

West Hill greenkeeper Sam Sweetzer is celebrating after being awarded a Baroness Level 3 Scholarship.

Sam is studying Level 3 in Sports Turf Management at Oaklands College and was runner up for the BIGGA Student of the Year 2015. He said: "This will help me massively, as I am paying for the course myself."

"If it was not for Baroness, people like myself would struggle to progress in our careers."

Designed to help BIGGA members gain their technical and supervisory qualification, the scholarships may be awarded for those studying Level 3 Diploma in Work-based Horticulture

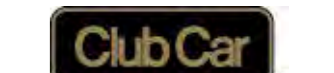
(Sportsturf - Greenkeeper) or SVQ Level 3 Sports Turf Management.

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

The fund may award scholarships up to 50% of the cost of the course. However, this will typically be capped at £1,000.

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

Successful applicants will have their name included on BIGGA's website and featured in Greenkeeper International.



INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS

Steven Tierney MG; Chris Lomas MG; Andrew Campbell MG CGCS; Espen Bergmann; Nick Gray; Steve Dixon; Richard McGlynn; Jaey Goodchild; Michael Beaton; Greg Evans; Frank Newberry



GI Industry Update

The latest industry news

John Deere appoints managing director

Jonathan Henry has been appointed managing director of John Deere in the UK and Ireland.

Jonathan took over the role from Antony Scott, who has retired after 40 years of service, which began in 1975 when he joined as a management trainee.

"Throughout his career, Antony has had an impact on thousands of customers, dealers and employees," said Jim Orr, John Deere's vice president of sales and marketing for Region 2.

"He is known to many as a consummate business professional and team player, fully committed to the brand. We thank him for his significant contributions to John Deere over his career - particularly so in the year the branch is celebrating its 50th anniversary in the UK and Ireland - and wish him a long, healthy and happy retirement."

Jonathan Henry joined John Deere as a management trainee in July 1993, following a HND in mechanism, planning and business management

at the Scottish Agricultural College, Auchincruive. From late 1993 he worked as an area manager product support in south west England, and from 1997 to 2001 as a territory manager in the north of England and borders of Scotland.

From early 2009, Jonathan held various product marketing roles in Germany and the US, chiefly supporting the launch of the 6R to 8R Series tractors. Since May 2015, he has been planning director for Deere's global crop harvesting business.



Jonathan Henry has been appointed managing director of John Deere

Greens staff help Kingsbarn soar



Kingsbarns Golf Links has recorded an unprecedented leap in one of golf's most respected course rankings, and the greens staff have been praised for the part they have played.

The venue has risen into the top 10 of Golf World's Top 100 Golf Courses in Britain &

Ireland directory.

Kingsbarns Chief Executive Alan Hogg said: "We continually seek to improve the course without disturbing the original Kyle Phillips design.

"The transparency of Golf World's criteria will give us an insight into how we

can further improve the presentation of the course and the levels of service we provide.

"The greenkeeping team at Kingsbarns works tirelessly to draw out every possible on-course improvement and these results will shine a new light on that process."

Toro fleet arrives in time for major tournament

Childwall hosted the annual Four Counties Junior Tournament during April, with the course prepared using a brand new fleet of Toro equipment.

Seven Toros have been welcomed at the club after a deal was struck with Toro distributor Lely Turfcare and dealer Cheshire Turf Machinery.

Arriving two months ago, the fleet ensured the club was prepped for the tournament. However, the

competition was not the only reason for investing in the new machinery.

Club Manager Gavin Brown said: "We have been looking at flat lining our lease payments.

"By negotiating a five-year deal with Lely Turfcare, we are able to do this.

"The deal will enable the club to better budget in the coming five years, meaning payments will not fluctuate and impact other expenditure."



It's 'Bent, Creeping Bent' as Wentworth opts for 007

The Wentworth Club, at Virginia Water in Surrey, has selected 007 DSB Creeping Bent to re-seed the greens on its West Course, which is undergoing major improvements.

The home of the BMW PGA Championship, the course is undergoing major renovation works, including the redesign of several greens and tees, fairway drainage improvements and bunker remodelling.

The club will be the first in England to have the SubAir system introduced to all its greens, with each one seeded with 007 DSB Creeping Bent.

"This is a genetically-advanced variety developed out of the Rutgers University turfgrass breeding program, and is available exclusively from Germinal," said Richard Brown, amenity sales manager. "It is widely adaptable to both warm summers and cold winters and retains a deep green colour all year round, even in the depths of winter."

The turfgrass also benefits from high disease resistance, especially to anthracnose, fusarium and snow mould.



Bainbridge brought up to Euro Tour standard



In preparation for this year's Bridgestone Challenge, part of the European Tour, Heythrop Park has been working closely with Headland Amenity to ensure the course is up to scratch.

Estates Manager Matthew Cropper joined the club in January and since then has been working on a course-wide nutritional programme.

"I found out within a few weeks that we were getting a European Tour event, which is a great honour," said Matthew. "To turn a pay and play into a championship-standard course in six months is quite a tall order, especially as there wasn't an effective feeding programme in place when I joined."

Matthew turned to Headland for advice in achieving

quick, true greens and overcoming moss problems.

An overseeding and top-dressing programme was combined with Headland's Greentec Mosskiller 4-0-4+9Fe.

Matthew said: "After just two applications, we're seeing better recovery rates and the moss scarring is growing in, so the improvements are already visible."

Another issue Matthew is attempting to combat is the mixture of mature and new areas, particularly fairways, which have come as a result of the nine-hole course being extended into an 18-hole layout in 2009.

"Some areas of the the new holes are pretty sparse and weak, so we want to thicken these up and eventually get to the point where we can apply consistent feed coursewide.

Following soil sample analysis of tees, approaches and greens, Adrian recommended C-Complex Granular and Xtend 46-0-0 soluble fertilisers.

"Adi's been great working together with me on achieving an effective, proactive feeding programme that will deliver the top quality results this course deserves," said Matthew. "At the moment the European Tour team come in every month to six weeks to make sure the course is adhering to the tour standards.

"It's fantastic that they've also commented on the improvements we're achieving already. It's vital the feeding programme helps us achieve the tour standard."

The Bainbridge course is set in 440 acres of Cotswold countryside and redesigned in 2009 by course architect Tom MacKenzie.

Double quick results for Weidenmann at Stanmore Golf Club

Delivery of a Wiedenmann Terra Spike aerator has prompted two sets of instant feedback at Stanmore in Middlesex.

Firstly, Course Manager Barry Neville and his staff of five greenkeepers reported the GXi8 HD deep aerator had tined all 18 greens down to 150 mm.

“After our installation and training session we just kept going,” he said. “The greens hadn’t been spiked for a few weeks so the team got everything done on day one with 8mm tines in a 50mm square hole pattern.”

“The results were so much better than anything that had gone before, and faster. We got the required depth, didn’t need to roll them and just cut them the next morning. Within another day, the holes were hardly noticeable.”

The second set of plaudits came from Stanmore members themselves.

Barry said: “Golfers don’t tend to like any machinery

on the greens, but we had lots of positive comments, all saying how surprised they were by the lack of surface disturbance.”

Stanmore is a varied course which can trace its roots back nearly 125 years.

Barry, who has been in charge since 1996, said it is the first Terra Spike they’ve owned and while it was purchased primarily for greens, tees and approaches it will also be able to tackle fairways.

He added: “I looked at several machines, then Mark House from Doe’s Benington suggested the Wiedenmann, which stood out by far. We’ll have it tining year-round, every three to four weeks.

“During summer maintenance week in August, we’ll hollow core the greens to 150mm and follow up with 60 tonnes of a Banks’ medium sand.

“We’ll get to use our new swath board attachments so I’m really looking forward to trying them out.”



Scotsraig

Scotsraig unveils first stage of milestone bicentenary project

One of Scotland’s oldest clubs has undertaken an unprecedented project to return its famous layout to the original specifications in time for its 200th anniversary.

Scotsraig, which was founded in 1817, is the world’s 13th oldest club and boasts a course originally laid out by James Braid.

The ambitious restoration project will see all the course’s green-side and fairway bunkers returned to their original size, with many being expanded.

With additional on-course alterations being completed in tandem with extensive

gorse removal, this is the biggest project undertaken by the club, which is situated between St Andrews and Carnoustie.

At the centre of the alterations is Course Manager Chris Barnard, who said: “The objective was to move the course forward, so we’ve concentrated on reinstating all the greenside bunkers in advance of the bicentenary year, and then we’ll move on to the fairway bunkers. These are big changes and the members are desperate to play them.”

The £300,000 investment made over the last two years has resulted in two fairway mowers, two ride-on greens and tees mow-

ers, a rough mower, a compact tractor with loader, an aerator and a Gator utility vehicle.

“We’re almost completely John Deere now,” said Barnard. “And we’re much more efficient because of it.

“With the two new fairway mowers, for example, we can do all the fairways in less than a day, whereas before it would take us a day and a half to finish the job.”

As well as the new-look bunkers, Scotsraig’s fairways have also been cut so longer hitters will find narrower landing areas the closer they get to the green. More fescue grasses have also been assimilated into the putting surfaces.

Paris agreement renewed

Ransomes Jacobsen has signed a five-year preferred supplier agreement with Golf National in Paris.

The course will host the 2018 Ryder Cup and has been using Ransomes Jacobsen France equipment since 2010.

“You don’t change a win-

ning team,” said Paul-Ian Armitage, general manager of Golf National. “We are very happy to renew our supplier agreement for the upcoming five years with Ransomes Jacobsen, our existing business partner.”

To ensure all of the courses are maintained in pristine condition, a total of 70 items of turf maintenance

equipment will be delivered, including 36 mowers, 21 utility vehicles and 13 miscellaneous products.

Alan Prickett, managing director of Ransomes Jacobsen, said: “We are delighted that Golf National has shown the utmost confidence in the Jacobsen brand and will work with us for a further five years.”

College tutor named Turfgrass president



The newly-elected ETS committee

A Myerscough College tutor has been elected president of the European Turfgrass Society.

Senior lecturer Stewart Brown will hold the post for the next four years after being voted into the role at the society’s latest general assembly.

Stewart said: “I’m keen to see Myerscough as the centre for turfgrass research and education in Europe. I believe there is a great poten-

tial for student recruitment for our higher education programmes but also opportunities for research and development with partners.”

Myerscough principal Ann Turner said: “It’s not only a personal honour in recognition of his work, but also a reflection of the status of the college.”

The European Turfgrass Society is the premier organisation for turfgrass research in Europe, the USA and further afield.

Forst and Orange Plant team up

Forst, a brand of Redwood Global, has joined forces with arboricultural sales and hire specialists Orange Plant.

The deal means Orange Plant is the regional distributor for Forst machinery in its branches in Newcastle upon Tyne, Wetherby and Bromborough in Cheshire.

Doug Ghinn, Forst director, said: “Joining forces with Orange Plant is a major milestone for our business. The company is the largest independent arb equipment dealer in the UK, with a hire fleet in excess of 120 wood chippers.

“The new relationship is testament to quality and robustness of the Forst product and we are looking forward to working with Orange Plant and taking our business to the next level.”

Toro brought in for 125th birthday



West Yorkshire’s Wakefield Golf Club was established in 1891, meaning this year the club is celebrating its 125th anniversary.

Under the watch of Head Greenkeeper Matt Booth and with 2016 full of competitions, the team want the course to be reminiscent of its nostalgic past and have brought in Toro to help achieve this.

Matt said: “The Greens Sub-committee conducted a full review of ma-

chinery to help us achieve our objectives. Toro was the obvious choice based on reputation, reliability, versatility and value for money.”

Designed by Alex Herd and bunkered by Alister MacKenzie, the course remains much the same as it was 125 years ago.

Planned course improvements include a balanced fertiliser and topdressing programme, an aeration plan and the restoration of sharp lines around the course’s greens.

Countrywide
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The Amateur Championships



at Royal Porthcawl

The Amateur championship saw BIGGA members head for Royal Porthcawl during June to help Ian Kinley and his team.

The volunteers joined the resident team of 10 greenkeepers in South Wales on the Saturday prior to the championship, with the first shift starting at 6am.

Working at a smaller championship such as the Amateur, which is in its 121st year, allows volunteers the opportunity to get a wider range of hands-on experience.

Glenn Kirby, course manager at Hockley, said: "Before kids, marriage and all these other amazing but time-consuming things came along, I'd get involved in as many of these types of events as I could. But recently I'd forgotten what else you gain out of these events other than just a bit of experience.

"I've networked, visited clubs, had fun, reminded myself of resources I have, looked on with envy at the resources others have, made friends, and re-engaged myself for challenges ahead.

"These events are a great opportunity

Chris Hale



to gain additional experience and the smaller the volunteer squad, the more opportunities there are to gain different experiences."

Royal Porthcawl also celebrates its 121st anniversary this year. The links look out over the Bristol Channel and are far removed from the manicured fairways that Wentworth greenkeeper Stefan Carter has grown used to.

He said: "I was given the task of hand mowing greens. As the week went on, I found out it's a lot harder to see your lines on a links course than it is working at Wentworth.

"It was the first time I had worked on a links course, so I enjoyed seeing the differences from the courses I had been on before, such as the finer types of grass species on the greens and throughout the course.

"There were various bunker types, with some being riveted and some more natural, rugged looking ones. It was also interesting to see the areas where they had recently removed the gorse bushes and scraped back the top lay-

er of soil to uncover bare sand areas, which would then be taken over by the desirable grasses, such as fescues."

With 144 golfers playing in the first round, it was long days for some of the team, who would start at 4.30am and could still be on the course at 9pm.

The catering team at Royal Porthcawl kept the volunteers well fed, and Stefan added: "Needless to say, the hand mowing jobs were the most desirable by the end of the week, to help shift some of the weight being put on by the constant eating.

"Sadly Saturday morning came all too quickly. Our final shift was a dry one and, like the rest of the week, went off without any problems. Once everyone was off the course we gathered on the chipping green for a team photo and said our goodbyes.



Early morning mowing and, right and above right, views of the Royal Porthcawl links



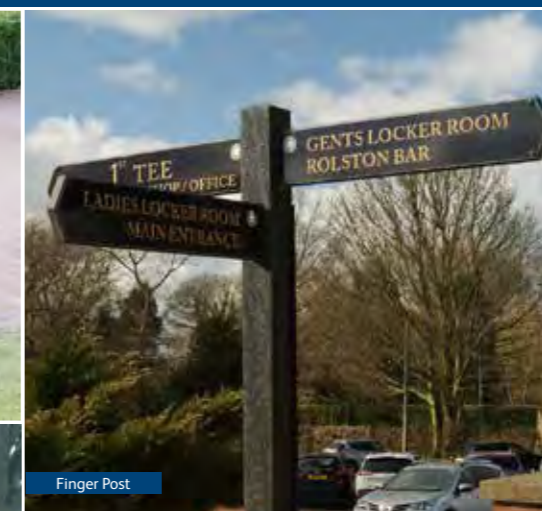
"Like all tournaments I've worked at so far, I met some amazing greenkeepers both from the home team and the other volunteers who I learnt new ideas from and who provide you with an ever-increasing network within the industry. "A massive thank you to Ian Kinley and his team for making me and the other volunteers feel so welcome."



Maintenance Free - EaglePlex



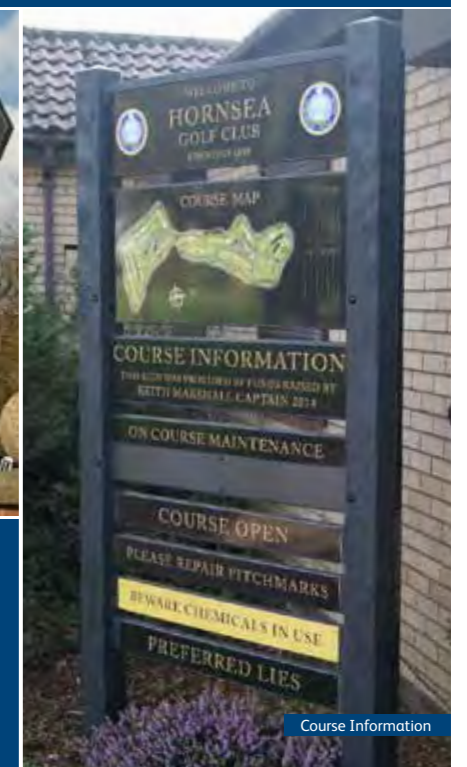
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That Went' well

Greenkeepers join the BMW PGA Championship team



WENTWORTH



Wentworth team

‘I was lucky enough to have Danny Willett. He is a top bloke and I was presented with a signed glove and ball at the end of his game, which made my day’

BIGGA members were once again invited to get up close to the action at Wentworth as they joined the support team for the European Tour’s flagship event, the BMW PGA Championship.

A small team of volunteers were available throughout the tournament, including the Pro-Am, to assist Course Manager Kenny Mackay and his staff on their early morning course work with bunker preparation in advance of the day’s play.

For Rob Patrick of Stoneham this was the first major event he had attended and he even managed to get a photograph with the tournament’s winner – Englishman Chris Wood – at the conclusion.

“I thought it was brilliant,” he said. “This was my first time of applying and I didn’t expect to get on.

“But they were a great bunch of lads and that made the whole experience a really good laugh.

Tournament winner Chris Wood with the BIGGA support team



WENTWORTH



On the Saturday, Rob worked in the match with Richard Bland, the European Tour regular who is also club pro at Stoneham. Rob said: "I didn't help his cause because he had a shocker and he apologised afterwards for putting me in so many bunkers."

"They were a great bunch of lads and that made the whole experience a really good laugh"

A full contingent of 42 volunteers were on hand, covering the matches on all four days of the tournament.

All agreed Kenny and his team had produced an immaculately-prepared course – no easy task after the weather experienced by greenkeepers over a long wet winter and cool spring.

Golf at Goodwood's Russell Carr was on the support team and said: "It is a fantastic event, where you can really experience being part of a large tournament. I was lucky enough to have Danny Willett on the last day. He is a top bloke and I was presented with a signed glove and ball at the end of his game, which made my day."

Rob also worked with one of his heroes - this year's Ryder Cup captain Darren Clarke. He said: "I raked for Darren Clarke, who I grew up idolising. He even gave me one of his golf balls, so that was great."

"It really gave me a lot of inspiration as I left wanting to get my course looking as good as Wentworth, which is obviously impossible."

New Zealander Rob Boyce is a Wentworth veteran and this year was the 18th time he had joined the team.

"I keep going back out of my love for golf," said the Links (Newmarket) head greenkeeper. "How many tournaments can you get inside the ropes? I learn something every day, that's what's so great about this job."

"I sometimes take my young apprentice along and show him how tournaments are set up – this year Oliver Kirk came with me."

As proof of how close to the action you get, Rob recalled how one year he helped decide the fate of the championship.



Wentworth bunker raking

Wentworth greenkeeping

During the final round in 2001 he was stood to the left hand side of the 17th hole, where spectators are not allowed, when Scotsman Andrew Oldcorn hit his approach shot into the trees where he was stood, and the ball came to a stop between his feet.

Oldcorn believed his ball had reached the green, and so, unable to locate his ball, would have taken a penalty drop – but Rob prevented this.

"I saved him two shots and he won the tournament by a single shot," said Rob. "His caddie bought me a few drinks afterwards to say thanks."

But what Rob said he most enjoys about the weekend is the opportunity to exchange ideas with the other greenkeepers.

He said: "The biggest learning curve is talking to your peers. You are sat in the cabin having a chat and that's when you learn the most."



BIGGA's Clive Osgood and Les Howkins

Dedicated Clive honoured

Regional Administrator Clive Osgood was awarded a BIGGA life membership badge from Chairman Les Howkins while at Wentworth.

Clive has been with the association since its formation and was involved with BGGGA and its predecessors prior to that.

"I'm proud to receive this award and I'm thankful for all the kind words I have received," said Clive.

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- 🌐 www.bayerturfsolutions.co.uk

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*Terms and conditions apply, please visit bayerturfsolutions.co.uk
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Watch your salt intake

with Geoff Fenn

Countrywide

TURF AND AMENITY

Scraptoft's greens team are delighted with the results from the low-salt Growth Products range

The issue of excess salinity in turfgrass management is well documented in hotter climates, particularly where irrigation water is of a poor quality.

Many experts are forecasting that restrictions on 'clean' water for sports turf irrigation are not that far away in the UK, so having an understanding of the effects of salinity on turfgrass growth is becoming more important.

Scientific research tells us salinity has a negative effect on plant growth and the main issue is that excess soluble salts affect growth by reducing water intake – effectively causing drought symptoms.

You may remember learning about osmosis back in school, whereby water is drawn from low salt concentrations to high salt concentrations through a permeable membrane. This is exactly what happens when you apply a high salt fertiliser.

When fertiliser salts are added to soil water, as a granular, or directly to the leaf blade, as a foliar, the osmotic pres-

'Healthy greens that perform consistently day after day, week after week'

sure changes, so there are effectively lower concentrations of water outside the plant. This pulls water out of the cell into the soil water or leaf surface to redress the balance. Plants cannot efficiently take up nutrients or water in high salinity soils and drought symptoms can be observed even with an 'acceptable' moisture content.

Applying a foliar fertiliser with a high salt index can 'burn' the leaf. This can be a noticeable browning of grass leaves in bad cases, or the damage may not always be visible to the naked eye but reduced plant health, vigour and growth may result from applying a high salt foliar.

Water will be drawn out of the plant cell, leading to a loss of turgor pressure

and reduced plant cell health.

There may be no visible damage, but the plant will not be responding efficiently to your fertiliser inputs.

It makes sense then, to be aware of how much salt you are adding to your turf via the products you use and to utilise products that are going to maximise turf health and minimise issues caused by leaf burn and soil salinity. Why apply excess salt when there are low salt alternatives available?

Jamie McGrath and Rob Duval at Scraptoft



Salt build up not only causes issues with plant phytotoxicity and drought symptoms, but also adversely affects soil biology. Good work using organic products and biostimulants may be undone using high salt fertilisers.

Fertilisers and Salt Index

All fertilisers will have a salt index based on the amount of salt within them. Once you start to get over a salt index of 40-50 there is potential for negative effects on plant health and above a salt index of 80 is where there is a high potential for plant tissue damage. The salt indices of various common nutrient sources are shown in table 1.

Finding out the nutrient sources for your inputs and the overall salt index of the product will give you a good idea of any potential issue you may inadvertently be causing. Growth Products have been championing the use of high-quality, low-salt products for a number of years and are very open about the salt content of all their products as they believe end-users should be fully aware of exactly what's in them.

Many turf managers have switched to liquid formulations of either the Classic 18-3-6 containing 50% Slow Release Nitrogen (SRN) or Nitro 30-0-0 containing 85% SRN. These results were reported as being impressive and economic. Consistency of growth rate is so important in maintaining green speeds and this is where Growth Products users have found real benefits. From a single application, growth is consistent,

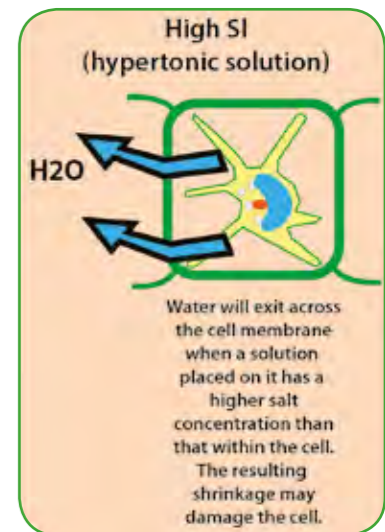
predictable and a healthy surface can be maintained for periods of a month and beyond. The key is a low biuret, long-chain form of methylene urea that is free from contaminants such as salt. A typical methylene urea contains 3-5 carbon chains and breaks down relatively quickly, whereas Growth Products SRN contains 7-9 carbon chains. This gives a much slower, more consistent release of nitrogen to the plant – getting turf managers away from the 'boom and bust' cycle of growth from quick release nitrogen.

Any excess growth is eliminated, along with negative aspects of unwanted spikes in yield, such as thatch build-up, soft growth and enhanced disease incidence.

Growth Products SRN can be taken in via the leaf, crown and root of the plant allowing flexibility of application rates. An added benefit of these long carbon chains is as a food source for soil microbiology. The carbon and nitrogen molecules break down and the plant will use the nitrogen, while microbial life will feed on the carbon, improving the overall health of your soil.

Jamie McGrath, course manager at Scraptoft in Leicestershire, is a typical user who has found huge agronomic and financial benefits in using Growth Products liquids.

He said: "They've been absolutely brilliant for me – exactly what I was looking for. I apply the Classic 18-3-6 every three to four weeks and I know exactly



what I'm going to get – healthy greens that perform consistently day after day, week after week.

"The rates are very low too – between 10 and 20 litres per hectare gives a great response with no peaks or troughs in growth. I'm also using Essential Plus, TKO Phosphite and X-Xtra Iron which are producing impressive results."

As budgets become tighter, more turf managers are looking for economical ways to maximise turf health and surface performance. With their unique formulation, low-salt liquids, Growth Products are a low-cost, high quality solution to sustainable management.

For further information contact Countrywide Turf and Amenity on 01386 429851 or email amenity@countrywidefarmers.co.uk. Alternatively visit www.countrywidefarmers.co.uk

Table 1. Some common nutrient sources in turf management and their salt index

Nutrient Source	Salt Index
Nitrogen Sources:	
Urea 46% N	74
Ammonium Sulphate	88
Ammonium Nitrate	104
Growth Products Smart Nitrogen	4
Potassium Sources:	
Potassium Sulphate	43
Potassium Nitrate	70
Potassium Chloride	116
Potassium Carbonate	5



Do you want to join the Players?



TPC SAWGRASS

This year's BIGGA delegates at TPC Sawgrass

Once again we've teamed up with John Deere to offer one full member from each of BIGGA's five regions the chance to be involved with golf's 'Fifth Major'.

Last month we told you how five BIGGA members won the opportunity to join the maintenance team that helped prepare the course for the Players Championship at TPC Sawgrass, and now you can follow in their footsteps.

The application process has opened for the 2017 event and will see those chosen enjoy travel, accommodation, food and uniform all included within the life-changing experience.



There are three stages to the application process.

Stage one is to register your interest by completing the short survey in the members area of the BIGGA website, by clicking on the John Deere TPC Sawgrass Volunteer Programme tab. Alternatively, scan the QR code featured on this page using your smartphone.

The closing date for this stage of the process is 2 September 2016.

Stage two requires applicants to make a video submission – of up to seven minutes in length – explaining what makes them an ideal candidate for the scheme. Details of how to do this will be emailed to you after your application is made. The closing date for these is 7 October.

Stage three features interviews with BIGGA regional administrators and representatives from John Deere, and these will take place later in the year.

World number one Jason Day won the 2016 Players Championship, and each

'The application process is open to all full members'

of the five BIGGA delegates described the event as a once-in-a-lifetime experience which they "will never forget".

The application process is open to all full members, with last year's delegates hailing from courses as varied as South Essex, Hampstead, Murrayfield, Remedy Oak and Dunstanburgh Castle.

The members even got the opportunity to tee off on Sawgrass' legendary 17th hole and attempt to reach the famous island green. They may be exceptional greenkeepers, but this year's BIGGA representatives cracked under the pressure and none reached the island green. If you think you can restore the association's pride, be sure to apply.



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(Trump International Aberdeen)

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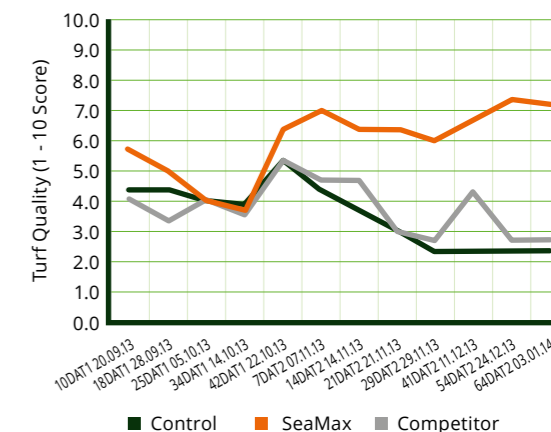
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Results – Turf Quality



Survey could help save 'millions' of at risk trees

TREE SURVEYS

Britain's golf courses actively support a significant proportion of the country's 'ancient and veteran trees', which is testimony to the high priority given by course managers and greenkeepers to biodiversity, ecology and conservation.

With advancing age, trees become a haven for wildlife, including feeding and breeding birds, hibernating bats and a huge range of insects and other invertebrate animals. This is because the tree's biomass is slowly but surely breaking down and deteriorating in tandem with the structural integrity and strength of the trunk and branches.

Old trees at risk and posing risks

These old and mostly native trees are prone to infection by a range of fungal pathogens, mostly mushroom and toadstool fungi. However, spore-bearing structures, called brackets, attach anywhere from the collar region to positions higher in the tree, depending on tree species and fungus species.

These fungi produce enzymes which digest and breakdown the cellulose, hemicellulose and lignin components of woody tissue and hasten the deterioration and death of full-grown trees. Native fungi are part of the natural order of

things, but there are new and much more sinister threats to our trees. An increasing number of tree species, whether native, naturalised or exotic, are threatened by alien pests and diseases. These are generally less discriminating in the age of tree they invade.

Tree species now under threat include common ash and sweet chestnut, but the most well-established and prominent problem in the amenity and landscape sector is a disease of horse chestnut trees. Both white and red flowering horse chestnuts are increasingly battered and bruised after a decade of dealing with bacterial bleeding canker, caused by the plant pathogenic bacterium *Pseudomonas syringae* pv. *aesculus*.

But help is at hand with technology that



Vince Cainey takes the resistograph to a red flowering horse chestnut

Horse chestnuts form attractive course features

allows landowners to assess what is going on inside the tree, permitting more logical and reasoned judgements about tree reduction and felling.

Assessing tree safety

Greenkeepers who started out in the 1970's will remember Dutch elm disease, caused by the fungus *Ophiostoma novo-ulmi*. The fungus is ferried around by bark beetles and moved so rapidly that by the time trees showed symptoms, felling was the only option. By the time the dust had settled in 1980 some 25 million mature elms had been lost.

Bacterial bleeding canker presents a more complicated situation and fortunately does not kill horse chestnut trees with the same speed that Dutch elm disease dispatched elms.

Like English elm, horse chestnut trees are relatively unstable trees, even when healthy, and may drop branches, seemingly at random, especially during summer in a phenomenon known as 'summer branch drop'.

However, the red flowering horse chestnut tree is more prone to infection and succumbs more rapidly to bacterial bleeding canker than does white flowering horse chestnut. Some white flowering horse chestnut trees are recovering by



the rapid production of wound periderm. This corky tissue seals off, isolates and destroys the bacterial infection.

Landowners are no longer planting horse chestnut and nurseries have stopped propagating and stocking the trees. This means red flowering horse chestnut, which is a natural hybrid that rarely regenerates 'true' from seed, could soon disappear from the landscape.

All that said, course managers need not rush to fell horse chestnut trees on safety grounds, provided they conduct a proper internal tree survey to determine the structural state and integrity of the woody tissue underneath the bark.

There are millions of horse chestnut trees across the country now infected and in various stages of deterioration and decay that could benefit from this approach.

What lies beneath?

Bradleigh Avenue is a horse chestnut tree lined avenue of houses at Grays in Thurrock, a large unitary authority which straddles the Thames Estuary. Houses were built in the early 1930's and the horse chestnut trees planted soon after are around 80 years old and huge. Past popularity of horse chestnuts as street trees has left a legacy of problems for arborists like Liz Wood, the tree officer at Thurrock Council. She has the unenviable task of trying to secure a future for as many of these trees as possible.

"At the end of day safety has to be my top priority," said Liz. "But felling and grinding out are the very last options. The only way for me to make a sound judgement on visible symptoms of disease, damage and stress is to investigate the internal structure of the wood using resistograph and tomograph tree survey systems."

And that is exactly what was happening in Bradleigh Avenue on a beautiful

A pair of English oaks defined as 'veterans' but not old enough to be classified as 'ancient trees'

morning, with the horse chestnut tree canopies clad in striking white and red blossom. Liz had called in Vince Cainey and Kim Dear from Atworth Arboriculture to internally survey 116 horse chestnut trees. Also on site were Alan Mitchell from Countryside and Thurrock's in house arborology team to remove low bearing shoots on the tree trunk, prior to surveying and any urgent remedial work.

Resistograph and tomograph survey systems

As I arrived, the team was focussed on a trio of red flowering horse chestnuts. At 150cm, 138cm and 137cm CBH – circumference at breast height – these sizable trees were the cause for some concern. This was due to 'burr' growth and symptoms indicative of *Pseudomonas syringae* pv. *aesculi* infection, including dried up rusty red ooze, severe bark cracking and advanced dieback in the canopy.

I watched on while Vince took his resistograph to one of the trees. This state-of-the-art instrument is an electronic drill, which detects and records resistance of the wood to passage of the drill and provides real-time readings on a digital display. The resistograph internal tree survey system has many advantages. It is lightweight, portable and provides real time data recording. But by drilling in just one plane, it is relatively easy to miss a pocket of decayed wood. Nevertheless, Vince located a 40cm void in the trunk.

Further down Bradleigh Avenue were much bigger white flowering horse chestnuts which had no external symptoms of disease. Nevertheless Vince and Kim would tomograph every tree, starting with a sturdy specimen 'weighing in' at a CBH of 220cm.

The specific tomograph used is a Picus, which provides a three dimensional picture of the inside of the tree, similar to a brain scan. Picus provides a highly-accurate picture of the internal structure, strength and integrity of trees without the invasiveness and destructive sampling of some other methods.

"This vital accessory uses trigonometry to rapidly plot the exact shape of the tree which otherwise would appear on the laptop screen as a perfect circle – which it clearly is not," said Vince, adding how the digital calliper represents the biggest advance in Picus technology since the year 2000.

With the measuring points and sonic sensors in position, Kim used the electronic hammer to obtain comparative information about the density of the wood.

Information collected as sonic waves was fed back into the computer to build up a detailed on-screen picture of the density of the wood, allowing a quantitative assessment of the tree's structural integrity.

It was good news for this white flowering horse chestnut and others nearby. They were all judged as sound, secure and not requiring any canopy reduction. But the news was not so good for the three red flowering horse chestnuts up the road, with two requiring significant reductions in canopy height and width and felling the only safe option for the third.

Liz said: "What we are essentially performing is a 'holding operation' by trying to keep what trees we have for as long as possible. We cannot be complacent with tree condition and we will continue to visually inspect the trees for any change in their condition."

As custodians of some of our largest, oldest and most important trees, and with dual commitments to ecology and safety, course managers and greenkeepers could benefit greatly from the internal surveying of trees.

By using resistograph and tomograph techniques to investigate structural integrity of the wood you are essentially paying for an insight into tree health, longevity and safety. Cost of purchasing the equipment is high and at £5,000 for a resistograph and over £25,000 for a tomograph, few golf clubs would be likely to purchase.

However, at £400 for a comprehensive internal tree survey by tomograph, complete with a full report, then calling in a reputable consulting arborist could turn out to be a good investment. It may avoid unnecessary work on an ecologically and aesthetically-valuable feature tree, which would almost certainly cost significantly more to fell with the stump ground out.

Conversely, if the internal tree survey reveals serious structural defects then a whole lot more would have been saved if serious damage was caused in the event of a subsequent tree failure.

Many consulting arborists now have the equipment, training and expertise to offer this service to golf courses.

TREE SURVEYS

'If you have a small budget, you can't make expensive mistakes'

Named among the most influential course architects in the world, Donald Steel is the only architect to have advised all the clubs or courses on which the Open has been played.

The former golfing journalist has designed hundreds of courses throughout the world and was elected president of the English Golf Union in 2006.

He is also the only writer or architect to have qualified for the Open – at St Andrews in 1970.

This month the 78-year-old is stepping down from the GTC chairman's position and he took the time to chat to Karl Hansell about how the needs of the greenkeeping team are vital when it comes to designing a course.

Do you work closely with greenkeepers when designing a course?

Clearly there's a great link between ar-

chitecture and maintenance. The two roles are separate, but if you don't design and build a course properly then it will be very difficult to maintain.

You have to put yourselves in their position, posing the question with everything I do - am I making it difficult for the greenkeeper to maintain?

As an architect, I had it drummed into me very early about the essential need for seeking expert technical advice. You do the design but you need an agronomist to supply the approval for what is planned and a detailed specification of how to proceed. The same applies to irrigation and drainage experts.

During the construction of a course you hope the greenkeeper has already been appointed as the comments and the feelings of the greenkeeper are of the greatest importance to any architect who cares to listen. I don't think any architect is qualified to know everything,

Terry Buchen
MG and Donald
Steel (right)

'I have always been interested and tried to understand the work of greenkeepers'

so that is the way to do it. But if it's a new course, sometimes the head greenkeeper or course manager hasn't been appointed so you can't get his opinion.

Have you always had respect for the work of greenkeepers?

Greenkeepers are a fantastic band of men and women, always willing to help when I need them.

They go out in all weathers, so on a lovely spring morning it is a very nice life, but it can be an abominable job on a dark winter's day when all they are

doing is bailing out after heavy rain.

Through the GTC and BIGGA, golfers and clubs are beginning to be made aware of the plight of greenkeepers in order to generate a better understanding and appreciation.

I have always been interested and tried to understand the work of greenkeepers. As a boy, we lent a hand in the school holidays to help the head greenkeeper at Denham aerate and topdress the greens with soot. As the only means of aeration was a hand fork, you probably only managed three greens in a year. Now, all 18 can be done in three days, with a few other operations into the bargain.

When you get in the architects' society, you realise the greenkeeping team can make or break the courses you build.

Who is more important in the success of a course, the designer

or the greenkeeper?

Architects are totally dependent upon greenkeepers. If a new course isn't well-presented, its reputation will take a nasty dent. My admiration for them, and that of the GTC, extends to a desire to see an elevation in their status within the world of golf. Things have changed from the days when greenkeepers weren't even allowed in the clubhouse to a position whereby they are regarded as the most important person in the club.

Are you thinking about maintenance when you design a course?

Absolutely. For example, I have never been an architect who believes in a lot of bunkers. Anyone can smack bunkers in here, there and everywhere, but you have to realise that the care of bunkers takes up a huge amount of a greenkeeper's time.

Around 25 per cent of work is on bunkers, not forgetting the cost of the sand, and so when you think about whether a course is top notch, stop and think, how much are they relying on bunkers for features at the course?

Do you advise greenkeepers on ways that they should try and look after your design?

In America, nobody argues with the superintendent and it's crazy when people want to interfere. I have never told a greenkeeper how to approach his course. In fact, I rely on them to tell me about irrigation, maintenance and care. In the end the maintenance is his responsibility as it is his course.

In my view the superintendent or head greenkeeper is entitled to say 'this is



The 10th green at Donald's Gomera in the Canary Islands

my course' as he gets to know it. Over time he learns which are the problem greens and the problem areas.

I still think his eyes and feet are the best measuring rods. They have all these gadgets, but to a good greenkeeper it's fairly obvious.

I have never said they should cut the greens lower, or things like that. They know much more about greenkeeping than I do.

What sort of relationship do you have with a course after construction is complete?

After a course is constructed, architects sometimes walk away and never go back although, in a remote location overseas, that is nothing unusual. The success of the course is then largely down to the greens team.

Sometimes they later start changing what you have done. Of course, a lot of changes are needed because the ball goes further and further and that means bunkers are in the wrong place.

Changes to the ball have caused the game a huge amount of cost and ex-

The 6th green at Donald's Victoria in Sri Lanka





pense, especially when you think that at 60 per cent of courses, there isn't room to add a yard. It means some really good clubs lost their championship status, which I believe is very unjust.

It seems many greenkeepers are getting more interested in designing and developing their own courses. Do you think this should be encouraged?

In every golfer there is always an architect trying to get out, so it's not surprising that a lot of greenkeepers fancy themselves as architects.

I find greenkeepers fall into two camps – those who love construction and those who hate it.

Jim Arthur, author of Golf Greenkeeping, always used to say 'I won't mess with the architecture if you don't mess with the agronomy'. It worked well but we both agreed the course should come first. It doesn't in some misguided clubs, but they forget that without the course, there wouldn't be a clubhouse. That message is unequivocal.

What changes have you seen in greenkeepers during your time within the golf industry?

The care of courses has improved out of all recognition over the last 30 years and golfers now expect the highest possible standards at all times.

We were brought up with hand push mowers and greenkeeping was hard work, no question. These days, you have machines performing the work of three or four men.

The other change is young men and women now happily make a career out of greenkeeping, rather than falling into it in later life.

I am particularly impressed by the new young generation of greenkeepers. Guys in their 20s, such as Michael Mann at Walton Heath and Ben Kebby at Temple, they are part of a new generation who have a desire to be well qualified and trained and they have gained a lot of experience at a young age.

I'm particularly impressed reading some of their reports that they send around their members to keep them updated on what's happening on the course. They are very well-written and it shows they are well-educated, with a thirst for learning.

The older generation of greenkeepers had years of experience but they were very slow and reluctant to pass on information, which means a lot of their secrets died with them. I learned by working alongside one or two of them, but now there is much more dialogue.

These days there is more of an exchange of ideas, which can only be good.

What is the biggest tip you would give greenkeepers who are looking to redesign or redevelop part of their course?

It depends how much authority the greenkeeper has to make changes. I think it's always good in life to have second opinions and I would encourage them to get expert advice. A lot of people may think they know about course design and the fact is it's not a

Donald's courses at Primlands in West Virginia

mystic art. It's basic common sense, with a degree of flair, but if you are in doubt I'd say get expert advice.

Then I would say be realistic with your expectations. There's a tendency to believe everything can be of championship status. It's not true, and only about 10 per cent of players are members at actual championship courses.

On a broader greenkeeping front, I am amazed at just how much a crew of six or seven people can accomplish on 125 acres, even with modern machinery.

When golfers see fit to be critical, that is worth bearing in mind.

Of the hundreds of courses you have designed, which would you say were your favourites?

As a player I have always liked the links courses, but I can appreciate courses of all types and characters. Everyone makes up their own mind about why they like a certain course, without having to explain why.

As an architect, if you are given a commission, you have to make the best of what you are given. I have been fortunate to build courses in remarkable, beautiful settings. I like beautiful surroundings, but you can't always pick and choose.

I am always rather proud of what I have done and what I can achieve depends on how much money I have been given. If you have a bottomless purse you can obviously deliver a lot more, but our older generation was brought up to build courses for as little as possible.

Architects rightly take simple pride in all their achievements. Unless you know what a piece of land was like before it was converted for golf, and unless you know how much money they had to do what they did, you can not judge fairly.

Money enables a lot of courses to be built in out of the way places that couldn't have been built 50 or 100 years ago, but the pioneering generation of architects were brought up to build courses for as little as possible – and they were very good at it. To quote Jim Arthur again, he remarked, 'If you only have a low budget, you can't make expensive mistakes'. ■



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How to influence committees... and golfers

with Michael Astrop

Michael Astrop of Coach the Mind has made a career out of effective communication.

In this feature he explains how an effective communications strategy can help protect your workforce and budget.

Influencing is about moving things forward without forcing others to do what you want.

All too often, if you seek to influence people through bullying or coercion you will not succeed in winning their support – and their lasting impression of you is likely to be negative.

Greenkeepers are fortunate when it comes to influencing their committees and members because they usually know them well. They can therefore prepare strategies to overcome the beliefs they think members hold.

A good influencer knows as much as possible about those that are being influenced and uses that knowledge to position the argument to take advantage of that knowledge.

‘Knowing when to ask for a decision can be critical’

Influencing when dealing with committees has to take into account the issue of power, which comes from the ability to influence because of position.

So remember, they have the budget but we have the expertise.

Start as you mean to go on

It is important to look and sound confident in what you are saying, because we are all influenced in some way by other people's behavior. Always look and sound the part.

Some words are more potent than others. The way you shape your message can affect the response you get. Here are some powerful winning words – put them into your conversation and

notice their effect on others: security; new; enjoy; safety; best; save; guaranteed; evidence; convenient; reliable; research; easy; tested; logical; trouble free; proven; fun; inexpensive; unique.

Much influence can be lost or dissipated in the first few sentences. With careful thought and rehearsal you can set the climate, elicit responses and identify a need within the opening gambit.

The other most vital thing is to plan what you are going to say and why the members should be convinced by your argument. Ask yourself the question: “If I was that member or members would this argument convince me?” In other words try and see it from the other party's point of view.

What makes people say yes?

When we agree to a proposal, it is because there is something in it for us. It is hard to influence people who can not see what is in it for them. Sounds one sided, but it is true. Call it self-interest, greed, selfishness or whatever.

Most people do not agree whole-heart-

edly with an idea. There is usually something that niggles, however well you've addressed their concerns, so in the end, when they finally say 'yes' to a proposal, it is because the benefits outweigh any disadvantages.

As you plan and prepare your influencing case, list all the benefits and advantages of your suggestions. We have all got one thing in common – wanting the best for the club and the course – which we can use to tip the balance in favour of a 'yes'.

Handling resistance to a proposition

To handle resistance to your ideas and influence, you will first need to pinpoint exactly why there is an objection. Typically, people object or resist because they:

- Do not understand your proposal
- Misunderstand it
- Do not feel a need to go ahead
- Do not recognise the potential benefits and advantages
- Do not believe your claims
- Are happy to remain as they are
- Need time to think things through
- Do not trust you
- Display general inertia

All resistance needs to be taken seriously but it can be very frustrating. You are anxious to get on with things and it is hard to see why others are stonewalling. This is the moment to back off and take stock and then to:

1. Listen carefully to what they are saying to you
2. Watch their body language – does it contain any hidden messages?
3. Step into their shoes; try to see things from their point of view
4. Consider what would have to happen for you to be convinced?
5. Plan your responses carefully
6. Take time to construct carefully thought through responses
7. Check that you have provided acceptable responses to any doubts and fears they have
8. Seek areas of agreement and stress them. Minimise areas of disagreement between you

Getting a decision - why is it necessary?

Unless the person you are influencing

offers an unconditional 'yes' to your proposals, you will need to do or say something that will generate a positive decision. Here are two steps you can take towards getting a decision:

1. Ask yourself, 'How does this person normally go about making decisions?' Some people take their time to decide, others are happy to make snap decisions. You can sometimes push the latter, but will need to tread carefully with the former.
2. Have a variety of ways in which you can stimulate a decision.

The signposts to a decision

Knowing when to ask for a decision can be critical. Ask too soon and you may frighten the other person off. Ask too late and you may miss your best chance. Watch for signals that suggest the other person is ready to decide:

- Leaning forward, seeming more interested and involved
- Head up, good eye contact
- Stroking chin thoughtfully
- Nodding or smiling in agreement with you
- Upward inflection in voice tone
- Requesting more information
- Asking you to repeat some points you made earlier
- Making notes
- Asking questions such as 'what if ..' or 'suppose ...'

- Checking guarantees, support, follow-up plans
- Picking up your written proposal and double checking aspects
- Discussing implementation details

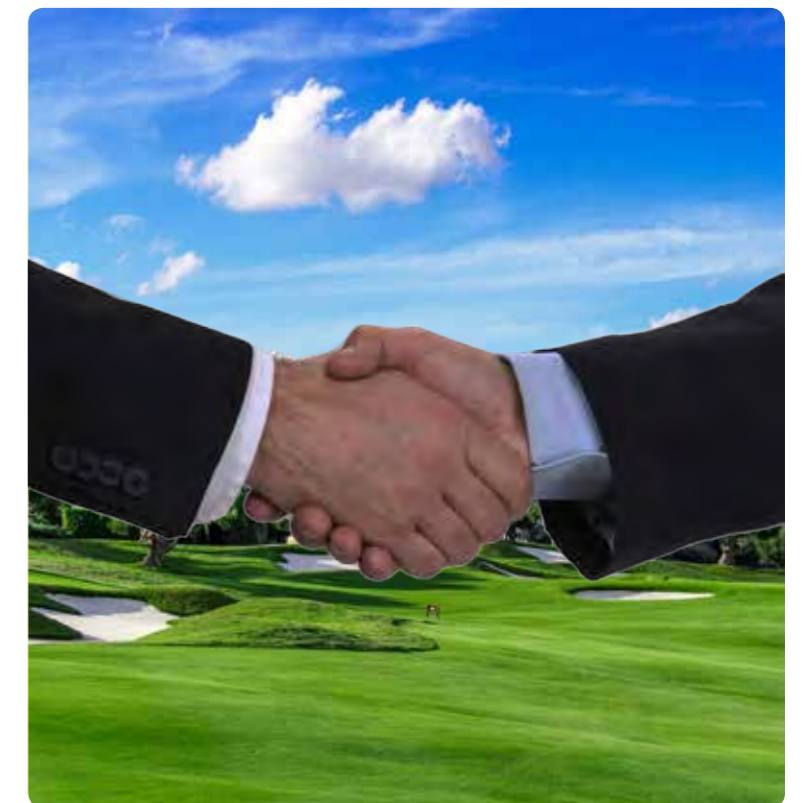
A good way of avoiding a decision is to say 'I want to think about it'. Sometimes people do want time to think things through. But, very often, this can be an excuse or a put-off. Ask, 'What exactly do you want to think through?' Whatever you do - don't pause here. 'Is it the implementation schedule? Is it the bottom line? Is it the timing?'

Once you have isolated the real reason, you are much better placed to respond to them.

If you are going for yes, ask: 'If you agree, shall we go ahead right away?' If the answer is no, ask: 'What's preventing you from going ahead?'

Another way to get a decision is to ask people to make a decision about a relatively unimportant aspect of the proposal. If they give the go-ahead, the assumption is that they agree to the whole idea.

'Where do you want your logo to appear – at the top of the form or do you think it would look better bottom right?' 'By the way, how do you intend to resource the project?' 'How should we deal with the front



Hallamshire GC



nine holes?’

Five easy steps to influencing

Or you may find the question or statement works well with those who need a continuous nudge towards decisions.

Examples include: ‘After we start I assume you’ll want a monthly update?’ and ‘You’ll notice significant improvements immediately after we start.’

Whatever way you choose, all committees need a nudge towards a decision. You may do the greatest presentation ever and if you do not directly ask for a decision it will all be wasted.

Rehearse, rehearse, rehearse

The value of rehearsing complex influencing situations cannot be over emphasised, so here is a 10 step plan:

1. Know your objectives
2. Find a suitable partner to rehearse with
3. If possible, rehearse in the actual location where you will be doing it for real
4. Brief your partner thoroughly
5. Practice one run through
6. Discuss the outcome and agree on any changes
7. Do a second run through
8. Discuss the outcome
9. Repeat as often as needed but a minimum of three times
10. Go in to the actual scenario with great confidence

The other vital thing to do in rehearsal is to think of all the questions you do not want asked and then work out what your answers would be.

Here are the five main steps to effective influential communication. Make this pattern second nature, leaving you to concentrate on the detail.

1. Gain Rapport
Be on their level; recognise their beliefs and values; match their behaviour patterns and blend your personality characteristics with theirs.
2. Ask questions
Elicit needs and different responses; probe to identify their motives, attitudes and feelings.
3. Listen actively
Demonstrate that you are listening; listen with all your senses; suspend judgement.
4. Stress pertinent benefits
Summarise how specific benefits of your proposal accurately reflect their needs.
5. Work towards a decision
Ask questions which will force a decision, or rejection; test interest through hypothetical questions; make positive statements which assume their acceptance.

Finally - a recipe for successful influencing and communication

Ingredients: trust, openness, comfort, acceptance, empathy, flexibility, something in common, understanding.

Method: Mix together the ingredients as required. Notice changes and be prepared to maintain a flexible approach throughout. Keep the communication flowing on all levels.

Gordon Brammah at Hallamshire



Gordon Brammah has been at Hallamshire, near Sheffield, for 33 years. He turns 62 in July and is course manager, but in his own words, he has never seen the course looking quite so good.

When Gordon joined, there was no desk in his office. There were no workshop manuals and there wasn’t even a dedicated greenkeeping budget.

But conditions have improved for the greens team. The excellent condition of the course has played a major part in that, but Gordon’s efforts to communicate with the members have also made a huge impression.

“You have got to start somewhere,” said Gordon, whose early forays into member communication began with a handwritten monthly bulletin, posted up in the clubhouse.

Gordon began his greenkeeping career at Hillsborough under the guidance of Henry Gillespie. He said: “Henry taught me how to be a greenkeeper and he had a very approachable and professional attitude, so I will always be grateful for that grounding he gave me.

“He used to say ‘this is not your course and it never will be. It’s the members’ course so you can’t just do whatever you think. But at the same time, you are employed for your skills and you have to do the best you can’.

“This is what communication is about – you are proving to the members that you are not just a grass cutter and that you know more than they do when it comes to managing the course. It’s not blowing your own trumpet, but telling them what you will be doing and why.”

After years of handwritten notices, Gordon got a typewriter, and he has now progressed on to a computer. Each month he emails a bulletin to every member, explaining what’s going on around the course.

It’s a simple gesture, but one that has a number of benefits. Members become more engaged in their course, while they are also less likely to complain about playing surfaces if they are aware in advance that a disruption will be taking place.

Gordon added: “Don’t be afraid to put in costs and things such as man hours, such as how long it takes to hand mow the greens. That’s an interesting fact that will lodge into their brain and they will tell their mates. Before you know it, you have got your point over.

“I hope the members here have learnt to trust me and the decisions I make, that I am not going to run roughshod or trash the course.

“When the bulletin was pinned up in the clubhouse, unless you were walking to the toilet, you never saw it. Now it goes out to every member and that teaches you to be more professional.”

Hallamshire is a successful course, due in no small part to the hard work of Gordon and his team, but he is keen to impress that greenkeepers at struggling courses should be just as proac-



Gordon and Alex Fitpatrick, brother of European Tour professional Matt

tive when it comes to communicating with members.

“I get that many people are hard pressed for time, but the benefits of communicating with members are worthwhile,” he said. “It hurts when things aren’t going great and I feel for those guys who don’t have the backing of the board and the members. But by being better communicators, you can start to get them on your side.”

And effective communication isn’t just in the form of bulletins. Twitter can be used to provide up-to-the-minute course condition updates, while considerate responses to emails – even if

they are complaints – can change the opinions of disgruntled members.

The general demeanor of the team is also a vital tool, and Gordon said: “We are seen as a team. If one of you is rude or evasive, we all get linked together. I will look after the team as well as I can, by fighting their corner when it comes to wages, working conditions and how they are treated, but I do ask for some things in return.

“One of those things is for them to do their job as best they can and to be professional. Communication isn’t just a bulletin, it’s how you conduct yourself around the course.”

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Guaranteed microdochium patch control

with the Bayer Turf Solutions Team



Nine out of 10 courses in the UK will be hit by one of the most damaging and disfiguring fungal diseases to attack fine turf during the year.

Good management techniques can go a long way towards minimising the effect of Microdochium patch, commonly referred to as Fusarium, but historically the number of programmes that have been able to guarantee control on greens has been limited.

However, BIGGA partner Bayer has

announced the launch of a programme, which assures full control of this infection for the first time.

Neil Pettican, from the Bayer Turf Solutions Team, said the programme has been specifically developed to guarantee Microdochium patch control between September and December.

He said: "This programme has been designed to help greenkeepers by giving them a planned approach to disease management and aims to preventatively 'power-up' turf so it's in optimum

health and better able to deal with the threat of disease.

"The greenkeepers' primary goal is getting the course ready for play and this has never been more important in an increasingly competitive environment - where customer expectations are high and turf quality and playability is key to retaining members."

Neil added that chemistry shouldn't be the first port of call and, if combined with cultural and biological controls as part of an integrated approach, the con-

trol programme is the best approach to Microdochium patch prevention.

Disease control guaranteed

The preventative treatment package ensures rotation of three different chemical classes, ensuring the resistance management is maximised. The package includes three different fungicides that are applied in 28 day intervals. The fungicides are Interface with Stressgard Formulation Technology, Dedicate Chipco Green and Interface again at the end.



Colin Mumford, Bayer technical manager, said: "The programme includes four products and appropriate application rates - all products are applied at the full rate - and this is important.

If you want the disease to be treated then the full rate has to be employed, it's no good thinking that the disease 'isn't too bad' - and applying product at half-rate, for instance. This will only encourage resistance.

"The programme doesn't have the ability to forecast weather, but trials have proven its value under all weather scenarios and each application complements the previous one. Also, the detailed guidelines are completely compliant with regulation - as you would expect."

Treatments

September treatment one: the first application is Interface with Stressgard Formulation Technology, which is a turf specific formulation that delivers disease control and lasting protection against six key turf diseases, but it also has a dual mode of action and has been proven to enhance plant health. It is the ideal preventative treatment to apply in September, ensuring turf is 'powered-up' and healthy at the start of the disease outbreak season.

October treatment two: this is followed by a Dedicate application 28 days later, which has a systemic action and is transferred through the plant tissue while it's still growing, which is typical during October.

November treatment three: the third treatment utilises the tried and trusted Chipco Green, breaking up the trifloxystrobin applications, as you can only apply four strobilurins per year on turf and can only make two consecutive ap-

plications - maintaining the appropriate resistance management protocols.

December treatment four: Interface is applied again as it has efficacy in even the coldest conditions and when grass is not growing - and it promotes turf health - also key at this time of year.

According to Colin, the programme not only means applications are in line with resistance management protocols but it has been designed to give greenkeepers peace of mind. The preventative approach will save money and time.

He said: "Reactive treatments can have huge ramifications if, for instance, there is a disease outbreak which is accompanied by a lot of rainfall, inhibiting the ability to spray. If scarring occurs from an outbreak, this can last well into the following season, until grass starts growing again."

Included in the programme is complete advice and support from the Bayer Turf Solutions Team, who offer guidance on applications and the employment of cultural and biological controls.

Colin added: "All golf courses are completely different and in a perfect world all golf courses would be 'links' style courses, where ideal conditions are commonplace. This is good airflow, uninterrupted sunlight, free draining soil, no shade and finer grass species better able to withstand disease.

"The reality is most courses don't have these conditions and in-land courses often have issues such as shade from surrounding trees and lack of airflow.

"The key is to replicate the ideal conditions as much as possible. This can be achieved with a combined cultural, biological and chemical approach."

Top right: Neil Pettican, Bayer

Fusarium - turf strongly affected in conducive weather

Colin Mumford, Bayer

Colin Mumford's top three tips for cultural control measures:

1) Ensure adequate moisture and nutrition

The issue: Applying too much water and fertiliser creates a 'grass factory', causing grass to grow too fast and leading to the formation of excess organic matter, often referred to as thatch.

Thatch can have a detrimental effect on surface performance characteristics (soft surfaces) and can create the perfect conditions for disease to thrive.

The advice: Avoid the temptation to apply nitrogen when it's not required. One way to do this is to monitor the amount of clippings being removed during mowing events - this should give a good visual indication of plant nutrition needs. Employ the use of soil moisture meters to find the correct level of moisture for the environment and plan irrigation accordingly.

2) Thatch reduction

The issue: Thatch at or near the surface doesn't break down easily because it contains lignin and cellulose, which are important structural materials. The accumulation of thatch acts like a sponge and absorbs moisture, providing the damp conditions that can enable diseases to flourish.

Advice: Remove thatch by verti-cutting or scarifying, such as physically removing excess organic matter, as well as top dressing to dilute any thatch build up.

Carry out aeration, specifically hollow tining - which also physically removes organic matter - which also improves gaseous exchange (CO₂ out, O₂ in) among other things.

3) Keeping the surface as dry as possible

The issue: The longer dew is left on a surface, the longer the pathogens have to develop in optimum conditions.

Advice: Remove dew as soon as possible, whether the preferred method be switching or brushing. Typically during the disease risk season, mowing will be taking place each day, and generally, removing dew before mowing can also have the added benefit of ensuring a better quality of cut.

The biological approach to pest and

disease management is becoming increasingly employed as part of an integrated approach, and Colin has three top tips to consider to complement a disease prevention programme.

Colin's top three tips for successful biological control:

1) Introducing new grass varieties

Although this may be seen as a cultural control, Colin argues it is a living organism and therefore forms part of the biological approach. Introducing new varieties that are bred to be more tolerant to disease should be considered for overseeding. The Turfgrass Seed 2016 guide includes a number of options that are tailored to specific needs, such as shoot density, disease resistance, winter greenness and summer greenness. And for specific advice it is important to contact your agronomist or seed breeder and supplier.

2) Microbial inoculants

The rootzone will have a microbial community to some extent, depending on the make-up of the rootzone. The ideal rootzone would have more antagonists (good guys) than pathogens (bad guys). Introducing a microbial inoculant can bolster the population of antagonists, and potentially benefit turf health. Microbiological populations and diversity can also aid thatch breakdown and disease mitigation.

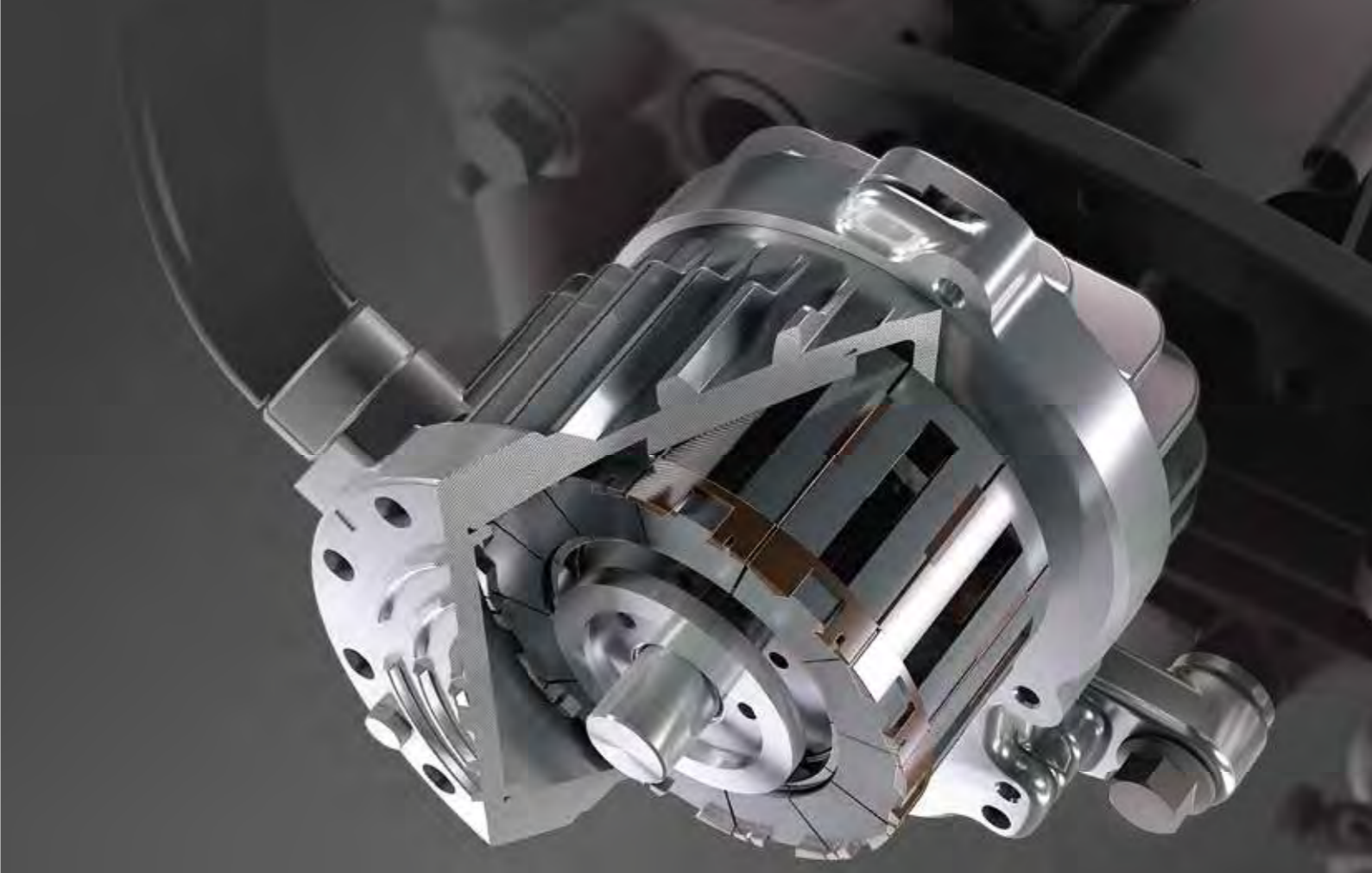
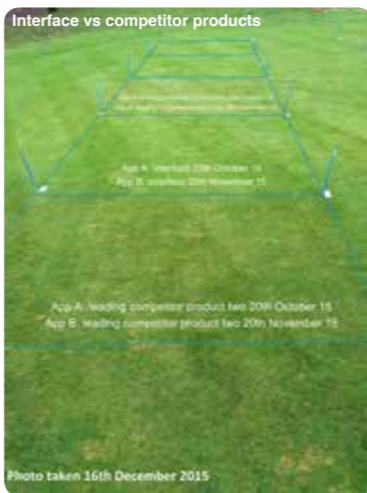
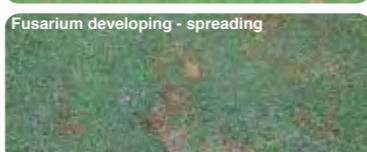
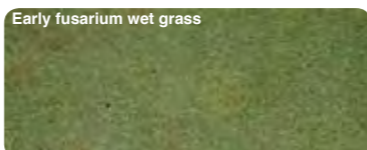
3) Biological products

Natural enemies of insect pests, also known as biological control agents, include predators, parasitoids, and pathogens. Biological control agents of plant diseases are most often referred to as antagonists. It is important to keep your ears to the ground on industry developments. In the agricultural and horticultural industries, biologicals are increasingly prevalent.

The Microdochium patch programme has been developed to deliver optimum Microdochium patch control from 1 September 2016 through to 31 December 2016 as part of an integrated approach with full support from the Bayer Turf Solutions Team on all cultural, biological and chemical processes.

Get in touch

Contact the Bayer Turf Solutions Team for more information or to discuss your requirements via turfsolutions@bayer.com or 00800 1214 9451. ■



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Television cameras focus in on Mid-Herts



How did Mid-Herts Golf Club find its way onto one of the UK's most popular television shows?

James Hutchinson, BIGGA's sustainability executive, recently visited Mid Herts to meet the team that is taking the green-keeping industry outside of its traditionally closed doors and into the masses.

Nestled off the B651 road into Wheathampstead is an extraordinary course with great history and one or two stories to tell us about. The course was designed in 1892 by five times Open champion James Braid and can best be described as a lowland heath with acid grasslands.

Its small greens are guarded by traditional tussocky hollows, which were a characteristic of Braid's designs, whereas there are many trees onsite, adding to the aesthetic nature of the course.

The team, led by Course Manager Jody Wilson, is in the process of reinstating the

course back to its original character.

Heather reinvigoration, woodland and rare fauna management, wildlife encouragement and the use of renewable energy are some of the projects that can be found at the club.

The hard work has gained such positive attention they were visited by a BBC television crew filming one of the country's longest-running series, Countryfile.

Woodland management and tree removal has revealed an interesting organism in the shape of juniper bushes. This shrub grows sweet-smelling berries but is in decline across the UK. However, it is growing contently alongside patches of heather and fescues on the course.

Here are a few facts about juniper: Juniper is dioecious, which means that it is either male or female, unlike most tree species. Juniper dates back 10,000 years and

The Countryfile and Mid-Herts team

'The club's hard work has gained such positive attention they were even visited by a BBC television crew filming one of the country's longest-running series, Countryfile'

was one of the first tree species to colonise the UK after the last Ice Age. The aromatic berries take three years to ripen and are prized for the flavour they impart to gin. It can take at least seven years for juniper to reach a height

of 20 cm. While they are so small, they are vulnerable to being eaten by animals, such as sheep, deer, rabbits and voles. A law was introduced in the 19th Century to outlaw unlicensed whisky stills. Juniper wood burns with an almost invisible smoke, so large tracts of juniper were harvested to fuel this illicit trade.

Formerly common in Britain, many of juniper's large population areas have shrunk, and small ones have almost disappeared.

The course at Mid-Herts is now the only place in Hertfordshire where this stunning but spiny plant grows and the team are doing all they can to sustain the population.

Other proactive and sustainable projects the team is undertaking are rainwater harvesting and the installation of solar panels on the clubhouse and maintenance facility. Further grassland controlling includes thinning the rough to encourage fescues, bents and native wildflowers.

One of the most exciting projects is the amount of nest boxes. There are 96 boxes onsite with all of them in use. Jody said members of the tit family use most and these boxes are a great way to visibly highlight the environmental work which is being carried out on the course.

Then there's the small matter of the BBC's Countryfile, which airs to approximately 7 million viewers each week.

Jody explained how a chain of events led to the producers choosing to visit Mid-Herts, starting a decade ago when Jody took up the course manager post. Jody realised there was potential to restore heather to the site, as this small perennial was once abundant across the course.

Unfortunately, during the 70's and due to the acidic nature of the site, a programme of liming was undertaken. This reduced the heather to just a few small pockets in the woodland. Jody and the team set about restoring small patches and with the guidance of Hankley Common Course Manager Gareth Roberts, began stripping turf from areas known to have once held a good amount of heather. They then spread out the seeds and brashings, purchased from Hankley Common, and waited patiently.

During the waiting period, the team began the long process of returning the acid grasslands back to their former glory. A programme of rough cutting, scarification then grass and leaf collecting was started.

The team's hard work and perseverance has paid off with the rough now dominated by wispy fescues.

Jody said the roughs have improved dramatically and a number of discreet wildflowers, such as the beautiful green alkanet, now inhabit these areas.



Jody Wilson and Ellie Harrison leaf blowing

Back to the heather, and Jody added: "We had some success with the heather seed and brashings and due to our intense leaf clearing we found heather was naturally occurring in the rough and woods."

It was at that point the club decided to ask for outside assistance from the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, who were impressed with what the greens team had achieved on the heather and acid grassland front. I'm not surprised they were impressed as heather and heathland courses are in decline throughout the UK and should be protected.

As a consequence, the wildlife trust was employed to develop an environmental management plan to assist the team. The plan has paid off, with many areas of the course being dominated by the striking purple-coloured heather plant.

But it must be said, lots of hard work went into restoring the course and it didn't just happen overnight. The team, in my opinion, worked tirelessly in their aim to restore the course back to its original heathland characteristics.

Here's when Countryfile got in touch, as Jody explained: "The BBC approached the Herts and Middlesex trust as they were

Mid-Herts team





doing a programme on Hertfordshire and asked if they would recommend anyone about the work that had been done on a conservation level. Luckily for us, the trust chose Mid-Herts.

Filming took five hours of shooting for just a six-minute slot. Jody said: "Although a short piece, it was a real positive for the club and the golf course industry," and I agree with him.

On a personal note, two of the Mid-Herts team are having success in other areas.



Liam Irons has been selected to represent Team GB in the 2016 Paralympic Games, as featured in the Newsdesk section of this month's magazine, while Ben Croft has embarked on a journey of a different nature. The deputy course manager, Ben has joined BIGGA's Future Turf Manager's Initiative.

Countryfile filming

Juniper berries



He said: "I applied for the future turf manager's initiative as I knew it would be a valuable learning experience to help me become a course manager. I realised the three days of learning would be intense and take me out of my comfort zone, so I

wanted to test myself. "It was a great experience and I learnt so much, not just from the sessions, but also from the mentors. All of the candidates were very welcoming to each other and we

made great contacts for the future. I feel privileged to have been selected and would recommend this initiative to any ambitious greenkeeper who wants to test themselves and gain valuable experience"

Green alkanet at Mid-Herts



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Whether counteracting over liming, herbicides, the altering of the power of hydrogen in the past, it is always a treat to see successful environmental management being carried out by a proactive greens team.

Mid-Herts' heather is flourishing, the wildlife is plentiful and the greenkeeping team are working wonders, not only on the course but also in their personal lives – great work team. ■



BIGGA SCOTTISH REGION



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AROUND THE GREEN SCOTLAND & NORTHERN IRELAND

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

Central

Some funny weather we are getting this year again and recently it has been wet, dry, wet, dry.

All courses have been or are in the middle of a busy time for tournaments, with competitions and other major events going on around the country. I nipped through next door to Panmure to watch the Open Regional Qualifying, where Gary and his team had the course looking great.

A busy schedule of events coming up includes the Scottish Open at Castle Stuart, the Open at Royal Troon, the Seniors Open at Carnoustie, Ladies Scottish Open at Dundonald and finally the Paul Lawrie Matchplay at Archerfield.

Good luck to all involved.

In the Pairs competition we move in to the fourth round of matches. Things are heating up.

The section had a course walk hosted by Owen Brown at Kingarrock hickory golf course. Kingarrock's hickory golf heritage stretches back to 1904 when wealthy jute magnate Frederick Sharp first brought his family across the Tay to the National Trust for Scotland's Hill of Tarvit mansion house, attracted by the house's proximity to St Andrews' Royal and Ancient Golf Club.

Sharp soon set about designing a nine-hole course on the house's front lawn, which proved a popular fixture with golfers for many years. The site's great golfing heritage was finally revived in the 1990s when National Trust for Scotland staff discovered a 1924 map of the old course.

Enthused by this discovery, David Anderson and family decided to bring hickory golf back to Hill of Tarvit, restoring the old course to its former glory and making numerous improvements to make it fully suitable for modern players, finally re-opening the course after a 70-year hiatus in June 2008.

On the course, greens and collars are hand-cut, while fairways and tees are carefully mowed using authentic 1920s-style trailed gangs. No fertilisers or artificial irrigation are used anywhere on the course, which provides a more natural, less manicured feel than most other courses.

Kingarrock offers an impressive level of diversity, with wildflowers including Marsh Orchid, Lady's Bedstraw, Cuckooflower and Ox-eye Daisy spreading across the course.



Section News

Please email your news to karl@bigga.co.uk by the 16th of the month



Thank you Owen for showing the section around.

With Paul Armour leaving for Dunbar, St Andrews had a switch around in staff to cover the position he left. Grahame Taylor moves from course supervisor on the New to the same position on the Old. Phil Hind is the new supervisor on the New and Jubilee courses, having previously been greenkeeper on the Old. Craig Wilson has been appointed as our new irrigation technician, responsible for all irrigation matters over the seven courses. Craig was previously course supervisor on the Eden and Strathtyrum and his role has been taken by Craig Berry, who was greenkeeper on the old.

Please get in touch if you have any additional news.

SW Scotland

South west Scotland is an exciting place to be at the moment. Turnberry has just opened and the

Open is here. Good luck to Turnberry and everyone else in the section for the upcoming season. Thanks to everyone at Troon for keeping us posted on your preparation and best of luck to everyone involved in the 145th Open.

This year's AGM has had a facelift - I'm proud to announce our section will host a SWS conference which will include the AGM at Irvine on 27 October. Non-members are welcome, so please pass on details to colleagues and friends.

I was honoured to attend the recent Greenlinks launch, which is the new sustainable programme that will be adopted to all Open venues. Philip Russel of the R&A, Jonathan Smith GEO, Johnny Cole Hamilton R&A and David Brown of Royal Troon gave a brilliant insight into sustainable management within golf.

Thank you to Steve Isaac and Wendy Cole from the R&A for organising an excellent event and best of luck with the programme.



As always, please keep in touch with your news and photos.

Happy summer folks.

East

Some of us from the East section were lucky enough to join up with Central section for a visit to Kingarrock for a course walk and presentation on the ideas behind maintaining the course in a fashion similar to that of the 1920s and to sample the hickory golf itself.

It was interesting to see and hear about the various methods used, from using Yellow Rattle to thin out the sward to using Hebridian sheep as grazers to control the roughs. The golf was a blast and fun on a dreich day. Thank you to the Central section for inviting us along and many thanks to head greenkeeper Owen Brown.

Good luck to the team at Royal Troon for the Open - the course looks great from what has been seen in various media and I hope the support team don't get too many bunkers to rake.

Nominations are now being accepted for the Patrons award 2016. Once again, more information is available on the website.

If you have anything of interest or suggestions of what you would like to see on the East sections pages on the website, please let anyone on the committee know.

We would especially like links to clubs or personal blogs if the owner is happy to share - don't be shy.

Upcoming events

The Willie Woods Trophy will take

place at Eyemouth on Thursday 18 August. Entry forms are available on the Scottish region website, follow the links to East sections golf events.

North

Just a reminder to all to make sure all your membership details are up to date, including any change of email address - all our correspondence will now come through by email, including entry forms and educational fliers.

We wish all at Castle Stuart the very best for the up and coming Scottish Open and really hope the weather is good for you all.

Also at the end of July, Royal Aberdeen are hosting the Scottish Amateur Championship. So once again, good luck for the lead up to the event and the event itself.

An irrigation seminar was held at Royal Aberdeen at the end of May with a very good turnout of 45 people. We all found the seminar very useful and I am sure we all went away with some very beneficial information to take back to our own courses. I would like to thank Callum Chalmers and Robert Pattinson for passing on their expertise.

Anyone who attended the seminar and requires their CPD codes please contact us on bigganorth-section@outlook.com and it will be emailed to you.

Our very own Paul Sharp has been putting all the practice of catching salmon out of bunkers to very good use. He recently took part in a national fly fishing competition, where he was top rod. So Paul and his team mates have qualified for the international championship.



BIGGA NORTHERN REGION



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AROUND THE GREEN

NORTHERN

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

Cleveland

Another quiet month for news in the Cleveland section, so I can only assume everyone is like me and snowed under - I wish - with keeping the course in tip top condition.

It is nice to see Brendan Brown has finished his man cave/shed and supplied me with some very nice pictures. I'm still waiting for my invite to officially open it.



Rumour has it ITV are relaunching 'Wish You Were Here' with Ian Pemberton favourite to scoop the hosting job.

This month has been tough at Richmond, with the wet and warm weather just about perfect for growing grass. I remember, mid-way through the winter, thinking 'I can't wait to start shaping the course up and doing some greenkeeping'.

Right now I'm just about fed up of chomping through the fairways and rough - it seems endless - not to mention the growth on the greens. A slow start to spring then boom - PGR's out, verti-cutting, grooming and still it grew.

Cue the mumbblings from the old timers, saying "greens are a bit slow". Perhaps now would be a good time to bring up that I need a new turf iron and two more men please.

I know I'm not alone out there

and we are all in the same boat this time of year. But it's because of these testing times that I love greenkeeping so much. Seeing the results of all your hard work at the end of the week makes it all worthwhile.

Northern

What a year it has been so far. First the start of the season, which was cold, dry and with no growth. Then it was followed by just enough days to get the shorts

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Sponsor thanks

Thanks again to Rigby Taylor and Cheshire Turf Machinery.

Thanks to Balmers GM and Greensman for sponsoring the event at Garforth.

Thanks also to any sponsors who have supported the Northern section.

North Wales

There is not a huge amount to report this month, with no golf day and the cricket match being cancelled. Hopefully, by the time the next Around the Green is released we will have a bit more to talk about, like who won Euro 2016 and the Open at Royal Troon.

I can report that Luke Williams, formerly at Wrexham and Carden Park, has been appointed as head greenkeeper at Flint. We wish him all well in his new venture.

At my own place of worship/work we have been blessed with a rare commodity in this industry - a lady greenkeeper. Chloe Seville has started with us at Upton by Chester on an apprenticeship and I am looking forward to see how she develops in the role.

Upcoming events

Thursday 8 September: autumn golf competition at Leasowe.

Friday 23 September: North Wales vs South Wales at Borth and Ynyslas.

Thursday 24 November: winter golf competition and AGM at Wrexham.

Sponsor thanks

Thank you to our sponsors and patrons for your continued support: Symbo, Rigby Taylor, MG Turfcare, North Staffs Irrigation, Germinal, Bathgate, Campy Turfcare Systems, Sheriff Amen-

ity, ICL, Turner Groundscare, David Williams Golf Design, Cheshire Turf Machinery, Farmura and Alturf.

Sheffield

On 26 May we had our spring competition at Wath, where we received a warm reception.

The course was in incredible condition after the amount of rain they had, so thank you to Dean and his team. It was a decent turn out with a few new faces and the lads from Bondhay coming out on top.

Well done to Paul Hobson, just edging past Paul Bracey on count-back on 34 points.

Upcoming events

Our summer competition will be held at Chesterfield on 21 July. First tee off is at 1.30pm and the event is medal format. Hopefully it will be a good turn out with more new faces attending.

Sponsor thanks

Thank you to Russell's groundcare for sponsoring this event and their continued support of our section.

Also thanks to Nic Blesic for kindly sending us a bottle of whiskey for our raffle.



New Members

Scotland & Northern Ireland

Brian McKendrick
Brian Revell
Callum Forsyth
Thomas Love
Richard McCormack
Adam Henderson

CM - Craigiellaw
GK - St Andrews Links Trust
GK - Nairn
GK - Glenbervie
Student - SRUC (Elmwood)
AGK - Largs

Key

CM - Course Manager
DCM - Deputy Course Manager
HGK - Head Greenkeeper
DHGK - Deputy Head Greenkeeper
GK - Greenkeeper
AGK - Assistant Greenkeeper

Midland

Alan Percival
David Boulton
David King
Henry Bowden

Affiliate - Astbury
GK - Evesham
GK - St Ives
AGK - Bearwood Lakes

Northern

Michael Seaton
Jon Irvine
Richard Smith
Thomas Jacques
Liam Smith
Anthony Holmes
David Lynam
Graham Gilson
Lee Lewis
Wayne Poole

Affiliate - Baileys of Norfolk
CM - Designation
GK - Immingham
GK - Ashton & Lea
AGK - Drax
AGK - Garforth
AGK - Chesterfield
AGK - Drax
AGK - Wrexham
AGK - Birley Wood

South West and South Wales

Ryan Ekers
Alfie Higgins
Gareth Thomas
James Morel
Liam Earl
Matthew Vidler

GK - Torquay
AGK - Perranporth
AGK - Southerndown
AGK - Broadstone
AGK - Remedy Oak
AGK - Bigbury

South East

Lewis Whybrow
Liam Sinclair
Philip Bennett
Sam Nunn
Elliott May
Chris Browett
James Hyman
Jay Campbell-Waggott
Jay Thompson
Stanley Murphy
Ben Bradham
George Lewinski
Matthew Lindsey
Michael Elderfield
Plum Sweet
Sean Lambert

GK - St George's Hill
GK - Horam Park
GK - West Sussex
HGK - Southwold
Student - Merrist Wood College
AGK - The Richmond
AGK - Silvermere
AGK - Kingswood
AGK - The Richmond
AGK - Ealing
AGK - Haverhill
AGK - Cuddington
AGK - Highwoods
AGK - Sandy Lodge
AGK - Southwold
AGK - The Rayleigh

International

David Callanan

International member - Beechpark



BIGGA SOUTH WEST & SOUTH WALES REGION



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DEVON & CORNWALL
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SOUTH WALES
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Section News

Please email your news to karl@bigga.co.uk by the 16th of the month

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Email to karl@bigga.co.uk

letting us know your name and the location of the pic

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AROUND THE GREEN SOUTH WEST & SOUTH WALES

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

South West

As mentioned in previous columns, the section will be sponsoring two places to the BIGGA national championship, being held this year at Bowood. In order to qualify for a chance at winning a sponsored position at the nationals you will need to qualify through the South West summer tournament being held at Mendip Spring on 6 September.

Don't forget we have the facility to accept BACS payment for golf days and seminar events, primarily to help our team of section volunteers keep up the great work they do in organising our events.

Upcoming events

As this column goes to print we should have a result from our annual match against golf club secretaries and South Wales BIGGA - fingers crossed for a South West victory.

8 July will see our par 3 competition and barbecue being held at Thornbury. This should be a great afternoon with tee times from 3pm and the BBQ kicking off shortly after. We will need advance numbers for the afternoon to enable catering to be organised. Please bear this in mind and take note of event-related emails, please email Lucy to confirm your attendance.

Our first confirmed Turf Club will be hosted by myself at Bowood on 18 August. Starting at 1pm, the topic of the day will be long rough management, including thinning of established areas, promotion of fine grasses in long rough and promotion of wild flowers on the golf course. Keep an eye on your email for further details.

Should anyone require details of specialist training providers in the South West, please get in touch with us for details. If we can not find the information for you, chances are we know someone who can.

Sponsor thanks

Many thanks to our 2016 patrons for their ongoing support: Countrywide Amenity, Farmura, H Curtis & Son, Ecosolve, SGI, T H White, Greensman, Irritech and Headland Amenity.

South Coast

At the time of writing, we are days away from our annual secretaries vs greenkeepers match and our summer tournament at Corhampton. A report on both events, together with the results, will feature in the next magazine.

Our most recent Turf Club saw our section members being treated to an in depth tour of 'Masters Pit', the quarry of Roffey Bros. The group were greeted by coffee and bacon rolls before being given a brief history of the company and the site. The visitors were impressed by the size and scale of the site and also by the complexity of the plant and how it can separate different size particles so effectively and efficiently. The section and members who attended would like to take this opportunity to thank all at Roffey Bros for their time and hospitality, in particular Joe Crawley for being instrumental in organising the day. Thanks also go to Conrad Cavill from Hockley for supplying a report of the tour.

Upcoming events

Our next Turf Club will be held at Goodwood on Thursday 28 July. This event will start at midday and include a course walk and tour of the facilities on site. An email invitation with more details will be circulated shortly. To book a place contact biggasouthcoast@hotmail.com

Sponsor thanks

Our thanks go to Course Care of the Highspeed Group for their sponsorship of the annual secretaries vs greenkeepers match. This is a long-standing event and the section would like to thank Course Care for their continued support.

Devon & Cornwall

Firstly, apologies for the lack of an entry last month - non-BIGGA life just got in the way.

I think this month should start by wishing life member Billy Mitchell a continued recovery from his recent holiday in Devon. Having spoken to Nick, he tells me the phone calls are becoming frequent and longer so we know Billy's health must be improving.

Chris Hale from Woodbury Park has been volunteering at Royal Porthcawl

for the amateur championship, along with myself. I would advise anyone who has wondered if they should get involved, that they definitely should. Although there are very early starts and long days, it is an extremely rewarding experience in many ways.

Although a little delayed, the section would like to welcome David Bevan to the area. David has taken over from Jon Day at Lanhydrock. He moves to the area, having most recently been course manager at Overstone Park in Northamptonshire.

Upcoming events

Our next competition is at Okehampton on 12 July, which is the grudge match between Devon and Cornwall for bragging rights as to which county is best.

South Wales

During the last month I played a few courses and I must say, all were in good shape. Talking to staff, all with varying budgets and staffing levels, and playing with members who gave good comments, can only be a good thing.

Most will know by now that Rob Hogarth has moved back to Scotland, leaving the position of regional chairman open. But he did not do so for long as Steve Lloyd has taken up the role earlier than he anticipated. Good luck Steve.

Congratulations to the staff at Celtic Manor on the successful Senior Wales Open. The course was in fantastic condition as usual.

Ian Kinley would like to thank all the volunteers for their assistance in helping his team during the 121st Amateur Championship at RPGA.

Upcoming events

Our next fixture is centrally located between Cardiff and Swansea at Coed Y Mwstwr. The first tee is at 1pm and we play for the Patrons Cup. Format for the day will be individual stableford with coffee and bacon roll on arrival, followed by a two course meal once play is finished. The cost is £15 per person. To book your place, contact either Steve Lloyd or P Handy or email phandy2@gmail.com

Golf Management Trophy

Regional qualifiers

Head greenkeepers and club managers will have to set aside their differences as the regional qualifiers for the BIGGA Golf Management Trophy get underway this summer.

This year's competition is sponsored by ICL with an AccuPro 2000 up for grabs for the winning team, along with various other prizes.

The format is a fourball stableford and teams will be led out by their club's course manager or head greenkeeper, who must be a BIGGA member.

Additionally, there must be three from the captain, lady captain, vice captains, committee members, club secretary, club manager, deputy course manager or head greenkeeper, professional or assistant professional.

Teams are restricted to fielding a maximum of two greenkeepers in the qualifying event.

If you haven't received an application form, contact your regional administrator.

Northern
Halifax West End
Thu 8 Sept



Midland
Longcliffe
Thu 25 August



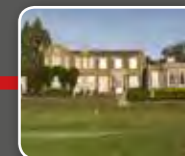
South West
The Kendleshire
Wed 3 August



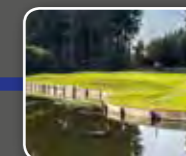
Devon & Cornwall
Torquay
Fri 16 Sept



Scotland
Stirling
Wed 27 July



GRAND FINAL
John O'Gaunt
Mon 31 October



South Coast
Remedy Oak
Thu 11 August



BIGGA MIDLAND REGION



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AROUND THE GREEN

MIDLAND

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



BB&O

It was good to see so many of our section members on the BMW PGA support team at Wentworth in late May. The weather was favourable, the course in great condition and some great golf was played. If you haven't already done so I would urge you to apply for next year's event to get an insight into tournament preparation and to network with fellow greenkeepers. And of course there really is no better place to watch the golf from.

The planned education day 'Renovations' unfortunately had to be cancelled and hopefully will be rescheduled for later in the year. The committee are working hard to arrange further education events and would really like ideas for subject content. If anyone has ideas of what they would like to hear about please get in touch via email or Facebook.

Upcoming events

The summer golf day on 28 July at Harleyford is fast approaching and invites should be with you by now. The event costs £25 per per-

son. Please meet at Harleyford at 9.30am for bacon rolls and coffee and the first tee is 10.30am.

Mid Anglia

Upcoming events

Our next section event will be held at The Bedfordshire on 24 August and will be a par 3 competition with teams of four, which looks like it will be a fun day.

Please get your entries in nice and early as I am sure it will be a very popular event.

Sponsor thanks

Farmura, Tuckwells Machinery, Avoncrop Amenity, Headland Amenity, Amtech Amenity, Ever-iss, Countrywide, Banks Amenity, ALS and Rigby Taylor.

The Mid Anglia section would like to thank our wonderful sponsors for 2016 and we are very grateful for your continued support with funds for our section events.

Midland

I'm sat in California soaking up the sun, but apparently we are having the most horrendous month back home. Well done to everyone in keeping courses playable.

Congratulations to Jim Moverley at Shirley for his marriage to the beautiful Jemma Jordan in Cyprus. Best wishes for the future.

Please get your calendar competition entries into us as soon as possible for the 2017 calendar. The more the merrier.

Upcoming events

Team event & AGM is at Patsull on Wednesday 14 September. Start at 10am, cost £25. Closing date for entries is 5 September, prize sponsor is Working turf. Format is 18-hole stableford, make your own team of four players.

The Christmas tournament at Redditch golf is on Wednesday 7 December, starting at 10am. The cost is £27 with the closing date for entries 23 November. Prize sponsor is Banks Amenity, format is pairs for partners to be drawn on the day.

An ecology seminar is taking place on 26 July at Great Barr. Rigby Taylor are hosting so contact your local RB rep for details.

East of England

Our spring golf day was held at Louth on 12 May. Praise goes to Graham Ives and his team for producing a course in good condition after what can only be described as a testing winter and troublesome spring.

Graham was quoted earlier in the week saying "I could do without you lot coming this week", after another of the relentless downpours we've all been experiencing lately. However, he had nothing to worry about, so credit to you and your team sir.



Section News

Please email your news to karl@bigga.co.uk by the 16th of the month

The results were: 1st Jack Evans; 2nd Sam Piggott; 3rd Robin Portess.

Nearest the pin: 9th hole Rob Welford; 15th hole Matt Haynes Trade winner Ian Collett of Rigby Taylor

Jack now qualifies for subsidised entry into the BIGGA National Championship

We would like to welcome Graham Ives to the section committee. Graham has taken on the role of education officer and will be playing an active part in the continued success of our educational days over the coming few years.

Upcoming events

Our next event is the summer golf day at Waltham Windmill, sponsored by FG Adamson & Son on Wednesday 27 July at 1pm. This is a singles stableford event, so if you wish to enter please contact Bruce Hicks by Monday 25 July at the latest.

Remember all upcoming events will be advertised on the section Facebook page.

Sponsor thanks

Our thanks go to Tom Shinkins of GKB Machines and Mark Silk of

Working Turf for their sponsorship of the spring golf day and halfway house at Louth. Your support, as always, is most grateful.

East Midlands

Flash flooding and the hot, warm and wet is causing havoc among the section. It is the most isolated I've ever seen. Some courses have even reported rain on half the course and the other half dry. I'm sure you all have your own grass factories out there and I must say wherever I have been, you're all doing a great job and the courses are all looking stunning. Also, John Barr MG eats the most I've ever seen a person eat.

A brief reminder to members that we are looking for new committee members. We don't have a chairman or education officer at the moment. Anyone interested or wanting more details can contact Martin Hickling or Roger Butler. It is always good to get fresh ideas and opinions, so please get in touch if you are interested.

Upcoming events

The following dates and venues have been booked for this year: Spring, Radcliffe on Trent, 28 April; Summer, Matlock, 27 July; Par 3 Beedles Lake, 31 August; AGM & Autumn, Stanton on the Wolds, 27 October; Christmas, Greatham Valley, 8 December.

The Midland Regional Golf Championship, sponsored by Farlo, will take place on 21 September at Northants County.

ICL Management Trophy will take place at Longcliffe on 25 August

Sponsor thanks

As always, thank you for the kind sponsorship for this year from all our sponsors. Without your help we would not be in the fortunate position we are as a section.





BIGGA SOUTH EAST REGION



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AROUND THE GREEN

SOUTH EAST

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

Surrey

As we know there were no competitions in May, however we have had an Open Qualifier held at Walton Heath and also the BMW at Wentworth.

Both courses looked to be in great condition and I had the chance to visit Wentworth on Friday to catch up with some of the BIGGA support staff and grab a quick coffee with some of the chaps.

Both courses looked in tip top condition and they could not have got there without the help from all the volunteers involved and those from the Surrey section.

Well done to you all for donating your time and effort.

There has been a lot of Surrey Bowl matches played this month and Joe Sexton and myself join the growing list of losers. To those still left in, all the best success in the next round and please

make sure you keep an eye on the closing dates for these to be played by. Don't forget to let Ash and Roger know when they have been played.

Even though there was no official Surrey section day this month, there was a point at which a lot of Surrey and the surrounding area course managers and suppliers assembled for a golf day. With 10 minutes to go we had our usual deluge of rain, which necessitated that we would only get to play the 1st, 2nd, 9th and the back nine.

Everyone was told, however one team managed to play the 3rd hole only to realise something was amiss. So they decided to ring the phone number printed in the middle of the card. It turned out the number was for the local builder who was sponsoring the score card and did not know anything. I'll spare the blushes of who it was as you know who you are.

Upcoming events

May's third Thursday seminar had to be cancelled due to England and Wales meeting for a football match or something. But keep an eye out for the next one and details will follow shortly.

Sussex

On 2 June we should have been basking in sunshine, but ended up with grey skies and the same temperatures as Christmas Day, with an annoying north wind.

However, it was the section's spring meeting and nothing was going to spoil the day. The section were honoured to be guests at the prestigious Royal Ashdown and we were given a very warm welcome. Following a substantial roast beef lunch, 30 Sussex greenkeepers approached the first tee with full stomachs and a little nervousness as they saw the length of the heather carry.



We were guests on the old course that meanders through the picturesque Ashdown forest and it was immaculately presented as always - many thanks to Chris Mitchell and his team for all their work.

Results: nearest the pin on the 6th, Kelvin Brown; on the 9th, Gary Ogilvie; longest drive, James Briggs; nearest pin in 2, Danny Burchill. Team prizes: 1st place, Pete Smith, Glyn Pollard, David Whitlock, 90 points; 2nd place, Mike Poole, Eric Green, Danny Burchill, 86 points.

If you have any news or interesting stories to share, email me at

chris@collier-turf-care.co.uk or call me on 07912 669457.

Upcoming events

The next event will be the autumn competition, which is a team stableford at Seaford Head on 14 September.

Sponsor thanks

Thanks to all of our generous sponsors

Essex

Anyone got a lifeboat? The Thornden Park golf day had to be

cancelled due to the monsoon that beat Rob George and his team.

A decision is to be made if this is rearranged and the implication regarding the national qualifier. This will be communicated via the usual social media, email and text. So keep an eye out.

If you have any news of interest, can you send me details, with pictures for sharing on social media and ATG.

Upcoming events

The next golf day is at Stoke by Nayland on 3 August. If you wish

to play, contact Mick Fance on 07894 423086. Please note this is his new number.

We are also hosting the annual Tri Event against Surrey and Sussex sections. This will be held at Benton Hall on 7 September. Contact Mick if you are interested in playing.

Sponsor thanks

Our list of sponsors are published and we thank them all for their continued support.





GREENKEEPERS TRAINING COMMITTEE

Farewell after half a century in greenkeeping



This month David Golding, GTC's education director, pens his final column before his retirement.

In the immortal words of Lionel Richie, "well my friends the time has come to raise the roof and have some fun, throw away the work to be done, let the music play on".

I am not sure at 65 that I will be raising the roof, but there will certainly be more time to listen to music as my wife Elaine and I intend to spend time visiting friends and family.

As for throwing the work away, I certainly hope whoever takes on my roles and responsibilities continues to ensure the sector controls all aspects of greenkeeping education and training standards.

Over the years there has been a tremendous effort to ensure greenkeeping is recognised as a



The GTC is funded by:



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profession in its own right and not part of agriculture, horticulture or landscaping.

Certainly, through BIGGA the golfing organisations know more and more each day on just how important greenkeepers are to the future of the game.

There is still much work to do with regards educating many of the golf employers but I do believe those clubs that actually invest and commit to staff development will be the most successful businesses.

I hope I am leaving the sector in better shape than when I moved from being a golf course manager in 1989 to join BIGGA full time, and subsequently take on the role of the GTC's education director.

I see the association going from strength to strength, through the regions and sections structure, with an increasing amount of education events available. With the support

and, if needed, guidance from headquarters staff, I am sure BIGGA will continue to ensure golf knows about greenkeepers and greenkeeping.

Every January BTME brings the whole sector together and each year from 1989 the education programme has improved.

It would be unfair of me to name the many individuals who have assisted me over the years to help develop, reform and maintain the range of formal greenkeeping qualifications and apprenticeship schemes.

All I would say is it has been an honour to work for BIGGA and the GTC and a privilege to have such willing individuals who care so passionately about the great profession of greenkeeping.

I sincerely hope those of you who share the same passion will ensure those who are entrusted with maintaining quality greenkeeper education and training

standards keep the sector in control of its own destiny.

Without strong partnerships, greenkeeping would possibly be struggling to plough its own furrow. But thankfully from the very top of the sport, both BIGGA and the GTC have received wonderful support from the R&A.

While in recent years their support has drifted into helping golf-developing countries, I firmly believe if further financial support was requested and a good case put forward, it would be made available.

It is the British model of greenkeeper education and training that the R&A has promoted to many countries, which has only been developed by the huge investment they have made since the infamous Way Forward discussion document was circulated to all golf clubs in 1988.

The Way Forward allowed these organisations to discuss with the R&A how best they could improve their roles and responsibilities to ensure the game had the structure to educate and train the staff to maintain and manage golf clubs.

BIGGA had just been formed and the GTC established, but operating through a volunteer administrator – the late, great Nick Bisset – with little or no funding.

It was through the Way Forward that the 2p per male golfer levy towards greenkeeper training suddenly increased and investment from the Home Unions, on behalf of the golfer, has allowed both BIGGA and the GTC to really become guardians of greenkeeping standards.

The employers' voice through the GTC on behalf of greenkeeping has become increasingly important as devolved governments consistently seek the engagement of the employer before approving

any qualifications and apprenticeship schemes that attract public funding support. The recent Trailblazer initiative proved that, as the GTC became the first sector in the whole of the land-based sector to gain approval to write its own set of standards.

The colleges, training providers and the many trade companies have also been great supporters of greenkeeper training and with all the expertise available this has required co-ordinating, through the offices of BIGGA and the GTC.

I hope the partnerships which are now established, including the one with the awarding bodies, will continue as greenkeeping is now well-positioned to maintain and manage its own formal and informal education and training standards.

In closing, a big thank you to the many GTC board members and technical committee vol-

unteers. And a special mention to Donald Steel, GTC chairman, who has also decided to retire from his position at the same time as me.

Donald is still involved with many golf courses as an architect and hopefully will continue to write articles about the importance of greenkeeper training. He has been a tremendous supporter to me personally through his term as GTC chairman and a great friend of greenkeepers.

Finally, Fiona Lyttle, who for over 16 years has assisted me at the GTC, will hopefully continue to have a key role to ensure the GTC retains its independence and her dedication to the greenkeeping profession has been immeasurable.

So it's goodbye from me and thank you to all my friends and family who have supported me through my 50 years in greenkeeping.



David with the late Nick Bisset in 2006

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BUYERS' GUIDE

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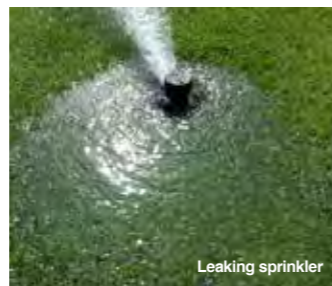
All of the elements within an irrigation system have associated running and management costs. In today's economic climate, managing these costs is critical and a working knowledge of the constituent parts is paramount.

An independent appraisal of the irrigation system needs to be undertaken and that's where Irritech comes in. They undertake numerous course and sports turf irrigation system efficiency and operational appraisals every year.

An appraisal deals with each aspect of the irrigation system's functionality - assessing the condition, safety, availability, usefulness, efficiency and future longevity. Irritech splits the system into five elements - water, pump station, mainline, sprinklers and control system.

Without a good, reliable, economic supply of water, even the best irrigation system is useless. The end user must consider water source, cost, quality, storage and safety of use. An appraisal of the water supply should highlight volumes required, abstraction and availability, storage volumes and safety of use. For example, storing

water in tanks or reservoirs has health and safety implications such as Legionella and Weils disease. When it comes to water quality, regular testing will highlight pH, salinity and iron, all of which are items that can affect application rates and turf condition.



Leaking sprinkler

Sources of water include: mains drinkable supply; borehole supply; surface water abstraction from streams or rivers; treated sewerage effluent; grey water, roof or surface run-off.

Once Irritech is aware of the water volume required and quality available, the pump station can be assessed. This includes flow, pump condition, manifold type, pressure vessel certification, operating risk assessments, pumphouse and signage. The pump station is the engine of the irrigation system and so incorrect, leaking or dangerous pumps will affect the sprinkler operation.

Mainline pipe networks are next as age, size and leakage all affect water usage, pressure at the sprinkler and the end user's ability to manage the water delivery. The mainline network is also affected

by both positive static rise and negative static fall, affecting pressures within the pipelines.

On to the control system, where parts to be assessed include cable type, size, jointing techniques, type of control systems, availability of spare parts, ability to 'save' water using control system features, and programming of the control system.

Then to the sprinklers: models, nozzles, flow, spacing, size, precipitation rate calculation, accuracy, efficiency, as well as solenoid valve configuration, safety and control.

All of these sectional elements combine to form the system, and all demand correct arrangements and safety in operation for final accurate and efficient, cost effective function.

An independent appraisal will produce a document that systematically goes through the operation of the exiting system, culminating in a 15-20 page written report that represents a fully independent review of the irrigation system that is in place.

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GREENKEEPING VACANCY



We are seeking an enthusiastic and experienced Green Keeper to join our team at Wyke Green Golf Club.

Wyke Green Golf Club is a highly respected 18-hole parkland course in Middlesex with quality standards being of the utmost importance. Candidates will need to be a team player, competent and eager to take on further responsibilities. Applicants must be able to demonstrate knowledge of maintaining and developing our golf course to the highest standards. Certification in PA1, PA2 and PA6 would be beneficial but not essential, training will be given to the right candidate. Salary is dependent on experience and will be based on a normal 35-hour week. Weekend working on a rota basis will be required and paid at BIGGA recommended overtime rates.

In the first instance please apply in writing (email or letter) to:

andyh@wykegreengolfclub.co.uk The Secretary/Manager
Or: tonydyke@btconnect.com Tony Dyke, Course manager

Wyke Green Golf Club
Syon Lane, Isleworth, Middlesex TW7 5PT

Head Greenkeeper
Website: cradoc.co.uk



Job Description
Cradoc GC is a private Member's Club, with an 18 hole parkland course and accompanying 10 bay floodlit driving range, situated near the market town of Brecon in mid Wales. The Club enjoys a high volume of societies and returning visitors each year.

Cradoc has hosted the Tournament of Champions for over 35 years, and is regularly rated amongst the top 30 courses in Wales.

Applications for the position of Head Greenkeeper are invited. Previous experience in managing a similar golf facility and a small team of staff would be an advantage.

Salary and benefits package will be offered commensurate with qualifications, experience and suitability.

Please send a CV and a covering letter to:

Keith Lloyd, Manager, Cradoc Golf Club,
Penoyre Park, Cradoc, Brecon, Powys LD3 9LP
manager@cradoc.co.uk

Applications and accompanying CV's to be submitted no later than Friday 22nd July

Deputy Course Manager

Posted: 13th June 2016 / Closing: 14th July 2016
Location: Crompton & Royton Golf Club - Oldham
Website: www.cromptonandroytongolfclub.co.uk



Job Description
Candidates should have:-

- Over 5 years practical experience in Turfgrass Management and Construction Techniques
- NVQ Level 3 or Equivalent
- PA 1, PA 2A, and PA6
- CS 30, CS 31 Preferred

All applicants must be self motivated and work to a high standard with an eye for detail.

Applicants to send a CV & covering letter to The Secretary (for the attention of the Course Manager), Crompton & Royton Golf Club, High Barn, Royton, Oldham, OL2 6RW or secretary@cromptonandroytongolfclub.co.uk

Seasonal Greenkeepers (x3)
Sorrento Golf Club (Australia)



Sorrento Golf Club, located on the Mornington Peninsula in Victoria, are looking to employ 3 seasonal qualified greenkeepers to help maintain the course over the busy spring/summer period. The period of employment is for six months, starting from 3rd October, 2016 through to the 31st March, 2017.

- Applicants must satisfy the requirements in obtaining an Australian Working Visa, particularly not being over the age of 30 years.
- Previous applicants are most welcome to apply.

For more information, or to apply for these positions please send a detailed resume (including 3 referees) to Course Superintendent, Shane Greenhill: sgreenhill@sorrentogolf.com.au

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How to Apply:

If you feel you have the necessary experience, skills and enthusiasm to succeed within our dynamic team then please send your CV and covering letter to: grass@indigrow.co.uk

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An exciting opportunity has arisen for an ambitious

Deputy Course Manager

Farleigh

to join the team at Farleigh Golf Club. Reporting to the Course Manager, you will be responsible for delivering a golf course to the highest standards.

Our Ideal Applicant:

- Substantial greenkeeping experience
- NVQ Level 2 in Sports Turf Management or equivalent
- Spraying certificates PA1, PA2 and PA6
- A good working knowledge of irrigation systems including repair and maintenance
- A sound understanding of machinery operation and maintenance
- Supervisory experience including training and development of team members
- Chainsaw certificate desirable
- Good standard of written and spoken English
- First Aid at Work qualified

CV and covering letter to: kenny@farleighfox.co.uk
Farleigh Golf Club, Old Farleigh Road, Farleigh, Surrey, CR6 9PE

Assistant Greenkeepers

Website: www.dyrhampark.com

Dyrham Park Country club wishes to recruit highly motivated and enthusiastic assistant greenkeepers.

You will be working as part of the team in the maintenance and development of the golf course, its practice facilities and the surrounding estate.

The candidates should have:

- Minimum two years' experience in greenkeeping
- NVQ Level 2 or equivalent
- Competent with modern machinery
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- PA1,2 & 6 Spraying, First Aid and Chainsaw qualifications preferable but not essential

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Please apply by email with a CV and covering letter to:

David Hicks Assistant Course Manager,
Dyrham Park Country Club, Galley Lane, Barnet, Hertfordshire EN5 4RA

stuart@dyrhampark.com
Or telephone: 07523 961911

GI & FINALLY...

Red refuge at Formby Ladies

BIGGA sustainability executive James Hutchinson visited Formby Ladies to see how the club is helping to protect one of the UK's most enigmatic and rare species.

Formby Ladies is on the north west coast of England, with the tight 4,419-metre course enjoying typical features such as fine grasses and undulating sandbanks.

The course heads out towards an established dune system, where wildflower rarities such as yellow bartsia, dune helleborine and sea-side centaury grow. Other interesting flora and fauna include kestrels, sand lizards and scots pines, where the ever-elusive red squirrel can be found.

Formby Ladies are fully aware of the decline of the UK's native red squirrels and have intentionally managed the site to accommodate them. Deciduous trees, including sycamore and birch, have been managed in the hope of reducing the march of the invading species,

the grey squirrel.

Red squirrels are at home in a deciduous forest, but greys do not take well to pine-dominated forests and do not usually cohabit this woodland with the reds. Instead, greys are attracted to woodlands where acorns and hazel nuts are plentiful.

A serious reason to keep the two apart is parapoxvirus, which is carried by the greys but will not harm them. However, the virus is usually fatal if contracted by a red squirrel.

When food becomes scarce, red squirrels are known to eat the fleshy parts of heather, and this plant is abundant at Formby Ladies. The heather is managed to a high standard and this creates a constant food source.

Reds also often eat fungi when food is scarce and this is plentiful at Formby during the autumn and winter months. Along with the heather and pine seeds, the reds have an abundant food source to

sustain them throughout the colder times of the year.

I visited the site three times to see the great work being done by the greenkeepers and to set up a remote wildlife camera. We found a healthy community of reds on the course, with many photographs being captured by the remote camera. An out-of-play area was identified, where there was no traffic and where reds are known to frequent, and the camera was set up for 48 hours, with squirrel bait - nuts, of course - laid down to attract reds.

The outcome was an array of photographs, including birds such as nuthatches and dunnocks. One clip seemed to show a red standing its ground against a much larger crow, and eventually winning the stand-off. This behaviour is highly unusual as reds are timid by nature.

At Formby Ladies the environment is managed to a high standard and this great work has encouraged the reds to move in and make the course their home.

Formby Ladies and (above) red squirrels inhabit the club



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