



GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

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WELCOME



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Chief Executive Jim Croxton

I have been privileged to speak at a number of conferences and seminars recently, mainly with the remit of promoting the excellence of greenkeepers and attempting to get employers and golfers to appreciate and respect the work you do.

I'm pleased to be able to speak on behalf of BIGGA and quite enjoy the opportunity to do so.

However, this wasn't always the case and when I first started my career I was absolutely petrified of public speaking. In fact, at the first event I administered by myself in my very early days in the industry, I opened the prize presentation and handed over to the Captain of Darwen Golf Club so he could say a few words of welcome and my legs completely buckled. I was grateful that I had a chair in front of me to save me from toppling into the crowd that had gathered to hear the results of the Pro-Am.

I had been worrying about that moment for quite a few weeks and had gone through dozens of scenarios in my head, all of

which ended in it going terribly badly. But of course, though I no doubt stammered my way through, when it came down to it the presentation was fine, and over the next few weeks and months I gained in confidence and even developed a reputation for doing it quite well.

Fast forward a couple of decades and I still get a little nervous before speaking in public, no matter the audience size, but generally I enjoy the opportunity to speak about subjects I feel passionately about.

I guess this was an early example of having to get out of my comfort zone, a concept that has cropped up time and again in discussions with members who are either trying to get on in their careers or survive in the role they have.

As greenkeeping has developed, excellence has become expected, and anything less becomes the subject of criticism. And so it is crucial that we do all we can to manage the expectations of those who judge our work. But so often, to do so necessitates leaving our comfort zone and prioritising tasks we would rather shy away from. In the greenkeeping world this may take the form of preparing reports, writing blogs, dabbling in golf club politics or adapting to the whims of a new club management structure.

These things distract from the primary goal of managing the golf course but, if they're done well, they will provide you with the support and breathing space to do so more effectively. And as we become competent in these areas, our comfort zone expands and they become second nature.

In these pages Mark Hunt follows up his article from earlier in the year, this time concentrating on the impacts of variable spring climatic conditions, and argues passionately that greenkeepers should embrace the opportunity to take objective measurements and use them as a compelling tool to educate employers and golfers. Doing so may take you out of your comfort zone, but the rewards are certainly worth the effort.



REGULARS

3 Welcome from BIGGA

6 Across the Board

8 Newsdesk

10 BIGGA Worldwide

14 Ecology

16 Membership News

18 L&D News

20 Industry Update

60 Around the Green

68 Greenkeepers
Training Committee

70 Buyers' Guide

72 Recruitment

74 & Finally

FROM THE EDITOR



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

Sometimes the battles are real

We all face pressures at work, whether it be preparing a course ahead of a tournament or, indeed, getting a magazine to print on time.

But one pressure we never have to face is that of protecting our colleagues from possible death at the hands of a very real enemy. I can't imagine it and, unless you have been in active service, neither can you.

This month I spoke to a man who not only took his troops into battle, he lost a leg in the process. In the ensuing years he has battled relentless pain and depression the likes of which we, touch wood, will never know.

Yet in greenkeeping, that profession we so often bemoan or take for granted, David Sneddon has found peace.

David volunteers three days a week at Kingsfield Golf Centre near Edinburgh and has honoured us by accepting membership of BIGGA this year. His is an incredible story about battling back from the depths of despair and how none of us should forget how fortunate we are to make a living within such a hospitable industry.

Turn to page 26 to read David's story.

Elsewhere this month, we have crowned two separate champions, and you'll be able to read about their successes within this magazine.

We are announcing the winner of our annual photographic competition, and you'll have to turn to page 24 to find out which of the more than 70 entries was chosen as judges' and members' favourite after an online poll.

Thank you so much to everyone who took part in the competition and, having seen the 12 images which have been selected to comprise the BIGGA Calendar 2017, it is set to be a corker.

Grange Park is an unheralded golf course just a mile or so outside of St Helens. Not necessarily, you would imagine, a hotbed of golfing talent. Yet it is at that humble Lancashire course that this year's BIGGA National Champion plies his trade. Gary Burgess is not just a talented greenkeeper, he's also a very gifted golfer, and there couldn't have been a more popular winner when he claimed the BIGGA National Championship trophy at Bowood Hotel & Golf Resort last month.

Turn to page 38 to see how it all went down.

You'll notice some changes to Greenkeeper International this month. We've enlisted the help of a very talented designer named Libbie Waddleton and this is her debut magazine. She's doing an incredible job of making my words look somewhat entertaining and informative and I'm sure you will all join me in wishing her the best of luck in this new role.

As always, I hope you enjoy the read, and if there are any stories you'd like us to cover, don't hesitate to get in touch.

P.S. We've launched the BTME app this month, where you can get all the latest information about the exhibition and the Continue to Learn programme. We may still be a couple of months away from BTME, but feel free to download the app now and start planning for January.

IN THIS ISSUE

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

34 Paul Miller

Paul is an experienced lecturer in golf course management and a regular contributor to Greenkeeper International and to the Continue to Learn programme. He has a keen interest in sustainable course management and this month explains what that means in practice.



46 Mark Hunt

Technical director at Headland Amenity, Mark Hunt is considered among the most prominent climate experts in the turf management industry. In this feature he looks at the evidence for updating the way we plan spring maintenance to suit our changing climate.



50 Jon Kiger

Director of media and membership at TurfNet, an online community of golf course managers, Jon was at the Ryder Cup where he met four British greenkeepers who travelled Stateside to volunteer at the event. This month he reports back, while resisting the urge to gloat about Team USA's success.



56 Robert Jackson

Robert is irrigation manager at Reesink Turfcare, UK distributor of Toro irrigation and Otterbine water management systems. He has been working in the irrigation industry for over 20 years and explains how aeration can make a huge difference to the quality of your sustainable water supply.



FEATURES FOR NOVEMBER

- 24 **September sunrise scoops photo competition top prize**
Announcing the winner of this year's competition
- 26 **On Course Foundation**
An injured veteran has found a new life in greenkeeping
- 30 **Bunkers**
Top 10 tips for revetting bunkers
- 34 **'How much does good quality turf cost?'**
Sustainability at Askernish
- 38 **Bigga National Ch'ship**
Gary Burgess conquers Bowood to claim top prize
- 42 **How do you solve a problem like turf weeds?**
Classifying types of weeds
- 44 **Sprayer Testing**
Make sure you don't get caught out by new legislation
- 46 **Climate Change**
Are our spring seasons becoming harder to manage?
- 50 **Ryder Cup**
We speak to four members who volunteered at Hazeltine
- 54 **It's a woman's world**
The young lady making her mark at Oake Manor
- 56 **Reservoir maintenance**
How aeration will help clear up your sustainable water supply
- 59 **Greenspeed**
Tips on how to improve the speed of your greens

ACROSS THE BOARD



John Keenaghan

It has been a fairly hectic end to the summer here at Chipping Sodbury, as we have just recently hosted the English Senior County Finals during October.

After what seemed to be a really busy summer of competitions, my small team of five, including myself, had no time to ponder about the coming months as we were joined by England Golf and the four county teams from Lancashire, Devon, Worcestershire and BB&O who were battling to become County Senior Champions.

Expectation levels are always high with this type of event, and our club members always want their course to be well presented. The added pressure of hosting a national event means a lot of extra work, but even after a long summer I have never seen my team so up for the challenge.

Interest for the event spread within the local area and I soon had offers from good friends and greenkeepers wanting to help out with the preparation of the course during the evenings. To me this just shows the beauty and

passion of the industry that we work in, and I would like to thank everyone who gave up their free time to help us prepare.

Members of our golf club even got involved, turning up at 5.30am to help prepare the bunkers. We appreciated the help, and I hope that through this hand-on experience, some of the golfers at Chipping Sodbury have gained an extra appreciation of the hard work my team put in to preparing the course on a daily basis.

After four exhausting days, blessed with autumn sunshine, Lancashire were crowned national champions.

The club members and my staff rightly gained accolades from all the visitors, with many vowing to return to the course.

The following Monday and it was my turn to play instead of watching as I was due to take part in the BIGGA National Championship sponsored by Charterhouse and Kubota.

The event was held at Bowood in Wiltshire, just 40 minutes from home. This was a blessing as I arrived still tired after the excursions of the previous week, but I looked forward to meeting some of the many good friends that I have made in my four previous attempts to win the title.

By the way, I have never really got anywhere near to winning as the standard of golfing among some of those greenkeepers is well above my capabilities!

Bowood Course Manager Jaey Goodchild produced a course in terrific condition for the competitors. Jaey put us to the test with some tricky pin positions, but I will put my struggles down to my bad putting as the course was in incredible condition.

There were some great scores over the two days and my congratulations go to Gary Burgess of Grange Park for two fantastic rounds under par. I do think, though, that it was the coaching from myself and Gordon Sangster during the practice round we had at Chipping Sodbury which helped him win the title for the first time!

I look forward to next year's championship, which is being held at the place it all started 30 years ago, Verulam Golf Club in St Albans.

I would like to wish all my fellow greenkeepers a stress-free winter. Take this opportunity to take stock of how things are going, reconnect with your fellow members, get to BTME if you can and most importantly recharge your batteries and be ready to do what we do best next season.



John Keenaghan, Sid Arrowsmith and Darryl Jones at the BIGGA National Championship

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



Individual Contributors: Steven Tierney MG ■ Chris Lomas MG ■ Andrew Campbell MG CGCS
Steve Dixon ■ Richard McGlynn ■ Jaey Goodchild ■ Michael Beaton, Frank Newberry



Eltham Warren anniversary



Scholarship



Obituary



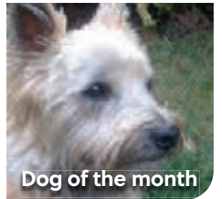
BIGGA's member in Dubai



New health and safety advice



@BIGGALtd



Dog of the month

Irish Open Support Team

For the first time, BIGGA members are being invited to join the support team for the Dubai Duty Free Irish Open, being held at Portstewart in Northern Ireland.

The event takes place from 6-9 July 2017 and will see BIGGA members join greenkeepers from the Golf Course Superintendents Association of Ireland in helping Course Manager Bernard Findlay prepare the links for the event.

Around 38 volunteers will supplement the 20 resident greenkeepers at Portstewart, and Bernard said: "We are asking for quite a few volunteers for the Irish Open, meaning our team will almost triple for the event.

"That wouldn't be possible if we just asked for help from one organisation and so I hope greenkeepers will make themselves available from the GCSAI and BIGGA. Four of our American colleagues are also making themselves available through the TurfNet organisation.

"This will not only be a huge help for us, but it also means members of the separate organisations, who don't often get the chance to mingle, will be able to come together to exchange ideas and build friendships."

Founded in 1894 and redesigned by Willie Park Jnr in the 1920s, Portstewart received its largest makeover with the purchase of the land known as 'Thistly Hollow' in 1986. This enabled the club to build seven holes through towering dunes and natural links land. Designed by Des Griffin, the Strand Course, which will host the Irish Open, is Portstewart's jewel.

The Irish Open will also mark the start of a bumper season of championships being held in Northern Ireland, with the Open heading to Royal Portrush for the first time just two years later.

Bernard said: "With the Open coming to Royal Portrush in 2019, just a few miles up the road, the Irish Open is going to be a fantastic opportunity for all of us to get some



The third hole on The Strand at Portstewart

experience of hosting a major event. And with BIGGA sure to send over a large support team for the Open, this will be a good chance to learn about greenkeeping on a championship-quality links course in Northern Ireland."

Throughout the event, all accommodation, food, clothing and transport to and from the venue will be provided for the volunteer team. Depending on availability, volunteers will have the chance to be part of the team for up to two weeks, starting on Monday 26 June.

All those on the team will benefit from gaining knowledge and insight into tournament preparation and presentation, while being part of the whole Irish Open experience.

All members of the team will qualify for CPD credits.

Application forms will be available from 22 November 2016. Email carly@portstewartgc.co.uk after this date to receive a form. The closing date for applications is 27 January 2017.

BTME app launch

The time has come to kick your BTME preparations into top gear by downloading our brand new application for your smartphone.

The app has been created by leading designers Avodigy and is available on both Android and Apple devices.

BIGGA's Jim Croxton said: "BTME is such a diverse event, featuring a comprehensive exhibition and filling four halls at the Harrogate International Centre, along with an educational conference, various special events and networking opportunities. So it is important to bring all the information into one easy to understand application.

"Everyone has a smartphone in their pocket these days and so the BTME app is the perfect guide to the premier turf care event in the calendar. With details of events, a calendar and information about exhibitors and sponsors, you can download the app now and start planning your visit to Harrogate months in advance."

A new feature of the app for 2017 is the introduction of a map of exhibition halls and tailored alerts, ensuring you don't miss out on any of the major events or sessions.

The app will also allow delegates to plan their own schedule and keep BTME attendees up to date with information about Continue to Learn sessions, accommodation and where to eat.

To download the app, head to the store on your Android or Apple device and search for BTME 2017.



Remuneration

The CGCS has conducted its review of remuneration for golf club managers and greenkeepers for 2017.

The CGCS has recommended an increase of 2% over the 2016 figures. This recommendation, although not in line with the committee guideline of using the RPIJ, which in August 2016 was 0.6%, takes into account the Office of National Statistics Wage Inflation rate of 2.4%. This variation from the guidelines was thought relevant because of the recent history of very low increases and the large difference between RPIJ and NSWI.

The CGCS recommended rates of pay package are guidelines only and, as in many industries, some staff will earn substantially more, while others will earn less, depending on the standing of the golf club.

The CGCS wants to emphasise that these scales are for 'packages' and should be treated as such, while taking into account individual and team performance and any increase in responsibility or qualification.

GI DOGS ON COURSE



Name: Peanut

Owner: Ian Reeves

Course: Boundary Lakes

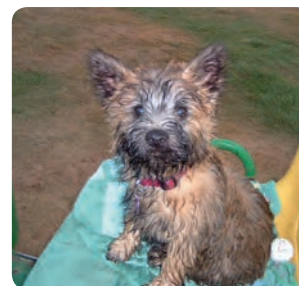
Breed: Cairn Terrier

Favourite treat:

Raw potato

Favourite spot on

the course: In the woods chasing rabbits



Naughtiest moment: When Peanut was about six months old, I took him to the park. We spent an hour running around, chasing balls and leaves and he clearly enjoyed himself. However, when it was time to go, every time I opened the car door he would turn and run in the opposite direction. After a good 10 minutes of pleading and begging I realised I had no alternative but to drive home. I drove at 5mph and he ran merrily next to the car. And this is how we went all the way home. It took 15 minutes, with cars beeping and overtaking. When we got home I was frustrated, but he seemed to enjoy every minute.

My dog is happiest when... he's eating

If you know a dog we should feature, email karl@bigga.co.uk

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THIS MONTH @BIGGALtd



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BANGBANG! Let's all celebrate @Mulkslfc89 The @BIGGALtd Challenge Cup Champion 2016! Made in Mid-Surrey!



@mortonhallgolf
This turned up on the 18th fairway today. Might steal it for a bit and hover over the greens to work in the last of the topdressing



@rustycarr5
Volunteering at the British Masters. Fantastic finish, great greenkeeping team @BIGGALtd #greenkeeper



@joshuapaulmoses
What an amazing day and a pleasure meeting everyone. Couldn't be more excited for this @GCAUK @BIGGALtd



@washy84
A little kestrel fancied watching me cut the greens this morning at @AberdoveyGC



@CaddingtonGolfC
Our green staff led by @HeadGK_CGC & @deputyheadcgc are proud to #wearitpink today to support @breastcancernow



@Cumberwell Park
Great support from 75 members for our conservation evening last Friday

GI AROUND THE GLOBE



Matthew Perry

Matthew Perry Course Superintendent Dubai Creek G&YC

What is the most interesting thing you would tell other BIGGA members about Dubai?

There is so much development here, which you become accustomed to. But what is happening is extremely innovative, with new projects really pushing the boundaries and gaining recognition around the world.

Dubai always strives to stay one step ahead, whether it be in its impressive architecture or large scale projects.

Dubai is also a very safe multi-cultural city and a great place for families. There is so much to do and I'm very happy to bring my young son up here.

How would you describe the style of golf course you manage?

Two things really define the course, one being the Dubai Creek, which runs alongside four holes. The creek runs straight into the sea and it makes for a stunning backdrop. Holes 17 and 18 run next to the creek and are widely renowned as the best two finishing holes in the Middle East. The second defining feature is our clubhouse. Built in 1992 with a special reference towards the nation's nautical heritage, its concrete 'sails' are an iconic site in Dubai and it is the only golf clubhouse in the world to feature on the nation's banknote.

How does managing a course in Dubai vary from the UK?

The type of grass we have in the Middle East varies due to the high temperatures. We have warm season as our base grass – Bermuda Tif Eagle on our greens and then the rest of the course is Bermuda 419. In the winter we do overseed with Rye grass. This is just on the rough and tees and is done mainly for definition and aesthetic purposes as the Bermuda slows down in the winter. Another major thing is irrigation and the amount of water we use and how we need to make sure our system is running efficiently. Summer can be a tough time of the year and if we have issues with irrigation we can lose grass quite quickly. From a cost perspective, we can use around 470million gallons of water on the course per year, so any way where we can help save on that is a must.

With water saving and the environment at the forefront of our minds, we have recently been awarded GEO certification, which is a proud achievement for the club. This follows on from Emirates GC receiving this verification in 2015 and shows the intent we have to make sure we are doing all we can to protect our environment.



Dubai Creek Golf & Yacht Club

What is the best part of living in Dubai?

There is so much to do here, from going to the beach to going to a waterpark or even snowboarding in the Mall of the Emirates. The variety of things is great and when you have a family it makes for some great weekends. The weather can inhibit you in the summer months, but once you are into September you have great weather through until May.

What is the worst?

Dubai is forever changing and innovating but one thing that can drive you crazy is the roads over here. Overnight a new road will appear and you are going the wrong way. The GPS in cars cannot keep up with the changes. Not to mention the driving is a little insane and you need to keep your wits about you when on the roads.

How does weather affect work?

It is a huge factor at certain times of the year. Summertime, which we class as from May to August, can be some of the most extreme temperatures you can experience. Regular days of 50 degrees and humidity between 60 and 80% makes for a pretty tough working day. With this in mind the Dubai government introduced a no outdoor working policy between 12.30-3pm from 15 June to 15 September. This is a great initiative, as

working in such heat is dangerous to your health. However, it does affect our work so adjustments in scheduling are required, with the team starting at 4am. Our aeration schedules in the summer also require the team to do split shifts to get the work done.

What wildlife do you get, that you wouldn't in the UK?

Being on the edge of Dubai Creek, we get a lot of bird life on the course. We have seen flamingos and lots of cranes, which visit throughout the year. There have also been occasions when dolphins have been in the creek next to the course.

What is your club management structure like?

The club manager oversees the running of things and then we have separate departments for golf operations, food and beverage, finance, marina and sales and marketing. Our club is very service driven and regular 'service culture' sessions take place each year, which all colleagues attend to get a better understanding of how to improve service to our guests and members at the club. We have 490 colleagues who work at Dubai Creek.

Dubai Golf, a leisure subsidiary owned by Wasl Asset Management Group, manages Dubai Creek, along with the

other leading club in Dubai, Emirates, and also Almouj Golf in Oman. Dubai Golf's director of course maintenance is Craig Haldane and I work closely with him to ensure our courses remain at the level expected.

Why do you choose to be a BIGGA member?

From working in the UK as a greenkeeper, it is nice to see what goes on back there. Being in the Middle East for over 10 years now, it is a great way to keep updated on new ways to do things and the differences with cold season grasses.

What tip would you give British members that you have learnt in Dubai?

I have really learnt to manage water usage on the course. We use a soil moisture probe called the Pogo every day, which sees how much moisture we have in the root zone and compare that with the ET so we know exactly how much water we need to give the plant. This has also been helpful for managing salinity build up and knowing when to flush the greens so we don't get too high on our salt content.

On page 56 you can learn about how you can introduce effective water management practices at your club.

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Health & Safety

BIGGA has launched an online health and safety management system, which will provide a comprehensive guide to all of the risks faced by greenkeepers during their day-to-day life.

The system is being provided by BIGGA free of charge to all full members and can be accessed by visiting bigga.xactassist.co.uk.

Health and safety topics covered by the website include course hazards, risk planning, work equipment and compliance procedures.

For help using the website, call 0330 332 2636 on Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm or email enquiries@xact.com. A monthly update and alerts will also keep members up to date with best practice and new developments.



Health and safety advice is now available

Eltham Warren

Course Manager Richard Hopgood has notched up 25 years at Eltham Warren.

The nine-hole course is built on land owned by the Crown Estate in South East London.

"I love this place," said Richard. "It is a real family club and my roots are here."

Richard started playing at the club when he was 13, while his father David was club captain in 1987 and his mum Mary captained the ladies section in 2000.

Joining Royal Blackheath as an apprentice greenkeeper aged just 15, Richard joined Eltham Warren after a spell digging roads. He said: "That was back breaking work. Then a friend told me about the role at Eltham Warren and I have been here ever since."



Richard Hopgood, right, and the greens team

ICL Scholars



ICL at BTME

Five members have been chosen to receive free education at Continue to Learn on behalf of BIGGA Partner ICL.

BIGGA and ICL have invited the members, some of whom are going for the very first time, to BTME, where they will be provided with an expenses-paid learning experience worth approximately £500 each.

Richard Sheldon, first assistant at Marriott Forest of Arden, said: "I have never been to BTME or Continue to Learn and so I am really pleased to be going, especially with all

that the scholarship includes. Education is so important in the development of a successful greenkeeping career, so thank you to BIGGA and ICL for supporting us members who would otherwise not be able to reap all the benefits that come from attending BTME and the Continue to Learn education programme."

The other successful ICL Continue to Learn 2017 scholars are: Lyle Davidson, deputy head greenkeeper at The Carrick; James Evans, assistant greenkeeper at Woburn; Darrell Crowley, head greenkeeper at Owston Hall, and James Sergeant, head greenkeeper at Sudbrook Moor.

Ed Carter, ICL Turf and Landscape sales and development manager, said: "We are delighted to be able to support this fantastic initiative that gives the five selected BIGGA members the opportunity to attend BTME and experience Continue to Learn."

Derek Farrington

The association was sad to learn of the passing of Derek Farrington, a former regional administrator in the South East region.

Derek died following a short illness and his friend George Barr said: "Derek was one of the pioneers of the regional administrator role in BIGGA and he served with immense talent and humour.

"Derek brought a lot of fun on to the job, as well as great commitment, and he will be missed greatly."

Derek joined BIGGA in 1996 as part time regional administrator in the South East region.



Derek Farrington, right

He had previously worked as manager of the Surrey County Staff Club.

When he joined the association, Derek was a member at Coombe Wood Golf Club in Kingston.



The Bayer Turf Solutions team

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So now what? Chlorpyrifos has gone and so has carbendazim. It won't be long before many other significant substances are banned but hey, we knew this was coming didn't we?

The reasons these types of chemicals are removed is simple - they cause damage to either the environment or the organisms which live there. Take the latest to be banned, carbendazim. This is particularly good at hanging around, with it showing up in 27% of apple juice samples by the EU monitoring chaps.

But what can we do to reduce the amount of pest damage? Attracting wildlife may be one answer. Hedgehogs, starlings and other carnivores take worms, chafers and leather jackets as a foodstuff with minimal damage to turf - it's just a thought.

There's been some whoppingly rare bird sightings on courses this past month. A hoopoe showed up at Royal West Norfolk and began nibbling at the bunkers. Hesketh on the North West coast recorded a yellow browed warbler and with a number of infrequent rarities including an olive backed pipit, Siberian accentor and a red flanked bluetail showing up on the east side of England it may be an idea to invest in a pair of binoculars to see if any appear on your course.

The wildflowers are clinging on to life, but with the frosts developing in many parts you probably won't see them for much longer. Harleyford still have a few toadflax showing and Kevin Weller sent over an image of flowers at his course.

However, you may still see a few moths, butterflies and caterpillars mooching around as these snaps sent in by Phil Slater, Matt Arnold and Kevin Hensman show.

We know water vole numbers are plummeting faster than the pound, with the Surrey branch of this smashing aquatic mammal's society mentioning they haven't found any this year. Help is at hand in Cambridgeshire, in the shape of a small golf course called Cambridge Lakes. This pro-active bunch has created an avenue for their resident voles to forage in safety from prying herons - how good is that?

One more thing: Keith Kemp, the course manager of West Cornwall, and his team were faced with an unusual hurdle one morning when a seal pup got stranded on their picturesque course. Everything was soon sorted when the Maritime Animal Response Team showed up and returned the seal to its natural habitat. Great work all.

Matt Arnold's Red Admiral and Phil Slater's caterpillar

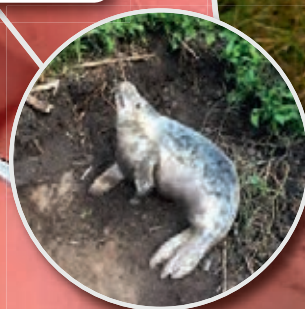


Hoopoe at Royal West Norfolk



Kevin Hensman's Privet Hawk

Harleyford's toadflax and a seal pup at West Cornwall



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Full Members Personal Accident Helpline
0121 698 8046 / 43

Greenkeepers Legal Assistance
0800 177 7891

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

BIGGA AGM 2017

The BIGGA AGM will take place at 1.15pm on Tuesday 17 January 2017 in the Queens Suite of the Harrogate International Centre. The dress code is smart casual, not jacket and tie as in previous years.

MEMBERSHIP

Latest news and information from the BIGGA membership team

JOIN THE TEAM FOR THE OPEN 2017



The Open returns to England in 2017, and once again the R&A has requested the help of BIGGA members to ensure golf's greatest tournament goes off without a hitch.

Royal Birkdale in Southport will be hosting the Open for the 10th time on 16-23 July and a BIGGA Support Team will be on hand to assist Chris Whittle and his team by raking for the players during every match during the tournament's four rounds.

Support Team members may also be called upon at short notice to help out with early morning preparation work and divoting duties.

With the first tee time at this year's Open taking place at 6.35am, and golf being played until nightfall, the week is intense and demanding. But anyone who has previously taken part on the Open Support Team will tell you it is one of the most professionally and personally rewarding things you will ever do. The Support Team gets a money-can't-buy view of the action - just ask Stoneham's Rob Patrick, who witnessed potentially the greatest duel in golf play out in front of him at Royal Troon.

The R&A will provide accommodation, food, refreshments and uniform throughout the entire event.

THE BIGGA OPEN SUPPORT TEAM – APPLICATION FORM, ROYAL BIRKDALE 2017

PERSONAL DETAILS		
Name:	BIGGA Membership No:	Age:
Golf Club:	Position:	
Home Address:		
.....		
.....		
Postcode:		
Email:	Contact Telephone:	

I HAVE APPLIED FOR/APPEARED ON THE OPEN SUPPORT TEAM AT:			SKILLS & EXPERIENCE:		
Open Tournament	Applied	Successful		Yes	No
Royal Troon, 2016			I have been a BIGGA member for more than three years		
St Andrews, 2015			I serve, or have served in the last three years on a Section/Region Committee		
Royal Liverpool, 2014			I am CPD active		
Muirfield, 2013			I am willing to be a mini bus driver (You must have held a full driving licence for 3 years and be over 25 years of age)		

PLEASE GIVE DETAILS OF ANY OTHER PREVIOUS VOLUNTEER SUPPORT TEAM WORK:		
Date:	Tournament:	Duties carried out:

What do you hope to achieve by being part of the support team?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

UNIFORM SIZES (IF SELECTED)					
Waterproof measurements	Waist:			Leg length:	
Polo shirt Measurements (tick):	S	M	L	XL	XXL

OTHER INFORMATION		
	Yes	No
Sunday final night, will you require accommodation booking? (tick)		
Passport photograph attached? (tick)		

Note: A place on the team is open to all full BIGGA members but priority is given to the more active members. Subject to the availability of sufficient numbers of experienced team members no regular team member will be selected for more than three teams in succession. A limited number of places will be made available to younger members and overseas members. **Please ensure that you have spoken to your golf club or Course Manager prior to applying and have arranged the time off.**

To apply please fill in the application form and enclose a passport photograph and send to: Rachael Duffy, BIGGA House, Aldwark, Alne, York YO61 1UF.

Closing date is 27 January 2017. You will be notified by the end of February if you have been successful.



LEARNING &
DEVELOPMENT TEAM
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(OPTION 3)

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LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

L&D NEWS

Latest news from the BIGGA Learning and Development team



New era for golf clubs begins with diploma launch



The attendees of the diploma induction day

The first candidates to enroll on the ASQ Level 5 Diploma in Golf Club Management have begun their studies, marking a positive shift in how golf clubs will be managed in the future.

The diploma launched in August with lots of interest, including greenkeepers looking to make the move into club management.

There have been more than 200 expressions of interest, with the first candidates taking part in an induction day at the PGA National Training Academy.

BIGGA CEO Jim Croxton attended the launch and said: "BIGGA is totally committed to supporting golf club management education and the recently-launched diploma represents a historic moment in the industry. The sport of golf is absolutely reliant on professional, well-managed clubs to provide vibrant, customer focussed venues for the nation's nearly 4 million golfers to enjoy."

Created by the Golf Club Management Partnership, comprising the GCMA, PGA and BIGGA, the ASQ Level 5 Diploma in Golf Club Management represents a fundamental shift in the approach to professional education in club management.

Suitable for all levels of skills and experience, the golf-specific qualification is suited for those looking to move into the club management profession.

Jim added: "I am sure this formal qualification will become industry standard in due course and lays out the key skills and understanding required of a modern club manager. It will undoubtedly lead to more professionally run golf clubs."

"Naturally, the diploma includes a section on the management of greenkeeping teams as golf course condition is a critical part of golfer enjoyment and club managers need a full understanding of how to get the best from their resources and exceed customer expectations."

The diploma can be studied at the learner's own pace and with an emphasis on flexible learning, it will be delivered through a combination of online and face to face workshops.

Joshua Moses, assistant general manager at Sunningdale Ladies, said: "I'm looking forward to furthering my career development, and they are very supportive at the club."



Jonathan Wood, St Andrews Links Trust; Eoin Riddell, Royal Dornoch; Elliot Wilson, TGMS; Craig Berry, St Andrews Links Trust; Darren Anderson MG, Abergele; David Cole MG, Loch Lomond; Ben Kebby, Temple; Matthew Perks, Sunningdale.

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

The following members also achieved their milestone this month: Sid Arrowsmith MG, Frilford Heath; Andrew Weeks, The Ohio State University.

Jon Jo nets scholarship

Royston greenkeeper Jon Jo Pitts, 24, has thanked Baroness after becoming the latest recipient of the Level 3 scholarship, sponsored by Baroness.

Jon Jo will be studying towards the Level 3 Greenkeeping qualification at Oaklands College.

He added that the benefits of taking part in BIGGA's scholarship schemes are not just financial.

"There's a lot of prestige associated with the scholarship," he said.

"Being able to say you are part of the scholarship shows you are motivated to go out and do the best for your career. I think that makes you really attractive to future employers."

Designed to help greenkeeper members gain their technical and supervisory qualification, the fund is available to those studying towards the Level 3 Diploma in Work-Based Horticulture and SVQ Level 3 Sports Turf Management.



Jon Jo Pitts

"I've always been interested in golf and management is certainly an area of the golf industry I am particularly interested in. I thought where else is better to go than GCMA, PGA and BIGGA and this diploma?"

The nine units that comprise the qualification are based on SFEDI business and enterprise National Occupation Standards and are: Leading and managing people in a golf club; Managing change in a golf club; Managing the operations of a golf club; Marketing of a golf club; Understand personal and enterprising behaviours and skills; Keeping up to date with legislation of a golf club; Developing and managing a socially responsible golf club; and Managing innovation and golf in a golf club."

For more information or to apply to join the diploma scheme, visit www.gcma.org.uk/diploma



BIGGA's Stuart Green at the induction day



INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS

Steven Tierney MG, Chris Lomas MG, Andrew Campbell MG CGCS, Steve Dixon; Richard McGlynn, Jaey Goodchild; Michael Beaton, Frank Newberry

LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

GI Industry Update

The latest news



Hadlow College landmark



First Level 2 apprentice



Ryder Cup support



Kubota expansion

INDUSTRY UPDATE

BIGGA features at Amenity Forum

BIGGA was on the agenda at the latest meeting of the Amenity Forum.

The forum is a gathering of professionals from all aspects of the amenity and sports turf industries and is a voluntary initiative that promotes best practice and improved standards.

The latest conference was held at the Pirelli Stadium, home of Burton Albion FC and featured

speakers on a diverse range of topics. Talks ranged from Wembley Stadium head groundsman Alan Ferguson to Highways England's Tony Sangwine OBE, who discussed the huge 'estate' operated by the body alongside the UK's major road network.

BIGGA is a member of the forum and CEO Jim Croxton took the opportunity to speak about how golf and greenkeeping can be seen to form

a major part of the amenity sector, with a successful golf course having huge benefits for the local community.

With 75,000 people directly employed in the sport, golf generates £10.3 billion for the national economy.

Also discussed at the Amenity Forum was the introduction of the new sprayer Sustainable Use Directive which is discussed in more detail on page 44.



Alan Ferguson

Update on the withdrawal of carbendazim

The withdrawal of carbendazim is creating concern for those involved in managing turf surfaces.

The Amenity Forum has provided an update on the controversial withdrawal of the pesticide. A statement from the forum said:

"We are in discussions with those involved about the implications and their importance.

"What is very important is for the sector to stand united and demonstrate its commitment to best practice. It is also essential that we demonstrate to

everyone how important and essential our work is, impacting on the lives of every UK citizen.

"The Getmoving campaign is an ideal opportunity and we hope everyone will engage to ensure we retain our ability to undertake the vital work of weed, pest and

disease control."

The deadline for purchasing carbendazim is 28 February 2017 and users will have until 31 August 2017 to store, use and dispose of existing stock.

Visit www.amenityforum.co.uk for more information.

Course upgrades

Golfers visiting Macdonald Hotels & Resorts will benefit from a series of course upgrades at five of its UK venues, following a £550,000 investment.

Highlighting a commitment to ensuring the courses remain in prime condition throughout the year, a number of enhancements will be completed by the end of 2016, including bunker renovation, greens project works and pathway redevelopment, while each venue also has a new fleet of course maintenance vehicles.

Golf course upgrades have been made at Linden Hall in Northumberland, Hill Valley in Shropshire, Portal in Cheshire, Cardrona in Peebles and Spey Valley in Aviemore, host of the SSE Scottish Hydro Challenge.



The 14th hole at Portal

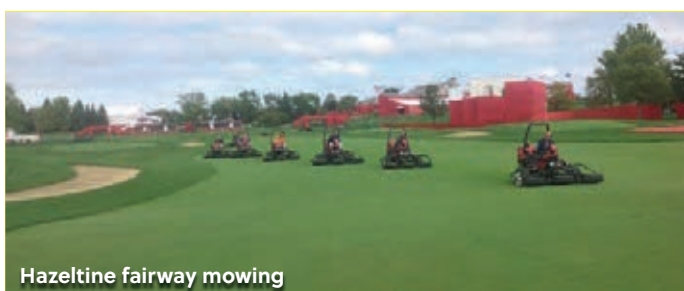
Ryder Cup support

Behind the scenes at the Ryder Cup was a team of unsung heroes, and Bernhard US Territory Manager Doug Veine has recalled his experiences.

Doug worked closely with Hazeltine Equipment Manager Ralph Arnt and said: "Teamwork is everything. In addition to the course staff, there were around 125 volunteers, working two shifts, morning and evening. Superintendent Chris Tritabaugh did an amazing job of organising his own team, the volunteers and all the sponsors that help out at the tournament.

"Being part of something like the Ryder Cup is an honour. Hearing the roars of the crowd as the teams scored on the course sends a chilling feeling of excitement through you. I believe this is the largest golf event ever to date. Well over 250,000 people attended over the week and we should be so proud that Bernhard played a part in it."

During the event, Doug was on hand to sharpen and set the cutting units. Around 90 cutting units were handled each day, with the focus on sharpening during the prep week.



Hazeltine fairway mowing

Barenbrug manager

Barenbrug has appointed Luke Hunt as area manager for the east and south east of England.

A former greenkeeper, most recently at the Hotchkiss course at Woodhall Spa, Luke is an established seed and sportsturf expert with five years' experience working with seed breeders and merchants throughout the UK and Europe. He joined Barenbrug this summer.

Amenity Business Manager David Greenshields said: "We are delighted to welcome Luke to the team. He brings with him not only a passion for the industry and an understanding from a user perspective, but he is also an expert in amenity grass and UK native wildflower seeds, an area we are keen to expand on."



Luke Hunt

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Apprenticeship approval is UK first

Hadlow College has become the first centre in the UK to be awarded approval to offer the 0143 Golf Greenkeeping Standard Apprenticeship.

The Kent land-based college has been approved by City & Guilds to offer the qualification, which has been developed by the Greenkeepers Training Committee, BIGGA and England Golf.

The apprenticeship typically takes two years to complete and upon completion, apprentices will be eligible to join BIGGA as a full member.

Anthony Stockwell, Sports Turf Assessor at Hadlow College, said: "I am very optimistic for the future of greenkeeping education and I believe these changes will continue to raise the standards within the profession."

The college already has its first two applicants, with Adam Richardson, 17, and Callum Melody, 18, becoming the first students in the south of England to take the new apprenticeship. Both will be based at

Royal St George's Open championship course in Sandwich, Kent.

Adam, who has already been working as a caddy at Royal St George's for three years, said: "We're the guinea pigs for this brand new apprenticeship, so we don't really know what to expect yet, but we're buzzing with excitement."

Callum has been working at Walmer & Kingsdown in Deal, Kent, and said: "I'm hoping to progress on to the Level 3 Trailblazer Apprenticeship after completing this one. We'll both be fully-qualified by the time of the 2020 Open, so it's exciting to think we could be working there, since Royal St George's is on the venue rotation and may be hosting."

Apprenticeships at Hadlow College are delivered by the Apprenticeships, Business and Community department, which offers access to an £85m Tonbridge campus, a new £26m Ashford campus and 1,000 acres of mixed farmland, fisheries and countryside in the heart of Kent.



The team at The Grove has been praised for its efforts

Tour sings Grove praise

A host of the European Tour's top players have given The Grove the thumbs up following October's British Masters supported by Sky Sports.

The course is maintained by BIGGA member Phil Chiverton and his team.

Ryder Cup veteran and 2007 winner of the British Masters, Lee Westwood, led the stream of positive comments and said: "Visually the Grove is a spectacular course. If you are hitting the ball well, it gives you a lot of birdie chances and certainly on the few times I have been here, the course has been in fantastic condition. This week is no different."

Joining the resident greenkeepers at The Grove was a support team of BIGGA members, who assisted with course preparation throughout the tournament.

The event was won by Swede Alex Noran with an 18 under par total, and competitors heaped praise on the condition, preparation and layout of the course during the week of tournament play.

England's Robert Rock said: "The greens are probably the best we've had on the European Tour, bar the Middle East. For England at this time of year, they've done an amazing job."

Anna Darnell, director of golf and resort experiences at The Grove, said: "Preparing The Grove for the tournament was a huge team effort and it is rewarding to hear the players' positive comments throughout the week. We have also received many positive comments from the 53,000 spectators who attended."

The 2017 edition of the British Masters will take place at Close House near Newcastle under the supervision of another BIGGA member, Brian Clark.

Kubota dealer expands across the south east



One of Kubota's south east dealerships, Rod Gaskin Ltd, has unveiled its new West Sussex depot, expanding the reach of Kubota's groundcare products.

The opening of the company's Haywards Heath facility was

prompted by the arrival of Kubota's latest M7001 Series tractors. Alongside the tractors, the depot will also offer the full range of groundcare equipment, completing the Kubota range on offer.

Sales Director Tom Gaskin said: "Our business in

Hampshire has always been evenly spread across agriculture and groundcare product sales, but this depot will allow us to offer Kubota machinery to customers across the territory."

Tom will head up the new premises with support from a small team of four.



Toro Workman GTX

Toro's new Workman might be light but it offers loads of utility.

With over 300 configurations, this turf and grounds crossover utility vehicle is the industry's most versatile platform with more power, improved steering and an exclusive suspension and braking system, which aids practicality and comfort.

Attachments:
Front and rear attachment points

Seating:
First in range to offer option to seat four

Load Space:
Steel and 6-foot flat beds available



Power to weight ratio:
Better power to weight ratio boosts payload capacity

Steering:
Manual rack and pinion steering, with 2.75 turns lock-to-lock

Fuel:
Available in petrol or electric versions

Speed:
Transport speed up to 16mph

MACHINERY RELEASES

Reece blazes a trail for greenkeeper training

A Myerscough College learner has become the first trainee greenkeeper in the UK to be enrolled on a Level 2 apprenticeship to the new Trailblazer standard.

16-year-old Reece Tomalin will be undertaking the City & Guilds Level 2 Certificate in Golf Greenkeeping.

Reece, who began his training at Trentham in Stoke on Trent, said: "I have already learned loads, working with the team and just getting used to the world of

work. "It's great to think that I am the first apprentice on the new programme and I am really looking forward to developing in my role."

Fiona Lyttle, GTC manager, said: "The greenkeeping industry has been at the forefront of dramatic changes to how apprenticeships in England are administered. The reforms are intended to engage with the employer more, to get them involved with education and ensure staff are trained to the highest possible standards."



Reece Tomalin and BIGGA's Roger Butler



PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION 2016

SEPTEMBER SUNRISE SCOOPS PHOTO COMPETITION TOP PRIZE

From The Remarkables Mountain Range in New Zealand to the PGA Championship at Whistling Straits, the BIGGA Photographic Competition proved once again just how beautiful and varied the working environment of a greenkeeper can be.

Yet, despite submissions coming from far and wide, it was a photograph taken at one humble Welsh course that has been chosen as the winner of the BIGGA Photographic Competition 2016.

The theme for this year's competition was 'Life on the Course', and you guys sure didn't disappoint.

We received a huge number of entries to the competition and put our top 20 to member vote.

Almost 250 BIGGA members took part by choosing their favourite photograph, with the results being used to help determine the 12 images that will be featured in the BIGGA Calendar 2017.

But in the end, there could be only one winner, and this year it came from a quite unexpected place.

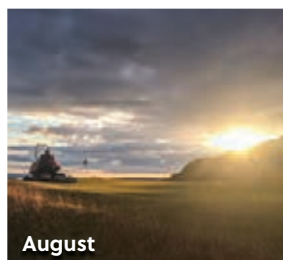
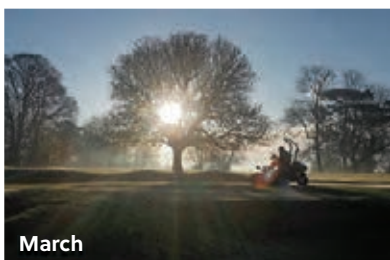
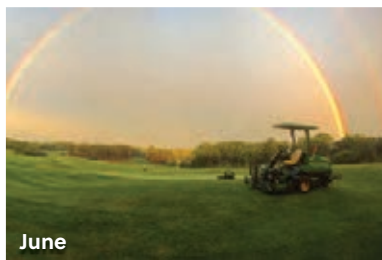
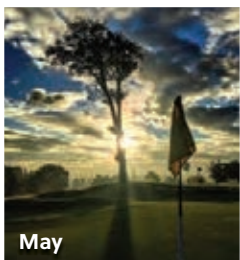
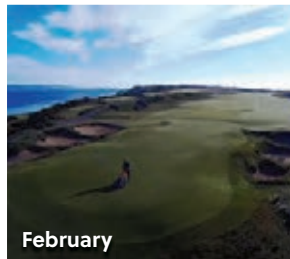
Wrexham isn't known as among the UK's most photogenic courses, yet Acting Deputy Head Greenkeeper John Parry used his

eye for a photograph to capture this spectacular image of course preparation one morning. The image shows a silhouetted David Wilkinson, Wrexham's former head greenkeeper, as he installed a hole on the club's 6th green.

"I am over the moon to have won," said John. "There were a lot of really good pictures entered into the competition, so I actually can't believe it."



John Parry



THE FINAL 12

JANUARY
Nick Paris, Camberley Heath

FEBRUARY
Chris Haspell, Castle Stuart
'Drone work at the sixth'

MARCH
Ben Croft, Mid Herts
'Early morning sun'

APRIL
Phil Worth, Prestbury
'Tiger the goat'

MAY
Paul Connolly, Ralston
'The early morning sun'

JUNE
Luke Cordery, Bearwood Lakes
'A nice 5am start'

JULY
Mark Fry, Worplesdon
'View from the 4th'

AUGUST
Graeme Roberts, Camberley Heath
'Mowing surrounds'

SEPTEMBER
John Parry, Wrexham
'A hole in six'

OCTOBER
Ian Joseph Harrison, Mendip Spring

NOVEMBER
Jake Austin, Hankley Common

DECEMBER
Andrew Norman, East Sussex National
'12th hole on the East course'

"The picture looks a bit staged, but it was not planned. It was a beautiful morning and I was out there with my boss at the time, changing holes. I took hundreds of photos that morning, and I saw him on the 6th hole with the sunrise behind. He didn't know I was taking the photo and so it was very natural."

John's picture has been chosen to feature on the September page of the calendar, which is poignant as that's the month when the photograph was taken.

Perhaps most surprisingly, the image wasn't taken with a high end camera, rather John used his Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

John said: "It's got a really good camera and because most of us always carry a smartphone in our pocket, it means they are really useful for getting spur-of-the-moment pictures.

"This picture has always been a favourite of mine. It was quite simple but came out better than I expected and I am very fond of it.

"It's just a greenkeeper going about his daily business."

Wrexham is a parkland course located on the outskirts of the town. Built beside a quarry on a sand and gravel subsoil, the layout has an almost links feel.

John said: "It can be tough to be a photographer around here. There are no lovely snow-capped mountains or scenery so I have to get quite creative, which I love. I like that challenge.

"There is some great wildlife, such as foxes, lizards, snakes and newts. But I tend to go for the small things, such as insects."

Having won the competition, John will be presented with a framed print of his photograph and an Apple Watch at the Welcome Celebration, held at BTME in January.

"I'm absolutely over the moon to have won," said John. "I can't wait to defend my title in next year's competition." ■

 The images chosen for the 2017 calendar

A huge thank you to everyone who entered and voted in the competition.
Don't forget to keep your camera handy and enter your best snaps into next year's competition.

PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION 2016

'HE WAS SCREAMING IN PAIN SO I DIDN'T TELL ANYONE I HAD BEEN SHOT'



BY KARL HANSELL, BIGGA

Lying in a dirt-filled drainage ditch with a gunshot wound to his leg and the Taliban fighters who had ambushed his team hiding somewhere nearby, David Sneddon couldn't afford to be scared.

ON COURSE FOUNDATION

There would be plenty of time for pain in the years to come, when infection claimed his right leg and depression struck, but for now, his colleagues needed him.

It was 2 August 2010 and Corporal Sneddon and his 10-strong squad were patrolling through Nad-e-Ali in Helmand Province, Afghanistan.

During the early evening, the local shop they approached would normally have been bustling with children playing and civilians going about their business.

Yet today it was deserted.

"I got on the radio to the boss and told him something wasn't right," said David. "He told us to make our way as quickly as we could back to camp.

"I told the lead man to take us out. But as we all stood up, the Taliban fighters ambushed us."

The point man was hit before he had chance to raise his rifle. David was fourth in line and got struck in the knee.

"I knew I had been hit, but I never felt I was stumbling about," said David. "I jumped in the ditch and got medics up to the front guy. I didn't tell anybody I had been shot because he was screaming in pain.

"In my mind, when I was in the ditch, the first thing I said was 'please don't let me die in this s***hole'."

David sent a contact report back to base. Within moments, Apache gunships were overhead.

"As soon as I heard them, I knew we were safe," said David. "I could have crumbled in that ditch, but when other people are relying on you, you know that's not an option.

"Nobody wanted to get out of the ditch, but I was pretty confident they had cleared off. So I dragged myself over towards a tree, took the helmet off and said "Look, if there was Taliban, no way would I be doing this".

Cpl David Sneddon on tour in Afghanistan



"One of the lads put me on his shoulder and carried me to the helicopter. That's the last thing I can remember."

David's 18 years as a soldier were over. In the six years since, greenkeeping became his saving grace and this year we welcomed him into the BIGGA family.

In the aftermath of his injury, David would have three painful knee replacements, each failing as an allergy to penicillin meant he was unable to treat an infection he picked up while lying in that filthy Afghan ditch.

"I decided enough was enough," he said. "I told them to amputate my leg. I was in absolute agony and it had been two and a half years in a wheelchair. I couldn't sleep at night, I was in constant pain, and it was the worst two and a half years ever."

David asked the doctors to amputate his leg. After 10 weeks, with the wound healing well, he was fitted with a prosthetic limb. The one he wears now is a Genium X3, purchased on his behalf by the Ministry of Defence. The prosthetic is the latest in artificial limb replacement technology and has modes that allow you to cycle, ski, golf and even swim.



But first David had to learn how to walk again.

“At first I hated it. I couldn’t get used to the prosthetic at all,” he said. “When I first got amputated I would never wear shorts. People were always staring at me, judging me, because they didn’t know my story. But as the years past I decided to let it go. Kids ask me what happened and if they were younger, I’d say it was a shark attack. I tell older kids what actually happened if they ask, but adults just sit and stare, which is the worst.

“But then I realised that it’s never going to go away, no matter how much I hate it. People are going to judge, you just have to be thick skinned. It’s actually quite funny as now I hate wearing jeans, they just get caught on the prosthetic.”

Since his accident, David had been visiting Headley Court, the Armed Forces’ rehabilitation centre in Surrey, for four-week periods.

While there he met another injured veteran, named Mike Brown, who told him about the On Course Foundation and how it had helped former soldiers in his position who had been suffering in the aftermath of their life-changing injuries.

The On Course Foundation supports the recovery of injured servicemen and veterans by introducing them to golf and in some cases finding them employment within the golf industry.

David attended a test day at Kingsfield Golf Centre, near Edinburgh, and he now volunteers at the club three times a week.

David said: “After 18 years in the Army, there was no way I could sit in an office inside. I’m also in hospital quite a lot so I wouldn’t be able to hold down a job behind a desk.

“But I love greenkeeping. There’s nothing they have asked me that I have never been able to do. The three days take it out of me as, with my leg being amputated, I use 150% more effort than a normal person would. But it is incredible to feel useful again.”

To help David around the course, Head Greenkeeper Lee Fraser has adapted a lot of the vehicles for him to use.



David has become comfortable with his prosthetic leg

‘When I first got amputated I would never wear shorts. People were always staring at me, judging me, because they didn’t know my story. But as the years past I decided to let it go. Kids ask me what happened and if they were younger, I’d say it was a shark attack. I tell older kids what actually happened if they ask, but adults just sit and stare, which is the worst.’

Continued Over

With the accelerator pedal of the club's fairway mowers on the right – the side David wears his prosthetic – the greens team has adapted the equipment so he can use an old golf trolley to handle the accelerator.

“They are making changes like that so I can get more involved with the greenkeeping,” said David. “I am always asking questions about what we're doing and why. For example, we are changing the greens from poa annua to fescue, and it's interesting to learn why that's happening.”

For David, the bullet that shattered his right leg brought to an end one part of his life. But another journey began and in the dark, painful years since, he has found relief through greenkeeping.

This year, David was offered a year's membership with BIGGA, allowing him to develop his greenkeeping passion further, and in March he received the Inspiration of the Year prize at the Scottish Golf Awards.

“Everyone knows what you are signing up for when you join the Army,” said David. “You go to war and it's not very nice, it's just one of those things.

“I still get my bad days, but when I do I just come here to the golf club. Before, I was stuck in the house, in and out of hospital, kicking in to depression. But when I started here, it opened up my world and gave me something to enjoy. I have a laugh with the lads and when I am out on the course I get the chance to reflect on what I have done and I feel one with myself.” ■

A state-of-the-art prosthetic leg allows David to play golf

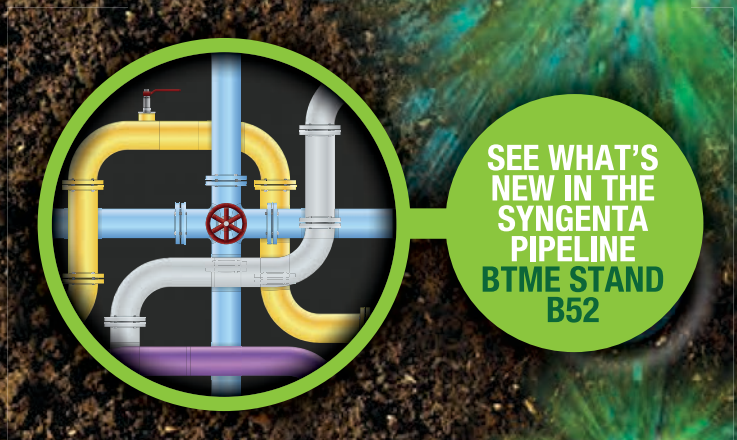


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FOUNDATION

The On Course Foundation is the only Services golf charity. It provides long-term benefits for wounded troops and veterans through golf. The foundation offers practical training through work experience placements for those who wish to pursue a career in the golf industry. Through this process, the wounded troops and veterans are able to build personal esteem and self-confidence and develop the skills and confidence to find long-term employment.

For more information visit www.oucoursefoundation.com

'With On Course's help, I'm now working three days a week as a greenkeeper at Kingsfield. The leg is fantastic and has opened up a whole new world for me - especially around the golf course. I still hit plenty of duff shots, though - there's no technology on this planet that can fix my swing.'

David Sneddon – On Course Foundation Member

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10 STEPS TO THE PERFECT BUNKER

WITH STUART IMESON,
HEAD GREENKEEPER AT
DUNSTANBURGH CASTLE



Links bunkering is perceived as the most dramatic and fierce of all bunkers types. In the early days of golf, many centuries ago, Scottish golfers shared the land with sheep and the annoying little things would scrape away the grass. These sheep were, in a sense, the first greenkeepers, helping to keep the grass short and playable.

BUNKERS

But they also scraped away the turf and underlying sand to produce hollows, in which they could shelter from the wind. Pioneering golfers grew angry about this destruction of the golf course and removed the sheep, replacing them with professional greenstaff. But the hollows remained, and after years of trying and often failing to repair these marks and scars, the Scots realised the holes actually made the course more demanding. The humble bunker had been invented.

Although revetting wasn't introduced straight away, the concept of a bunker had been born. Natural bunkers are still seen today at the likes of Castle Stuart, where the dramatic jagged edge with fescue rolling behind make the bunkers look the same as they would have centuries ago.

Revetting began around the 1880s, with turf being cut with a spade into bricks and stacked at points of bunkers where excessive wind damage occurred.

These days, revetting is seen as an art form and a traditional way to protect the historic heritage of a links course. Most of the Open venues have these revetted-faced bunkers and in my opinion they represent the character of the links golf course as much as any other feature.



 A revetted bunker at Dunstanburgh Castle

When constructing a revetted bunker there are many things to consider. This includes wind blow, design and any contouring work to enable the bunker to fit into the landscape. There is also the bunker's size and shape, the severity of the angle of the wall, the depth of the bunker, irrigation, time, materials and labour.

The most important thing to consider about links bunkering is whether it fits into the natural setting.

Over the last few years, after seeing countless social media posts by greenkeepers at various courses such as St Andrews, Royal Dornoch and Royal Cinque Ports, I realised my own revetting skills were in need of improvement. I decided to research into ways to improve them and tried to come up with a few simple steps to make sure all the bunkers I built and restored had a consistent look and feel to them. And honestly, this has nothing to do with the fact I think revetted bunkers look like works of art and I love watching golfers struggle getting out of them!

HOW TO REVETT A BUNKER

01

SELECT THE RIGHT TURF

Whether its bought in or turf farmed on your own site, I've found fescue turf cut between 1-2 inches thick gives the best stepped effect. Choosing fescue turf means minimal growth for best appearance and less maintenance. It also allows you to leave them slightly hairier than usual to make the links effect stand out better.

02

THE BASE

Make sure this is completely level and that the sides are a mirror image of each other.

Once the wall is built, it is important to compact this level to make sure there is no movement in the turf in years to come, especially as mowers will pass over the top.



03

TURF FLOOR

These are becoming increasingly more common to help keep the sand levels in the bunker consistent.

A turf floor also helps keep the bunker debris free from anything that may come to the surface over the next few years.

04

THE FIRST ROW

Make sure your first row is the exact size and shape you want. It may sound silly, but I've seen so many bunkers that I wished I'd tweaked the shape of when I had the chance.

Lay from the centre outwards and when building a new bunker, go five layers below the anticipated sand level. When the wind blows, it is easy for the sand to get underneath the turf layers if they are too shallow, which will cause problems.

05

GET THE ANGLE OF THE WALL CORRECT

This will vary due to where on the hole the bunker is positioned. Bunkers should be less steep on the fairway, but increase in angle as you approach the green. This will give you the gap for the step of the revetted rows. Faces should be between 10-15 degrees from the vertical. With less of a slope than that, you offer too much opportunity for people to try and walk up them. Any steeper and the wearout becomes much greater. A good guideline for laying the turf is to have two finger widths difference between the layers.



06

TAPER THE EDGES

Tapering is something I've picked up along the way. It allows your wall to flow into row after row, making the wall have a smooth finish around the final row and the top edge.



Continued Over

07

BACK FILL

One of the most important jobs when constructing a revetted bunker. The back fill makes not only the foundation for each layer, but it also helps lock all the sods together making minimal movement once built.

08

KNOW WHEN TO STOP

Always remember that you have to make sure the contours can be maintained by your team. Links courses should fit seamlessly into the natural land and so do not make them too high or steep. It is important to remember the rivetting is not part of the bunker, which in fact begins at the sand line.



09

CONTOUR THE NATURAL EDGE

The contouring of the final edge around the bunker is something that can often go wrong if rushed and so you need to look at the way the land rolls and fit your bunker to match. I've found working from the existing land down towards the face of the bunker allows you to determine the height of the bunker and the necessary contouring easily.



10

FINAL TURF

This can be the most satisfying part after a short reflection of what you've achieved. Then keep the bunker out of play for a few weeks to allow it to settle and knit together sufficiently. It may be the turf needs pegging until root development has taken place. ■



DURABLE REVETTED BUNKERS AT ST ENODOC

The team at St Enodoc GC has adopted a different approach to revetting bunkers.

Course Manager Scott Gibson said: "Historically we rebuild our revetted bunkers on a regular basis at St Enodoc, a task that requires huge amounts of man power and resources. More recently though, we discovered Durabunker, which utilizes recycled synthetic grass to build revetted bunker faces and edges.

"It's fair to say we were sceptical at first due to the synthetic nature of the product, but it really does look fantastic, takes away the need to constantly rebuild bunkers and requires little or no maintenance to keep it looking good. It really is a revelation. The vast majority of members had no idea the first Durabunker we built on the Church Course was in fact synthetic, it looks so natural.

"I would suggest that sustainable bunker construction of this kind will be of benefit to any course manager, and although we are a traditional links course, the spin off for inland courses is that shallower revetted edges can be built in this way. I know that a number of courses have also incorporated a liner in addition to synthetic edges to offer a complete solution.

"Maintenance savings from edging work alone would be appealing for most courses. Having the added benefit of bunker shapes not changing or moving ever closer to greens is also a very positive benefit of building bunkers in this way. The fact that all material used is re-cycled is the cherry on the cake as far as I'm concerned."

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HOW MUCH DOES GOOD QUALITY TURF COST?

BY PAUL MILLER

SUSTAINABILITY

The word ‘sustainability’ has entered the language of course management over recent years, yet how many of us are able to define it, or articulate what it might mean for us in practice?

It is my intention, in this and subsequent articles, to give a perspective on sustainability following personal experiences over the last couple of years, using examples from Scotland, Scandinavia and from the USA and Brazil.

It is in all our interests that golf has a healthy future, but that future lies in an uncertain world in terms of climate change for us all and post-Brexit economic and legislative considerations, for those of us in the UK in particular.

Niels Bohr, the Danish physicist and Nobel Prize winner in 1922, famously said: “Prediction is very difficult, especially if it’s about the future.”

With that truth in mind, it is with a little trepidation that I set out to share these considerations about the future of greenkeeping and golf course management as we respond to our changing environment.

Ensuring a long-term future for courses and for golf as a sport is inextricably linked with notions of ‘sustainability’, regardless of the strict definition we choose to give that concept.


In searching for the meaning of that term and application of it within our industry, I look to the R&A and their excellent website ‘Golf Course Management’, which is full of case studies and articles about sustainable golf course management.

I shall take their definition and work from there, discussing the concept and then describing those examples that I have referred to.

The R&A recognise four main pillars of sustainable golf course management: environmental stewardship, social responsibility, financial viability, and turf quality with an emphasis on playing performance. Each is entwined and inseparable from the other. Can we do justice to all of these in the one golf course, or do compromises have to be reached? What is the best turf we can produce given the resources at our disposal and the environmental constraints we are working with?

I have sat in many seminars and heard about the practices of high profile venues, operating with budgets beyond the means of the vast majority of clubs. These venues can, in one narrow context at least, be described as sustainable – if they have the money to keep doing what they are doing then they are sustainable. That’s OK for some, but the majority of clubs exist within stringent financial constraints and in the real world I feel we need to find an application of broader thinking that can be relevant to those. Something has to give, whether price, quality or time scale, and I wonder where the compromises will come if we are seeking the holy grail of sustainable golf course management in a challenging future.




14th green
at Askernish

Where, in an everyday situation, do we make our compromises – do we compromise environmentally, financially, socially or in turf and golf course quality? I am not going to pretend that, in the examples I shall go on to describe, the approaches taken are universally applicable, but I believe they demonstrate the way in which golf course management has adapted to the wider economic and social environment, and from that we can at least draw some ideas.

In this first of three articles I shall discuss Askernish on South Uist. The second will describe the approach to 'Low Input Turf Management' as discussed at the Copenhagen seminar of the Scandinavian Turf and Environment Research Foundation, and the third will describe the work of 'Team Zoysia', which is a collaboration of plant breeders, scientists and turf managers in the United States, who supplied grass for the Olympic Course in Rio.

Askernish will be familiar to many readers, as it has received considerable attention due to course restoration over the past decade. Askernish is on South Uist, one of Scotland's Western Isles, and has received attention for several reasons. There is the historic association with Old Tom Morris, Keeper of the Green at St Andrews, who laid out the original

course in 1891 for the enjoyment of the Askernish landowner Lady Cathcart and her friends. At some point in history the course fell into decline, although golf at Askernish never fully disappeared, and I suspect any familiarity you have will be since the revitalisation from 2005 onwards, when the course was restored with zero earth movement, simply being 'discovered' and mown out of the existing landscape. This process was carried out by Head Greenkeeper Allan MacDonald, supported by Gordon Irvine MG and a team of greenkeeper volunteers from all parts. Perhaps less well known is that Askernish plays host to a group of R&A Greenkeeping Scholars from SRUC Elmwood and Myerscough College on an annual study visit to examine and discuss sustainable golf course management. So why go to the trouble of taking students, lecturers and speakers to South Uist?

What does it have to offer that we can't find closer to home?

In terms of environmental stewardship Askernish sits on 'machair', a rare and fragile landscape consisting of windblown sand running from the tops of the beach dunes to a point inland at which there is a transition to rocky, peaty ground dotted with lochans (small lochs). Traditional land-use here is subsistence farming, or 'crofting', from which crops of potatoes and Uist oats are taken on a rotational basis with land lying fallow, fertilised by seaweed, between cropping years. In winter, machair provides grazing for the crofters' cattle and sheep. As such this is a well established but fragile agricultural system in a unique environment, and the golf course was introduced to it.

Continued Over

Ensuring a long-term future for courses and for golf as a sport is inextricably linked with notions of 'sustainability', regardless of the strict definition we choose to give that concept.



Under this traditional land use, a species-rich grassland has evolved to support insects and other invertebrates, small mammals and bird life – some of which are very rare and on the edge of survival.

During the re-establishment of Askernish there was concern the change of land use would compromise the environmental diversity, so Scottish Natural Heritage led the way in protecting the species-rich habitat, expressing concerns over many aspects of sharing the land with golf. These ranged from the protection of ground-nesting birds to the potential overuse of fertilisers.

For the past four years, during the R&A Scholars' visit, Joanne Ferguson of SNH has spent time explaining the machair and the relationship with the golf course. She is very happy that golf, habitat management and biodiversity can coexist with the minimum of tension. Going hand in hand with the biodiversity at Askernish and the use of the land for crofting, is the social relation of the course with the community in which it is embedded. During the reconstruction process a great deal of careful negotiation had to take place on a number of levels. Firstly, as the machair is a community-owned resource and is both cropping and grazing land for crofters, every square metre of mown turf is a square metre less of winter grazing. There was stiff resistance from the crofters during

the re-establishment of the course, but this has been overcome. Unlike some clubs and courses which sit behind high fences and have security on the entrances, Askernish sits accessible to one and all, so conflict could arise relating to beach access, the long-distance coastal footpath, bird watchers, photographers, – pretty well anyone. While the grazing of cattle will be a long way from most greenkeepers' experiences, the consideration of public rights of way and other potential community uses will resonate with many of you. In the UK much of our golf is long-established and these social tensions have settled down, but that's not the case everywhere.

Looking beyond the physical environment and hand-in-hand with social considerations is the economic factor. Because Askernish is geographically isolated, it is easier to quantify the financial impact of the golf. Figures provided show that every visitor round is worth not just the £40 green fee, but over £300 to the local economy, given the requirement for travel, accommodation and food. It can be seen from this that the 'economic multipliers' for golf can be significant, with financial benefits reaching beyond the golf club itself.



Objective testing

This is significant in the Western Isles, which has the lowest average household income of any local government area in Scotland and an ageing population, putting financial pressures through the whole community.

All of which takes us to turf quality and greenkeeping. I have witnessed it many times with R&A Scholars that a judgement of turf quality is quickly made based on appearances and the unique nature of the greens, and that judgement can be a little dismissive at first. However, playing the course and undertaking a range of tests such as Clegg hammer, moisture content, green speed and holing out changes perceptions. On objective measurement, the greens are slow by today's standards, but fall well within acceptable parameters for firmness, moisture content, and reliability. As we say, a golfer can adjust the putting stroke for green speed, but not for unevenness, and when we golf at Askernish we soon get the hang of hitting the ball a bit harder on the greens.



Soil profile of the 5th green



Soil profile of the 18th green

The agronomics of Askernish are fascinating and make greenkeeping a challenge. The basis of Askernish is the sandy soil and the cool windy climate, giving an entirely natural flora, including high percentages of fine grasses throughout the course. Cool-season links land is the geographical home of the game, and fittingly the sands of Askernish consist of 86% medium fine sand. This sets up the conditions of high porosity and free drainage, perfect for fine grasses. The pH of 7.6 might conventionally be regarded as high – it's attributable to the shell content of the sand – and one might speculate that it could be a disease pressure. However, in this environment the natural flora is perfectly adapted and Allan has never had to spray a fungicide.

A further consideration, and one gaining traction in greenkeeping circles as we pursue the measurement of so many things, is soil organic matter content. Modern ideas would suggest that 4–6% OM through the profile is about right in order to set up firmness and smoothness, yet at Askernish these range from 6–10% on different greens and at different depths without detracting from the growing of desirable grasses and the production of good surfaces. We have to say that at Askernish this organic matter is an asset, as Allan does not have an irrigation system of any description and relies solely on water supplied by Mother Nature.

As such the organic matter has to act as a reservoir for water and nutrients, and in this situation to blindly work to reduce that organic matter would be a big mistake.

It is not just in water use that inputs are sparing. Nitrogen input is only 80kg per hectare per annum, applied via dried blood, hoof and horn to greens only. Topdressing is 40–80 tonnes of sand and milled local seaweed, applied to greens over two applications. Herbicides are used sparingly – only twice ever – to reduce broadleaved content in greens only. Fungicides and pesticides have never been used.

In terms of other maintenance, the focus is upon mowing. Allan cuts greens 3–5 times per week in summer, no lower than 6mm, and once a week in winter at 7mm. Tees and fairways are cut weekly in summer at 14mm, and the two permitted heights of rough – 50mm and 100mm – are cut weekly and fortnightly respectively during the growing season. The vast majority of rough is left to grow for winter grazing.

Given this description of the maintenance programme, it is clear greenkeeping is carried out on a shoestring budget of around £42,000 per annum, including salaries. Less than £3,000 is spent annually on materials, around £1,200 on equipment and about £8,000 on machinery maintenance. Greenkeeping at Askernish is supported by Jacobsen in the form of machinery on long-term loan.

Askernish is an extraordinary place and I am not sufficiently naïve to think the specific maintenance programmes there are directly applicable to golf courses everywhere, but the principles are. Askernish is a course that has a perfect fit with its physical environment, which successfully co-exists with other historic and cultural land use interests firmly in mind, and is managed according to the financial resources available. Turf quality is more prone to weather variability than most courses, but this does not distract from what is a unique and unforgettable learning and golfing experience. ■



16th Green at Askernish

BURGESS ON CLOUD NINE WITH BIGGA NATIONAL VICTORY

BIGGA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Gary Burgess surged ahead of the field to claim the BIGGA National Championship sponsored by Charterhouse and Kubota by nine strokes. The Grange Park greenkeeper won the BIGGA Challenge Trophy, awarded to the player with the best overall gross score, by finishing two under par at Bowood Hotel and Golf Resort in Wiltshire last month.

Gary said: "I never thought I would win. I've been coming to the BIGGA National Championship for 11 years, but I've never won the big one.

"Last year was the first time I didn't get a prize, so to be honest I just tried to make up for that.

"I had set out to just try and match the plus handicappers and although I knew I was doing well, I was absolutely bricking myself coming down the back nine. I guess even a blind squirrel catches a nut sometimes."

Three golfers were tied for second place, with Nathaniel Riddett, of Shanklin & Sandown, last year's champion James Rowles, of Henbury, and two-time champion Gordon Sangster, of Cathkin Braes, all shooting 151 across the 36-hole medal competition.

Early morning mist greeted the players on both days, but the weather soon cleared to give unseasonably warm and settled conditions for the majority of both days' play.

Continued Over



H
L



BIGGA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP



Jaey Goodchild, Iain Macleod, Gary Burgess and Jim Croxton



Grant Stewart



Danny Perring and Liam Mulkerrins



Ricky Sherwood, Moira Heath and Terry Carver



James Rowles hit's the event's first tee shot



Tim Sethi, Andrew Gibbs and Paul Simpson



Scan here for more pictures from the tournament



John Mooney



Sean Haynes, David Dumpleton, Oly Browning and Shaun Deller

BIGGA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Bowood is a long championship layout nestled within mature parkland and Course Manager Jaey Goodchild set his peers a fair challenge of their golfing abilities with punishing rough and a few choice pin placements.

Shooting under par on both days, Gary's rounds featured seven birdies and just four holes over par.

The BIGGA Challenge Cup is awarded to the best nett score over the 36-hole tournament and was won by Liam Mulkerrins, of Royal Mid Surrey, with a score of 144.

For those players who were disappointed with their score on the opening day of the tournament, there was the opportunity to redeem themselves in the 18-hole stableford competition.

The winner, Grant Stewart of Huntercombe, was presented with the BIGGA Challenge Plate after scoring 36 points.

The prizes were presented by BIGGA CEO Jim Croxton and President Iain Macleod.

Jim said: "Congratulations to all the winners of this year's BIGGA National Championship. It was great to see members from all over the country coming together to enjoy this fantastic event, once again supported by our sponsors, Charterhouse and Kubota."

"Many thanks must go to Jaey Goodchild and all the greens team here at Bowood, who have laid out an excellent course and proved a worthy host for BIGGA's most prestigious annual competition."

The BIGGA National Championship 2017 will be held at Verulam and will mark 30 years of the event, coming as the association celebrates three decades since its formation in 1987. The event will be held on Monday 2 and Tuesday 3 October 2017.

'Congratulations to all the winners of this year's BIGGA National Championship. It was great to see members from all over the country coming together to enjoy this fantastic event, once again supported by our sponsors, Charterhouse and Kubota.'



BARRY REMEMBERS BIGGA NATIONALS PAST

BIGGA life member Barry Holt has been coming to the BIGGA National Championship longer than any other player.



His first was at Lyme Regis in 1989, and two years later he won the championship when it was held at Royal St Davids.

"I have met so many people and developed a great sense of camaraderie with those greenkeepers I have played against on a number of occasions," said Barry. "I have learnt so much by coming here over the years. It gives you an insight into different ways people produce courses. Playing a round of golf with somebody, you learn so much, and that's what makes the BIGGA National Championship so great. I will keep coming for as long as I can."

Barry remembered when the championship was held over three days, predominantly at links courses. This extended break beside the seaside meant families would often accompany golfers and make a holiday of it.

Kubota have sponsored the championship from the start and in the early years the top 12 places were the most sought after as these were the qualifying spots for the greenkeeping team entered into the Kubota Challenge at The Belfry.

Barry praised Bowood Estates Manager Jaey Goodchild for his preparation for the tournament and said: "He's brought everything into play. You think you have played reasonably well and yet it beats you up. The course was designed by Dave Thomas, who was a great ball striker, and so there are no holes out there where you can run the ball on to the green, you have to be playing well."

EPIC ROAD TRIP FOR SWISS SUPERMEN

Four greenkeepers made the 800-mile journey from Golfpark Nuolen in Switzerland to Bowood in order to play in the BIGGA National Championship.



Steven Tierney MG, Yannick Asaf, Tim Sethi and Richard McGlynn

The quartet departed their Swiss homes at 4.30am on Sunday morning, driving for 14 hours and arriving in time for the start of the competition on Monday.

Tim Sethi was the highest handicapper to attend the event, playing off 26, but said he was glad to come along to experience the sense of community.

He moved to Switzerland four years ago from Exeter and said: "We are quite good friends with Jaey, so it has been good to come over and see his course. He hasn't disappointed."

For one of the greenkeepers, his journey to the BIGGA National Championship is about to get a whole lot longer – Yannick Asaf is moving to New Zealand. "I hope to be back as often as I can be," said Yannick. "But this was a really good opportunity for me to say goodbye to some old friends."

Nuolen Head Greenkeeper Steven Tierney MG said: "It's always worth the journey, and we don't do it enough. We get the chance to meet old friends and network and it's a good experience for my two assistants, who I brought with me." ■

PRIZE LIST

BIGGA CHALLENGE TROPHY (BEST GROSS OVER 36 HOLES)

- 1st:** Gary Burgess, Grange Park (142)
= 2nd: Nathaniel Riddett, Shanklin & Sandown (151)
= 2nd: James Rowles, Henbury (151)
= 2nd: Gordon Sangster, Cathkin Braes (151)
= 5th: David Simpson, Crieff (153)
= 5th: Stuart Ponfield, Mendip (153)

BIGGA CHALLENGE CUP (BEST NETT OVER 36 HOLES)

- 1st:** Liam Mulkerrins, Royal Mid Surrey (144)
2nd: Sean Haynes, Bearwood Lakes (145)
3rd: Shaun Deller, Billingbear Park (146)

BIGGA CHALLENGE PLATE (STABLEFORD)

Grant Stewart, Huntercombe (36pts)

BIGGA CHALLENGE BOWL (AFFILIATE)

John Mooney, Rigby Taylor

TEAM PRIZE

- 1st:** Midlands. Sean Haynes, Shaun Deller, David Dumbleton, Oly Browning
2nd: South East. Darren Abbs, Dave Allen, Liam Mulkerrins, Nick Roberts

DAILY HANDICAP PRIZES

- +2-5** Day 1: Gary Burgess, Grange Park
Day 2: Gary Burgess, Grange Park
6-12 Day 1: Sean Haynes, Bearwood Lakes
Day 2: Dave Allen, Pyecombe
13-24 Day 1: Shaun Deller, Billingbear Park
Day 2: Shaun Deller, Billingbear Park

NEAREST THE PIN

- Day 1:** Dave Allen, Pyecombe
Day 2: Leigh Mordy, Knowle

LONGEST DRIVE

- Day 1:** Matthew Strudwick, Weston Park
Day 2: Shaun Deller, Billingbear Park

GETTING THE LOW DOWN ON WEEDS

BY DR TERRY MABBETT

TURF WEEDS



▲ Lesser celandine is difficult to eradicate because attempts to prise it out will spread its tiny bulbils around to produce new plants

▲ Common turf weeds are frequent in the wider environment where they generate seed loads that invade turf

Professional turf is a tightly knit sward of fine grass species designed to exclude broadleaved weeds. In this feature, Dr Terry Mabbett looks at how adaptable weeds make it difficult for greenkeepers to eradicate them from the course.

The high frequency and lowness of cut should dispatch all broad-leaf weed intruders because their higher positioned growing points are excised by mowing.

In practice, this is a different matter, due to a wide diversity in the form and structure of weed species. Cutting professional turf grass too low can be just as damaging as cutting too high, because weeds like common daisy and greater plantain will thrive in turf which is 'shaved' and compacted.

Many weed species display a completely different growth habit outside of turf. Thus creeping buttercup will hug the ground with runners slipping through close cut grass to root at regular intervals, but outside of turf, plants can grow to 60cm high.

Range and frequency of weed species depends on how they are managed. However, a successful turf weed will invariably possess one or more attributes related to growth habit, reproduction, drought resistance and response to herbicide treatment, which underpins its capacity to enter turf and compete with fine grasses.

Growth habit

Common weeds, including dandelion and common daisy, display leaves in rosettes at or just above soil level. Low set rosettes escape cutting while leaves shade out and kill adjacent grass. For instance, large dandelion leaves smother the short fine leaves of turf grasses.

Rosette forming weeds expand by establishing 'daughter plants', either directly at the fleshy rootstock and stem or via running stems or stolons.

Vegetative reproduction

Running stems rooting at the nodes provide weeds with an efficient means of vegetative reproduction. The runners may be severed during mowing but the daughter plant with its own root system survives to form a new focus of weed infestation. Species with running stems rooting in this way include white clover, self-heal and creeping buttercup.

Perennating grass plant organs

Many weeds can store food to ensure survival through drought or low temperature. Perennating organs can also play a part in asexual reproduction as pieces of tap root left in the soil form fibrous roots and develop into new plants.

Another weed thriving on turf managers' attempts to remove it is lesser celandine. Although not a widespread weed in turf, it is one of the most difficult to shift. Below ground at the base of the plant is a cluster of tiny bulbils, each with the capacity to produce a new plant.

Sexual reproduction and seeding

Mowing programmes should mean broad-leaved weeds do not get the opportunity to flower and set seed. However, many weeds are biotypes which have been selected out by low-cut mowing and are able to flower just millimetres above ground level.

Dandelion is a low profile weed made more so because low-cutting selects weeds with the most extreme low profile growing habit

Many grow outside of the turf environment and, like the dandelion's wind-borne 'pappus', find their way into turf.

Turf weeds can exploit small germination sites including bare soil caused by wear and tear. Worm casts provide ready-made germination sites, especially when the seed has been ingested and deposited intact inside a cast on the surface.

Other side of drought resistance

The role of drought resistant turf grasses in the face of climate change has been chewed over for years, with virtually no consideration given to how turf weeds are likely to fare.

White clover, bird's foot trefoil and dandelion thrive in drought stricken turf. They persist through summer drought to be quick off the mark in autumn. Then when rain falls, they form large weed patches in the still struggling turf.

Tolerance and resistance to herbicides

Selective herbicides allow greenkeepers to control broad leaved weeds without harming turf.

The recommended application rate and stage of weed growth when the herbicide can be applied differs between species.

A weed species may be difficult to control because the foliage is difficult to wet – such as yarrow

with its finely divided and waxy leaves, or because the weed plant's metabolism is inherently resistant to herbicide action.

Grass and grass look-alike weeds

Coarse grasses like timothy, Yorkshire fog and ryegrasses, all regarded as weeds of professional turf, are extremely difficult to control without harming fine turf grasses in the sward. However, we are in a 'brave new world', with highly sophisticated herbicides designed to control coarse grass species while not affecting the fine turf grasses.

Poa on the other hand presents a conundrum as it can be a valued component of turf in some situations, but in others is regarded an unnecessary addition, making it a weed.

Some turf managers have traditionally tried to squeeze out poa by turning a blind eye to the basal rot anthracnose.

With poa much more susceptible than bents and fescues, they were harnessing a natural mycoherbicide to reduce the levels of poa.

However, with the arrival of anthracnose foliar blight and its ability to infect bent, any thoughts of leaving anthracnose to its own devices is no longer an option. ■



ARE YOU UP TO SPEED WITH SPRAYER TESTING REQUIREMENTS?



SPRAYER TESTING



With new requirements set to come into force on 26 November on the testing of sprayers, we took a look at the requirements of the Sustainable Use Directive with Duncan Russell, NSTS manager

The National Sprayer Testing Scheme has been part of the agricultural scene since 2003 and is an important part of the VI and a requirement of the major UK crop assurance schemes.

That is about to change with the introduction of the Sustainable Use Directive, which requires all

▲ Changes to legislation relating to ride-on mowers are coming this month

Mechanical sprayer controls ▶

pesticide application equipment to be tested by 26 November 2016. NSTS are the delegated body for testing in the UK so, if you have not had your sprayer and other application equipment tested, you should by 26 November. For those who are already having their sprayers tested annually by NSTS, it is business as usual.

NSTS tests around 16,500 pieces of pesticide application equipment annually at its 270 independent test centres nationwide. To find your nearest centres visit the NSTS website at www.nsts.org.uk. All NSTS machine examiners have been trained and hold the City & Guilds qualification in Sprayer Examining.

Duncan said: “For those owners who are having their sprayers tested annually, the requirements will have little impact. The new rules apply to all those applying pesticides commercially, meaning golf courses will come under scrutiny.

“Leaks and drips are the most common problem found and along with other quite easily fixed issues, should be picked up during regular maintenance and easily remedied by the operator. Other faults like worn nozzles, which are giving more than 10% above the manufacturers output, can have significant financial implications. A new set of nozzles is a small cost compared to the cost of potential misapplication of product.”

Details of the Sustainable Use Directive requirements are:

- ▶ All pesticide application equipment must be tested by 26 November 2016 unless it is less than five years old on that date. Machines that are less than five years old will require a test on their fifth anniversary.
- ▶ Equipment with boom widths of more than three metres, air blast sprayers, train sprayers and sprayers mounted on aircraft require testing at no more than five yearly intervals until 2020. After 2020 they will need testing every three years.
- ▶ For machines with a boom width of three metres or less, slug pellet applicators, granular applicators and other vehicle mounted specialist equipment, there is a requirement to test by 26 November 2016 and then a re-test every six years. Machines that fall into this category are classed as 'low scale of use' and can be found listed in Annex 4 of the UK's National Action Plan.
- ▶ Knapsack, hand-held and pedestrian controlled machines do not require a formal test, but must be inspected regularly by a competent person. The results of that inspection are to be recorded along with any repairs or rectifications made.

All pesticide application equipment will need to be tested by 26 November



Sprayer equipment on display at the Amenity Forum



The SUD may be seen as another layer of bureaucracy but there is a real need to have machines tested. A well maintained and tested machine is less likely to breakdown during a busy spraying period, helps application accuracy and contributes to operator and environmental safety. ■

SPRAYER TESTING

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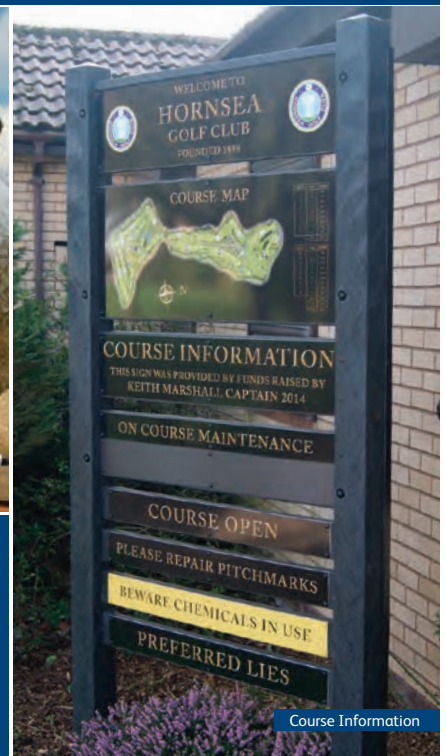
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WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO SPRING IN THE UK?

CLIMATE CHANGE

BY MARK HUNT, TECHNICAL DIRECTOR AT HEADLAND AMENITY

The spring season used to be one of the easiest to manage in terms of turfgrass growth, with 'sunshine and showers' the traditional weather pattern. Our position on the path of the Atlantic jet stream provided consistent south westerly winds and grass growth, allowing recovery from a long winter.

Nowadays the situation can be far from easy as a combination of unpredictable weather and high player expectations conspire to increase pressure on turfgrass managers.

Spring is also a time when traditionally we have an aeration slot planned, before the number of club fixtures ramp up. Most of the time this is a week in March or April, when greens aeration is scheduled with the objective of reducing organic matter levels, decompacting the rootzone after a winter of play and increasing soil oxygen levels, known as venting.

All well and good, but the last two spring seasons have been anything but predictable in terms of grass growth. So when this aeration is undertaken, often at the only time of year it is scheduled, there has been poor recovery.

The Oxfordshire

Dovetail that with increased competition between clubs for a changing golf demographic, that of less annual members and more nomadic golfers, and it is easy to see why course managers come under pressure at this time of year.

To look at our last two springs and compare them with the last good growing spring in 2014, I will again use Growth-Degree-Day (GDD) and Growth Potential (GP) information. It was precisely the problem of a slow spring that first drew me to use this type of grass growth modelling in 2013 when we had a long winter with snow on the ground up till the end of March. Course managers were asking me how far behind we were from a 'normal year' and I looked to GDD to provide an answer, which it did in a convincing manner.

Using GDD and GP models to describe grass growth provides us with something tangible and factual that we can communicate to our members and management – a huge help as we all know it's difficult to discuss something coherently if you don't have the facts to hand. All you need to put together this information yourself is the maximum and minimum air temperature on your site on a daily basis. This can be provided by a weather station, weather data logger or sometimes using the growing networks of on-line nearby weather stations.

Let's look at 2016's hard spring and compare it with the last good spring in 2014 using GDD and GP data. This information came from The Oxfordshire, Thame, and thanks must go to Course Manager Sean Wilson for the diligent recording of this data.

Comparing spring 2016 with spring 2014...

Firstly, let's use cumulative GDD data to give a footprint of the growth pattern and overlay 2014 and 2016. The result is shown below in figure 1.

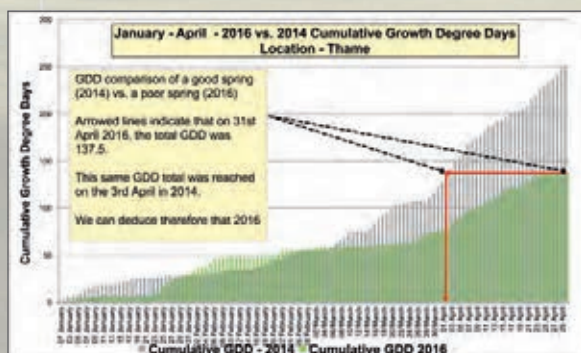


Figure 1

From this we can see that the cumulative GDD total on 3 April 2014 wasn't reached in 2016 until as 31 April. This means we were a full four weeks behind 2014 in terms of grass growth.

If we look at the monthly GDD totals for the two respective springs in figure 2 it is clear to see where the growth difference occurred.

Figure 3

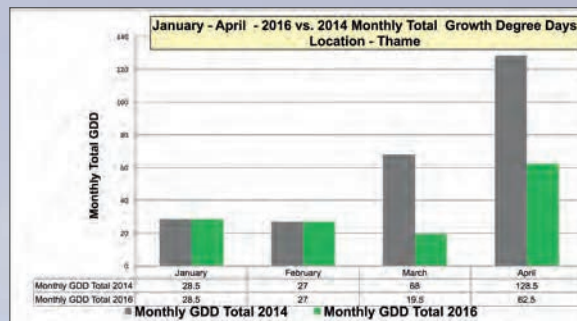


Figure 2

March and April 2016 were significantly behind 2014, with only 28% of the growth in March 2016 and 48% of the growth in April 2016 versus the comparable 2014 months.

These graphs hopefully shed light on why I am such a big fan of GDD and GP data. They allow us to make a factual comparison between years, seasons, and even weeks so we can indeed conclude the spring of 2016 was poor in growth terms versus a good growing spring.

But why?

It is a complex weather situation, but in simple terms when we have a strong Atlantic jet stream in the spring it means we have mild weather and the temperature at night stays up, as was the case in 2014. In 2015 and 2016, during March and April, we had a weak, fragmented jet stream that allowed a northerly and easterly wind direction. This caused a cooler airstream to influence the weather and temperatures suffered.

Comparing the two-month period of March and April 2016 with the same months in 2014, we can see the night temperature was above 5°C for 29 days in 2014, but only 15 days in 2016. If you then equate that with growth – using Growth Potential as a measure – we can see this dramatically affects the potential of grass to grow. Remember, with Growth Potential, a figure of 0 means no growth and a figure of 1.0 means maximum growth.

By again comparing the same two-month period, we can see in 2014 we had 35 days when the daily Growth Potential was ≥ 0.3 , which means some growth is occurring. In 2016 there were just 10 days. Comparing the number of ground frosts between 2014 and 2016, we had only seven hard ground frosts in March and April 2014 compared with 18 in 2016.

The comparative graphs are shown below in figures 3 and 4.

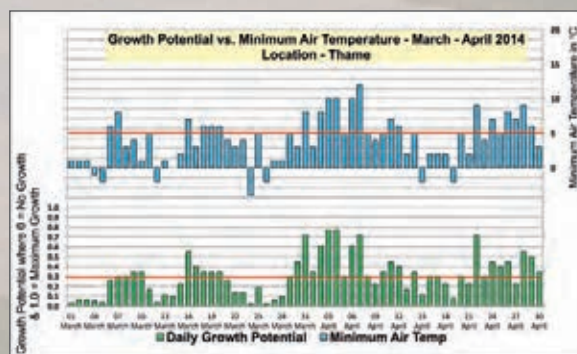
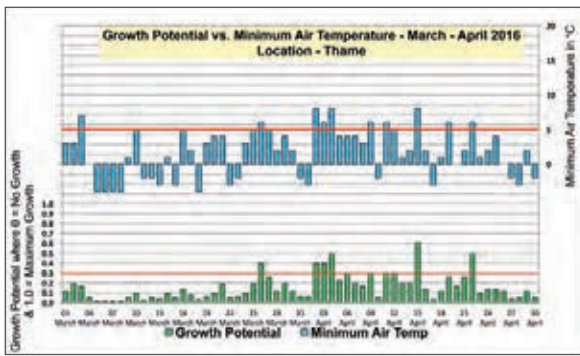


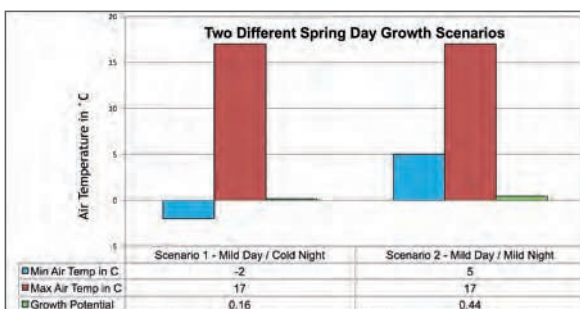
Figure 3

Continued Over



Night temperature is key

Poor night temperatures are clearly pegging back the ability of the plant to grow and this is regardless of maximum air temperatures during the middle of the day. The graph below shows what difference a cold night and a mild night make on growth potential with the same maximum day temperature.



This means we have just 36% of the growth potential on a warm spring day preceded by a cold night than we do on a warm day following a mild night.

Even though you may have had frost on the rollers when you were cutting at first light, it can be tricky explaining to golfers why the grass isn't growing when they are playing in short sleeves at midday. However, the above graph deals with this point clearly and concisely.

I hope I have been able to demonstrate why spring 2016 was difficult for grass growth. Please bear in mind that this data is from The Oxfordshire, Thame, whereas other areas like the north west of England were much worse temperature-wise.

I am cognisant I haven't taken rainfall data into consideration because this was also affected by the different path of the jet stream and had a strong bearing on grass growth, but I prefer to concentrate on temperature for the purpose of this article.

Agronomic issues of a cool spring – aeration timing

At the beginning of this article I mentioned March and April could be tricky because traditionally that's when a lot of clubs have aeration work scheduled. I think we have to have a good look at this going forward. We can't just do the same things at the same time and not react to the fact that in some years our weather can work against us.

This doesn't mean skipping aeration as that approach is foolhardy and in these days of tighter legislation with fewer pesticides, increasing surface organic matter because of a lack of aeration and topdressing will come round to bite you.



Poor night temperatures are clearly pegging back the ability of the plant to grow and this is regardless of maximum air temperatures during the middle of the day.

Instead, let's look at the timing of aeration. If you go back to the monthly Growth-Degree-Day totals shown in figure 2, we can see the GDD total for January and February exceeded the total for March. That means we had more growth potential in those winter months than we did in what should have been the spring.

One of my first points about changing our approach is to look at when we do aeration and perhaps utilise milder winter months, if it is feasible. If you're in a traditionally high rainfall area I accept this may not be possible, but if a window of cold, dry weather presents itself, why not hollow core in January or February?

It won't affect revenue significantly because they're the two quietest months of the year and golfers have their 'winter' heads on. I accept you may not be able to topdress if ground conditions prevent it, but you'll have removed organic matter and then have ample opportunity to do light dressings up to March. If the weather works in your favour, you can have a recovered sward by mid-March and if not you'll have much less recovery to try and gain than if you hollow core in March or April.

I've seen an increasing number of clubs do this type of work in January and February and get great results with minimal disruption in the spring. It doesn't mean you skip spring aeration totally, but you can lessen the



You can lessen the impact of scarifying, solid tining or using compact vertidrain tines with no heave to vent the surface and mix your topdressing into your rootzone profile. Worth a thought maybe?

impact of scarifying, solid tining or using compact vertidrain tines with no heave to vent the surface and mix your topdressing into your rootzone profile.

My next point concerns the type of aeration and working with the weather. If you have a slot planned and have a 13mm hollow core and Graden in mind, you have to gear up for this by upping your nutrition prior to the work. I'd be applying a granular fertiliser two to three weeks ahead to get the grass plant moving.

Secondly, I think we have to adopt a flexible approach to spring aeration and accept that if the weather is against us, we need to react accordingly and change tine size, spacing and type. If we are in a non-advantageous weather pattern, look at the forecast for the next 7-10 days, calculate your growth potential and see if you're going to get the type of recovery that you're after. Of course, the opposite is true as well and if the growth potential forecast looks good,

then maybe you can take more organic matter out with a more aggressive aeration practice. To me it's horses for courses.

In summary we can see that the last two springs have been difficult from a turfgrass management perspective, particularly if you were carrying out significant spring aeration. Whether this change is more permanent or just another feature of our little-understood jet stream remains to be seen, but we need to be more in control of our turfgrass management in the spring. At the very least, measuring your daily temperature and then converting that into GDD and GP parameters allows you to compare seasons and plan work according to a 7-10 day weather forecast. Just as importantly, it can provide factual information to assist with communication within your golf club.

There's an oft-repeated saying, 'if you don't measure, you can't manage', and I think it's a very apt one when it comes to our industry. ■

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THE RYDER CUP VOLUNTEERS



BY JOHN KIGER, TURFNET

RYDER CUP

Chris Tritabaugh is course manager at Hazeltine National and will be heading to BTME and Continue to Learn in January to explain what it's like hosting golf's most partisan and emotional tournament.

But a few BIGGA members couldn't wait until then, choosing instead to head over to Chaska, Minnesota and get a first hand look at the Ryder Cup by volunteering to help prepare the course.

Chief among the lessons they learned was how Chris manages to foster a great sense of camaraderie among his team.

But there were other lessons that each was able to bring back home to the UK, although the Ryder Cup itself will remain on American soil for the next two years.

TurfNet's Jon Kiger met up with each of the volunteers, and asked them what they thought about being a part of Ryder Cup history.

Also representing BIGGA was Paul Jenkins, of Westridge, while former Taunton & Pickeridge greenkeeper Matt Darby is now a member of the Hazeltine team. Also volunteering at the event was Alejandro Reyes, golf course superintendent of Le Golf National in Paris, which will host the next Ryder Cup in 2018.

Graeme Roberts
Deputy Course Manager
Camberley Heath Golf Club

Previous tournament experience: 2014 US Open, 2015 US Open, 2015 PGA Championship, three Scottish Opens

Goals of volunteering at the Ryder Cup: It's an opportunity to see how things can be done differently and I wanted the chance to work a tournament with a larger group of volunteers. I also saw it as a great opportunity to do some networking.

How has your Ryder Cup experience differed from other events you've worked on? At first I thought there would be more work, but it has turned out that there was quite a bit of down time and we were encouraged by Chris to walk the course when we weren't working.

Primary duties: I was assigned to holes 9, 10, 16, 17 and 18. This meant I would be preparing the bunkers in the morning and then I would be on standby to blow debris off the greens during play.

Biggest thing you'll take away from the experience: I was extremely impressed with Chris Tritabaugh's attitude and his style with his staff and volunteers.

He is very laid back about what we're doing here and he trusts that the staff and volunteers are doing their best. Someday, when I become a course manager, I will try to adapt that style of management.

What is next up for you? I'm actually getting married!



Lee Strutt
Course Manager
Royal Automobile Club

Previous tournament experience: 2012 Ryder Cup, 2014 Ryder Cup

Goals of volunteering at the Ryder Cup: I wanted to learn more about the different cultural approaches to managing such a major event. There is also the opportunity to learn different skills, meet different people, and see different perspectives and approaches.

How has this Ryder Cup differed from the others where you've volunteered? It was clear there has been an evolution of the thoughts on what it takes to properly host the Ryder Cup as a course manager. I know Steve Chappell at Gleneagles in 2014 learned from Curtis Tyrrell's



2016 Ryder Cup greens team

Steve Chappell,
Tom Brearley and
Lee Strutt

preparations for 2012 at Medinah and now Chris has learned from speaking to Steve since the last Ryder Cup.

Primary duties: I was fairway mowing, greens mowing, stimping, and using the squeegees during the rainfall. Basically, we supported the crew in whatever way we could.

Did you have any side trips while you were there? I visited Medinah near Chicago and Whistling Straits in Wisconsin as that will host the Ryder Cup in 2020.

What is the biggest thing you will take away from this trip? This is the best-maintained golf course I've ever seen.

The surfaces are so smooth and there isn't anything you could do to it to make it better. I've also been amazed at Chris' approach to management. He really embraces an opportunity for his team to take responsibility and he gives them the confidence to do the job. They've brought that back to the table and they've produced the goods. That approach will help me improve how I manage things back home.

What is next up for you? This might well be my last Ryder Cup. But if I can, I will get to the Presidents Cup or the Solheim Cup in Des Moines, Iowa with Rick Tegtmeier MG.

Continued Over

'I was extremely impressed with Chris Tritabaugh's attitude and his style with his staff and volunteers. He is very laid back about what we're doing here and he trusts that the staff and volunteers are doing their best. Someday, when I become a course manager, I will try to adopt that style of management.'

Graeme Roberts

Tom Brearley
Deputy Head Greenkeeper
Sunningdale

Previous tournament experience: The Open at Muirfield and a few smaller tournaments in the UK.

Goals of volunteering at the Ryder Cup: I wanted to see how the guys do it out here as I'm interested in learning how to do things on a larger scale than what I am used to.

What surprised you the most about your first Ryder Cup? Easily the sheer scale of it. We have a team of 20 back home, which is quite a large team there. It's hard to translate that to what happens here, which is a group of more than 100.

Primary duties: I took part in fairway and greens mowing and I supported the crew in whatever way I could.

Did you enjoy any side trips? We went to a local baseball game in Minneapolis, so that was a first. I really enjoyed going out on the pitch and meeting the pitch manager.

What is the biggest thing you will take away from this trip? I have learnt to pay attention to some of the fine details on things. To give you one example, they mark the stimping points on greens with a Sharpie pen. Also some of the ways they manage their bunkers are really interesting.

It was an invaluable experience, learning from the very best in the business on how they get the course to the stage it is at by tournament time, and also how they overcome the challenges they encounter.

Being out there the week before gave me chance to get some uninterrupted time speaking with the likes of Chris, Senior Assistant Superintendent Ryan Moy, Steve and Lee on all things turf management, which has given me a new lease of life in how I manage and perform on a day-to-day basis back home.

What is next up for you? I will be heading home, where I hope to implement some of the aspects of Chris' approach to working with his staff to enhance the camaraderie among my team back at Sunningdale.

Steve Chappell
Head Greenkeeper
Gleneagles

Previous Tournament Experience: 2010 Ryder Cup, 2012 Ryder Cup, and hosted the 2014 Ryder Cup at Gleneagles.

When you hosted the Ryder Cup at Gleneagles, what were you able to implement that you had learned from your experiences at those first two Ryder Cups? I combined what I felt were the best aspects of crew management between what Jim McKenzie at Celtic Manor and Curtis Tyrrell at Medinah did.

It was also helpful to get a handle on the infrastructure needs and timelines for hosting the event, while being on those crews helped me determine our staffing needs.

What do you remember as you reflect on your own hosting of the Ryder Cup? When it becomes your own event you start to scrutinise a lot of it yourself. But then you realise that you've also got about half a dozen official people that are scrutinising the same surfaces and everyone looks at things slightly differently.

'Being out there the week before gave me chance to get some uninterrupted time speaking with the likes of Chris, Ryan, Steve and Lee on all things turf management, which has really given me a new lease of life in how I manage and perform on a day-to-day basis back home.'

Tom Brearley

Steve Chappell
Head Greenkeeper
Gleneagles





The one main thing I learned from the whole process was not to make any assumptions, but never second-guess yourself either. Sometimes you need to stand back and resist trying to find something that isn't there.

Duties on the course: I helped mow fairways, greens, dug holes and helped the course recover from the rain.

Did you take part in any side trips while you were there? We went to Medinah upon arrival in the US and then went to Whistling Straits, which is due to host the Ryder Cup in 2020. We met with Superintendent Chris Zugel while we were there and that was one of the best course visits I've ever done.

I also enjoyed going to the Minnesota Twins baseball game on Ryder Cup night and getting the opportunity to go out on to the pitch.

What stood out about this Ryder Cup? It was awesome to be a contributing member of the crew for a change. It was really nice to be in a position to relax a little more and have someone direct me toward my tasks each day. Chris is a very talented superintendent and the surfaces were a testament to the work he and Ryan Moy and the rest of the crew did leading up to the event.

This was the first Ryder Cup where I was actually able to enjoy the competition.

What is next up for you? I'm looking forward to participating on the Ryder Cup panel at BTME 2017 in Harrogate, which takes place at 8.30am on Wednesday 18 January. I hope people bring lots of questions. ■



Top left: Tom Brearley

Top right: Brushing the greens was an unusual approach that attracted attention

Bottom left: Graeme Roberts

Bottom middle: Fairway mowing

Bottom right: Lee Strutt, Simon Winzar and Steve Chappell

'It was awesome to be a contributing member of the crew for a change. It was really nice to be in a position to relax a little more and have someone direct me toward my tasks each day.'

Steve Chappell

IT'S A WOMAN'S WORLD FOR OAKE MANOR'S CHARLOTTE PRING

Women are in the news. With a female Prime Minister for the UK, potentially the first female President of the United States and female First Ministers of Scotland and Northern Ireland, 2016 may go down in history as the year women caught up with men.

OAKE MANOR



And with BIGGA revealing the number of female members has increased by 62 percent since 2005, the same “trend” applies to the golf industry, too.

Charlotte Pring is the only woman in the greenkeeping team of seven at Oake Manor, but she explained why she chose a career in turf maintenance and how she fits in to such a male-orientated working environment.

Charlotte explained how her career choice is down to her father, the renowned Nigel Pring. When she was a child he was Oake Manor’s head greenkeeper, while her mother worked at the clubhouse. Charlotte said: “I used to go to a primary school just down the road from Oake. After school, Dad would pick me up in the buggy and I’d ride around the course with him until he finished work.”

Having grown up on the course, Charlotte’s always had strong links to Oake Manor, but it was a week’s work experience at the club that truly set her on course to becoming a greenkeeper. Following this, Charlotte was so keen to get the qualifications necessary to become a greenkeeper that in 2005 she began an apprenticeship through Bridgewater College only a week after finishing school.

Two years later, Charlotte completed her apprenticeship and gained an NVQ in greenkeeping, becoming one of only 13 other women in a male-dominated field. As a fully qualified greenkeeper she’s worked at Isle of Wedmore and spent five years at Bovey Castle, where she prepared their golf course for the PGA EuroPro Tour, before returning to Oake Manor in 2014.

Charlotte describes what it was like to join the team at Oake Manor, saying the initial awkwardness of working with a female soon wore off for her male colleagues. “The guys at Oake are really good, but when I first joined the team they were shy around me,” she said. “That didn’t last long though.”

Charlotte believes gender shouldn’t play a part in career choice, and added: “I don’t think women should feel restricted to some jobs, and men to others. It would be really great to see more women in the industry.”

For Charlotte, the perks of being a greenkeeper include seeing the sunrise and working outside amid beautiful surroundings, while the most enjoyable and important aspect of her job is presentation – making the grass and course as good as it can be.

‘I used to go to a primary school just down the road from Oake.

After school, Dad would pick me up in the buggy and I’d ride around the course with him until he finished work.’



Keeping the course perfect is an ongoing challenge for greenkeepers at Oake Manor. Charlotte said: "We are always striving to keep the course beautiful and consistent to ensure the best playability and safety for golfers and greenkeepers." But that is a job she said is made easier with Toro machines in the shed. Having attended a Toro on Tour roadshow with Reesink Turfcare, where a range of Toro machines were available to test-drive, Oake Manor now owns a Toro fleet that suits its course down to a tee.


From the greens to the long rough, every aspect of the course is accounted for with two precise Greensmaster 1000s, two efficient Reelmaster 5510s, an innovative Greensmaster Triflex 3420, a productive Groundsmaster 4000, and a powerful Groundsmaster 4700.

The latter is Charlotte's favourite piece of kit. She said: "The GR4700 is a really sturdy machine which has the power to climb banks and steep areas of turf easily. With seven cutting units, it's wider and therefore faster. I think the Smart Power feature is a really intelligent design as it keeps the quality of the grass all the same, so there's a consistent cut everywhere."

After two and half years with Oake Manor, Charlotte is taking her experience, knowledge and love for Toro to the other side of the world. She is leaving the UK to embark on a new adventure in New Zealand, where she will maintain the championship course at The Hills near Queenstown.

In 2006 there were over eight times the number of female greenkeepers in New Zealand compared to the UK. That number is even higher now, with recent statistics suggesting many women are working their way into senior positions at a growing number of clubs. This will therefore be a fantastic opportunity for Charlotte to make the most of the many benefits of working in another country and golfing community.

But with Golf Business News noting a surge of women across the country joining the golfing community and women making up 70 per cent of online bookings for "Get into Golf" courses, and in Ireland and Wales more than 50 per cent of these women going on to become members, women in the industry are no longer such a novelty. The perception that golf is a male-dominated sport is beginning to change for women working in and playing the sport. ■

 Charlotte Pring with the fleet at Oake Manor and John Pike of Reesink Turfcare

'We are always striving to keep the course beautiful and consistent to ensure the best playability and safety for golfers and greenkeepers.'



RESERVOIRS 'WHAT LIES BENEATH'

BY ROBERT JACKSON, REESINK TURFCARE

IRRIGATION

With increased awareness of its importance, more and more clubs are moving toward efficient and responsible water usage. When changing irrigation systems, the trend has moved towards the installation of a reservoir, which sustainably collects and stores water in the winter from boreholes, local streams or by harvesting rainwater.

If maintained correctly, a reservoir can be a fantastic feature, in both aesthetic and business terms. Reservoirs can store immense amounts of water that can irrigate entire courses, allowing clubs to collect water during wetter months to overcome summer droughts using their own free resources.



This is not only environmentally friendly, it also means lush, healthy turf all year round and, subsequently, better playability leading to more players and members enjoying your greens.

However, a neglected reservoir will likely become unhealthy, and has the potential to become a drain on the club rather than a positive. Whether you've had one for years or your course has just splashed out on one, close attention is required to protect the quality of the reservoir's water. To keep a reservoir's ecosystem in perfect balance, the right levels of light, temperature, nutrients and oxygen must be maintained. Installing an aerator is the perfect solution for keeping most of these variables just right.

WATCH OUT

If you spot any of the following signs, then your reservoir's eco system could be out of kilter, and it might well be time to invest in an aerator:

- Stagnant, dark slimy water
- Bad odours
- Excessive algae and weed growth

These low-quality water signs mean one to three things, and none of them are good. For one, the reservoir water is detrimental to aquatic life. Second, the reservoir is undoubtedly visually unappealing, likely causing odours to waft across the course, and thirdly, turf is being irrigated with poor quality water. From all of this it is clear that failure to maintain reservoir water to a high standard negates all the benefits it should provide.



Frilford Heath's Sid Arrowsmith MG meets Robert Jackson of Reesink Turfcare

If the bottom layers of the reservoir receive sufficient oxygen, it will directly lead to reduction in instances of nauseating smells or dark slime, caused by anaerobic bacteria's production of gasses and heavy metals.

However, with aerators supplying sufficient oxygen to the bottom layers of the reservoir, good aerobic bacteria has enough fuel to carry out its natural role, breaking down 'nature's compost' and eliminating slime and bad odours.

The addition of oxygen to water forces nutrients within it to oxidise, which makes them insoluble to plant life. This essentially removes the 'all you can eat' buffet for algae and weeds, resulting in slower plant growth.

It also reduces the risk of harmful fungi growing and contaminating the water supply, reducing the risk of turf diseases.

There are three basic types of aerators: surface spray, horizontal aspirators, and air diffusion systems, such as Otterbine's Air Flo 3. Each type is suited to specific applications and can be used in conjunction to treat several problems in the same body of water.

Every reservoir has its own unique ecosystem, requiring proper analysis and understanding. No two are the same and, as such, no single management programme will provide the same results for two different reservoirs.

CASE STUDY – Frilford Heath

Water conservation is a hot topic at the moment, and Frilford Heath has taken a step towards self-sufficiency with the installation of an Otterbine Air Flo 3 into its 10 million gallon reservoir.

Course Manager Sid Arrowsmith MG said the aeration system has already made a significant improvement to water quality. He added: "Our holding reservoir is a fantastic resource, but the water had become too unhealthy to go on the turf.

"The reservoir's water comes from a brook downstream through farming fields, bringing waste and silt with it. Because it's not feasible to empty the old reservoir water out before the new water arrives, the water at the bottom was very old and probably hadn't seen the light of day for up to 10 years. As a result it was starting to smell and turn black."

The Air Flo 3 pumps air to diffusers on the lake or pond bed, which creates circulation of the layers without affecting the water's surface. The club has worked closely with the Environment Agency every step of the way and Sid added: "Churning the water up from the lower levels allows the aerobic bacteria to do their work and metabolise the nutrients. The process takes time, considering the volume of water, but we had water ready to use within 12 weeks, which is a significant improvement."

Not only will a poorly-managed reservoir be a visual detriment to the course, but the unhealthy water being used in the irrigation system provides an increased risk of diseased grass. That can mean unsightly turf as well as poor playability, which is less enjoyable for players.

The problems stem from oxygen depletion and poor water circulation.

Oxygen depletion can lead to a build-up of nutrients in a reservoir, because a lack of sufficient oxygen means aerobic bacteria – the good guys – are replaced by anaerobic bacteria – the bad guys. These metabolise sediments seven times slower than aerobic bacteria would in a healthy reservoir. An excess of nutrients causes algal bloom to grow exponentially, providing a breeding ground for other kinds of fungus that can prove harmful to any plants watered on course – if the plants even get watered, since algae can also block irrigation systems.

Poor practice often leads to treating the above symptoms. Cleaning excess algae from the reservoir may offer short-term relief, but the symptoms are likely to return and require re-treatment if the cause isn't addressed. Imagine a hole in a roof, whereby the symptom is a wet floor when it rains. Placing a bucket on the floor to catch the drips effectively treats the symptom as there is no wet floor, but the correct solution is to fix the hole. Adding dissolved oxygen to a reservoir through aeration is like repairing the hole in a roof and so the symptoms will not return.

Oxygen levels are key to a healthy reservoir, so to ensure you are reaping the benefits from your reservoir, good water circulation is essential – with aeration the way forward.

The three 'A's of effective water management

The efficiency of an irrigation system depends upon how the watering schedule is adjusted. Get that wrong and you'll suffer wastage, poor quality turf and complaints about playing conditions.

Did you know that on average golf courses are overwatered by between 30 and 50%?

How can this be corrected? The answer lies in the "Triple A" approach: anticipate; adjust; achieve.

Anticipate:

Collect data about seasonal weather changes from the nearest Meteorological Department or any nearby course that has a weather station. From this you will be able to make large savings by estimating monthly water requirements and adjusting watering times.

Know when to peak-up: Anticipate hot weather and increase watering ahead of this. Prevention of dry spots conserves more water than reacting after the event.

Know when to scale down: Anticipate cooler weather and reduce watering gradually. Establish Schedules: Create winter, summer and rainy season schedules. Record the watering times and the turf condition in a diary. This will help you make better adjustments in the future.

Maintain Records: Number all valves, and maintain a spreadsheet of the valves' runtimes, the dates when they were adjusted and any remarks, such as too wet or too dry.

Adjust:

Modify the watering schedule as needed, adding watering days before anticipated peaks in temperature. Use 'Water Budget' functions to make quick adjustments. This is an effective way to fine tune the system without having to change each valve individually and allows you to alter running times from 0 to 300%. For example, if the base run time is 24 minutes on some valves and 16 minutes on others, you can set the water budget to 50% in peak summer months of June and July and automatically the run time will be changed to 36 minutes and 24 minutes respectively. Every two minute reduction in run time could save millions of litres of water every year and huge savings in electricity costs.

Achieve:

Optimal watering reduces grass clippings, keeps grass healthier, prevents diseases, reduces compaction of playing areas and shows improves your reputation. Water requirements could vary between 1mm and 9mm throughout the year, so applying 6mm all year round will result in either under watering or over watering, leading to complaints throughout the year. The benefits of these adjustments are therefore clear to see.

Rain Bird Golf Division manufactures a wide range of irrigation products dedicated to golf course water management: EAGLE™ Gear-drive Rotors, field controllers and map-based central control irrigation systems, among others. Rain Bird® Central Control Systems integrate advanced technologies and optional software to arrive at solutions that manage water use responsibly to help save money.

The golf industry benefits from continued developments to design more efficient systems. By providing superintendents and managers with simplified installation, unmatched flexibility, affordable performance and invaluable peace-of-mind, the Integrated Control™ system is revolutionising the way professional agronomists manage their irrigation systems.

Imagine how useful it would be for you to be able to access your irrigation controller while out on the course, or even at home.

The IQ Cloud platform from Rain Bird allows you to do just that by giving access to ESPLX controllers remotely using your PC, tablet or smartphone.

Once connected to the IQ cloud you can completely programme and monitor your irrigation from wherever you are - useful if you're scheduled to start watering but there are storm clouds overhead.

The software is also able to send email alerts for unexpected flow events, such as excessive water loss or irrigation not taking place. This requires an optional Rain Bird Flow Sensor which also unlocks an extensive suite of flow monitoring and water management features.

The Rain Bird IQ Cloud platform is free to use with no software purchase necessary for the standard version.

For further information on IQ and the complete Rain Bird range, contact the LWS Irrigation team on 01722 716 969 or visit www.lws.uk.com.



HOW TO IMPROVE THE SPEED OF YOUR GREENS

GreenTek

BY JIM INGLEBY, GREENTEK SOLUTIONS

In summarising research he completed at the Michigan Turfgrass Foundation, Dr Thomas Nikolai explained how rolling your greens every single day, and mowing every other, will result in improved turf quality and improved uniformity in green speeds

Dr Nikolai said even rolling it every other day still gives noticeably increased green speeds, as long as the thatch is not too thick.

This is very interesting research, with a seemingly clear message – rolling your greens every day, or even every other day, has a measurable impact on the speed of greens, as long as thatch is dealt with.

Given these findings, savvy greenkeepers will ask themselves:

1. What's the most efficient way to get rid of thatch?
2. What's the easiest and most cost-effective way to roll?

GreenTek is a world leader in quality greens care solutions and has nearly 50 years' experience supplying equipment to the golf industry.

A number of the top golf clubs in Europe use GreenTek products, including over 90 per cent of the UK's Top 100 golf clubs, which puts GreenTek in a great position to help greenkeepers create and maintain quality of greens that they have always desired.

GreenTek's Jim Ingleby advised the following two products to remove thatch and increase green speeds.



Groomer Cassettes

Thatch is the number one enemy of good putting surfaces, producing a slow green that is soft and spongy when damp.

Groomer cassettes have very thin blades that can cut at spacings of just 5mm. Used at the correct working depth they reduce coarser grasses and encourage fine textured turf. Fanned blade spacers help clean up efficiently as you go. These cassettes are particularly good at thinning out and refining course grasses, especially poa annua, and creating a smooth textured and desirable playing surface.

A benefit of groomer cassettes is they discreetly attach to triple mowers, meaning the operation is virtually unnoticeable.

GreenTek recommends: Thatch-Away Supa-Verticut Units



Groomer Cassette



True Surface Rollers

GreenTek have been selling true surface rollers throughout Europe since 1996.

The idea behind their vibratory greens rollers is that rather than smashing soil or sand down into the greens using weight, vibrations shake the topdressing to spread it evenly. In creating smoother greens with faster speeds, turf can be mown at a higher height of cut. This results in stronger turf which needs less fertiliser and water to keep it healthy.

Detailed studies have been conducted by turfgrass universities, which document the increase in greens speed achieved by the use of rollers. Lightweight rolling three times a week does not cause compaction or any loss of turf quality.

The combination of brushing and vibratory rolling fills coring holes and settles topdressing. This reduces the blunting of mower blades which in turn reduces down time and regrinding costs.

GreenTek recommends: Select-A-Vibe True Surface Roller

GREENTEK

To find out more visit www.greentek.uk.com or call 0113 267 7000.



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Section News

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

AROUND THE GREEN SCOTLAND & N IRELAND



Duddingston

East

The East section held its autumn outing at Duddingston by kind permission of the captain and the council. The course was in great condition on another lovely day for golf and the food was delicious. After a very interesting talk on life in the soil from Gary Smith of Symbio, the golf turned out to be very competitive. Results: 1st class, Graeme Davidson, Murrayfield; 2nd class, Keith Craig, Eyemouth; Scratch, Blair Shearer, Dunbar; Trade and closest to the hole, Alan Thomson, Tacit; longest drive, Graeme King, Hugh King Ltd.

Upcoming events

The East section AGM is being held at Carrick Knowe in the clubhouse of Carrickvale on 15 November at 12noon, registration from 11.30am. This is followed by lunch then nine holes of golf for the prestigious Jimmy Neilson trophy at 1.30pm, courtesy of Edinburgh Leisure. This is your chance to have your voice heard and to let your committee know what you would like to see done.

Please let Stuart Ferguson or myself know if you plan on attending to assist with the catering numbers. Also indicate if you want to play golf.

We are having a get together for a curry and beer on 26 November at 2pm, somewhere on Leith Walk. This is a very flexible arrangement and is dependent on your responses.

It will probably involve another pitstop for food at around 6pm. If you would like to meet up, let any of the East section committee know by Wednesday 23 November saying if and when you will be arriving.

North

I think we will all be happy to see the back of the golfing season. 2016 has been memorable for all the wrong reasons! So here is hoping for a good winter without the savage storms that we endured last year. It is also the time where we should be easing our cutting regimes and starting to think about our winter programmes, which makes a welcome change from the daily routine in the summer months.

We would like to wish Fraser Jardine and his wife Amanda all the best after getting married on 15 October.

Innes Reynolds has left his position at Newmacher to take on the deputy head job at Ellon. All the best Innes.

Finally, a couple of sporting congratulations. Firstly to Paul Sharp for getting back in the Scotland team for angling. Paul was picked after several very good events this year. Most recently, in the nationals he was placed in the top 20 out of 500 anglers. So very well done, and if you are needing a fish for Christmas, just contact Mr Sharp.

The Dukes had its annual trades day golf event, which was won by myself Neil Sadler, Paul Sharp of Peterculter, Billy Craig of Kirriemuir, and the team host Neil Mitchell of Greentech. I think this was a surprising win as it was only Mr Mitchell's second outing on a golf course. So we will now hopefully be seeing Neil golfing at our section outings, rather than doing the cards.

Upcoming events

An education event is being held on 9 November at Newmacher. This will be hosted by Indigrow and the event runs from 10.30am-1pm. The presentation is open to all members of the association with tea/coffee and a buffet lunch is provided.

There are also 2 CPD credits available for this event. The event will cover topics from seaweed extracts as bio stimulants to foliar application of fertilisers. Contact Rob Hogarth, Indigrow, on rhogarth@indigrow.co.uk.

The second education event is going to be held at Pittodrie - the home of the mighty Dons - on 24 November and is hosted by Symbio.

This event is designed for head greenkeepers and deputy head greenkeepers, groundsman, club secretaries and managers.

The event will be looking at how playing conditions can be improved and savings can be made by working with soil biology instead of fighting against it. Four CPD points are available. Contact Polly Gearing on 01428 685762.

AROUND THE GREEN SOUTHWEST & S WALES

South West

Following our AGM in the first week at Ashton Gate, Bristol City FC, we welcome committee members Seb Cavilla, Dave Taylor and Matt James to the fold. Great to have you on board guys. The afternoon was a real success and gave everyone who attended the chance to check out the recently reconstructed stadium and DESSO pitch and see turf management from a slightly different perspective. Special mention has to go to Head Groundsman Dan Sparks for his welcome, hard work organising our visit and hosting a superb discussion on the pitch. Thanks must go to Tim Needham and Simon Kew for their contributions to the South West following their retirement from committee duties.

Great to see a big turnout from the local members for the National Championships at Bowood on 10-11 October, although special mention has to go to Leigh Mordy from Knowle for nailing nearest the pin on day two.

Our sponsored positions to BTME have been decided. Congratulations go to David Moreno who receives the regional position and Adam Baldwin who receives the section position. Enjoy the week guys, it's invaluable and well worth the journey.

Upcoming events

The South West section Christmas tournament is being hosted by Burnham & Berrow on 14 December. This ever popular event is now open for registration. Consider this fantastic value - only £20 to play one of the finest courses in the country and tuck into a hearty Christmas dinner with your colleagues from across the South West. Get in quick and email Lucy on southwestsection@bigga.co.uk for registration.

Finally don't forget the SW&SW regional conference being held once again at Somerset County Cricket Ground in Taunton. Tracey.walker@bigga.co.uk for registrations.

Tracey's sharp organising ensures this event is always top notch, so expect great speakers and pick up details from the regional news.

Sponsor thanks

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

Support from our patrons allows the South West section to provide free education events and provide an opportunity for our members to attend national level events.

South Coast

Upcoming events

Our AGM at Alresford is taking place at around the same time as this magazine will land on your doormat. At this event we will be publicising our dates for the diary list of events for 2017. Watch this space for a report of the meeting and the educational presentation and course walk which formed part of the day.

By now you should have received your invite for the 2016 Turkey Trot Christmas golf event. The ever-popular day takes place on Tuesday 6 December and is hosted this year by Salisbury and South Wilts. The cost for the day is £25. If you haven't already done so, contact southcoastsection@bigga.co.uk to book your place.

South Wales

More than 21 players entered our autumn golf competition at the Worcestershire. The course was in superb condition thanks to Steve Lloyd and his team and the weather was kind and hospitality great. In first place was Colin Kerfoot with 37pts, winning on the back nine. 2nd was Clive Jones with 37pts, in third was myself on 35pts, with Peter Holmstrom in fourth with 35. The longest drive on the day was Tom Howels, Mal Mitchel won nearest the pin in two on the 18th.

The AGM held on the day ran smoothly and Clive Jones was presented with an engraved pewter jug for his 30 years' service at the Worcestershire, which was a very proud moment for Clive.

Emyr Nickels has made a difficult decision to leave Royal Porthcawl and the industry after many years. Good luck in your new job and thanks for your contribution to the committee and for looking after the accounts.

Darryl Jones entered the BIGGA National Championship, reporting the course at Bowood was in fantastic condition with tricky pin positions.

Last month around 50 people attended a Toro roadshow at Cottrell Park with many new machines on demonstration. Greenkeepers from the South Wales section, including chairmen of the greens and managers, attended the event. There was plenty of time to ask questions and try the machinery and it was a great networking event.

Upcoming events

Our Christmas golf competition will be played over the links of Pyle & Kenfig with the testing heathland of the front nine and the dunes on the back nine. The date's set for 15 December with tee times from 10.30. Coffee and bacon roll on arrival, two-course meal after golf.



Clive Jones receives a pewter jug to mark 30 years' service



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AROUND THE GREEN NORTHERN

**Section
News**

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of the month



North East section versus Cleveland at Longhirst Hall

Halifax West End win Golf Management Trophy qualifier on home soil

The BIGGA Northern Region Golf Management Trophy qualifier was kindly hosted by Halifax West End, where we were fortunate enough to enjoy a dry day.

Some great golf was played with no shortage of two shots from: Bernard Fee, Halifax West End, on the 1st and 4th; Stewart Lobley, Bingley St Ives, on the 15th; Martin Heywood, Bingley St Ives, on the 4th and 10th; Ryan Envoy, Howley Hall, on the 13th; Richard Shields, Eastham Lodge, on the 8th; and Tony Hesketh, Eastham Lodge, on the 8th and 13th.

The results of the event were: 1st, Halifax West End, 81pts; 2nd, Bingley St Ives, 76pts; 3rd, Whitwood, 74pts.

Both Bingley St Ives and Halifax West End will represent the Northern region at the final, held at John O'Gaunt on 31 October. Thanks are extended to all clubs who supported the event, which will be held next year on 2 August at Bingley St Ives.

North East

The North East section had a resounding win in the annual match against the Cleveland

section, held at Longhirst in Morpeth. Well done lads. A big thank you to Graham, Steve and the team for the superb condition of the course.

Results: Sam Wilkinson & Rayn Martin beat Anthony McGeough & Richard Hood 3&2. Jack Friar & John Scuffield beat Ben McGrattan & Paul Legg 3&2. Jimmy Richardson & Marc Friar beat Martin Woods & Alan Eastlake 5&4. Many thanks to TSL for sponsoring the event.

The autumn tournament at Whickham had a great turn out, the course is in great condition and was enjoyed by all. Congratulations to Brian and his team. Thank you to everyone who turned up to play. It was a really good turnout and I am sure everyone enjoyed their round. Results: Gross: Jack Friar. Nett: 1st, Gary Morse; 2nd, Paul 'The Dancer' Walton; 3rd, Jimmy Richardson.

Congratulations to Craig Parkinson who recently tied the knot to the beautiful Louise. We wish you a long and happy life together.

Cleveland

Firstly, we have to start by saying congratulations to Daniel Egan who got married to Joanne on 1 October. That's another bachelor from the Cleveland section

snapped up. Surely there can't be too many left now ladies!

The autumn tournament was due to be held at Wynyard on 12 October, but was postponed due to low numbers and has been rearranged for 2 November. The perfect storm of work commitments and meetings meant the usual gathering of likely lads was greatly reduced. So we hope to see you there for a great day out on a lovely course.

October has been a very busy month for me and I haven't been updating the Facebook pages as frequently as I would have liked.

Congratulations to BIGGA North East on winning the annual golf match challenge and being crowned 2016 champions.

It has taken a bit of time for the rawness of defeat to ease. Even the presence of a ringer like me, slightly out of my depth, wasn't enough to stop the BIGGA North East team from ripping the trophy from us. Held at the wonderful Longhirst, which was in top class condition, there was a friendly atmosphere created by Graham and all the staff, so thanks again.

The day was sponsored by TSL Turf Care and a great day was had. Cheers Terry Charlton and Martin Stephenson for a brilliant day. See the North East section notes for the full results.

Upcoming events

Although not in the Cleveland section, don't forget about the wonderful opportunity to gain bunker building experience at Dunstanburgh. Check out the Facebook page for more details.

Northern

Upcoming events

The autumn tournament/ Presidents' Day will have been played by the time you read this. Let's hope it's a decent turn out.

Sponsor thanks

Thanks to sponsors. Thanks to Rigby Taylor, Cheshire Turf Machinery, Balmers GM Ltd, Greensman Ltd and Icl

North Wales

I'll start off by congratulating Ashley Griffiths, head greenkeeper at Wrexham, for winning the scratch cup on his own course. While mentioning the course, could you, if you haven't already, send Carl Crocher your entry forms as soon as possible for our Christmas comp and AGM at Wrexham on 24 November, which will no doubt be a cracking day.

The BIGGA National Championship was held at Bowood in Wiltshire and the section was well represented by James Hampson of Chester, Phil Watson of Wallasey, Martin Lee of Portal Championship, Simon Ashford of Upton-by-Chester, Andrew Cornes of Thorntree Amenity and John Mooney of Rigby Taylor.

The only reason for putting John last was because he won the BIGGA Challenge Bowl, much to the annoyance of Mr Cornes, who has won it many times in the past. Thank you Jaey Goodchild and his team for presenting the course to the standard we have now come to expect from this event.

Upcoming events

Thursday 24 November. Winter golf comp and AGM at Wrexham.

Sponsor thanks

Thank you to our sponsors and patrons for the continued support: Symbio, Rigby Taylor, MG Turfcare, North Staffs Irrigation, Germinal, Bathgate, Campey Turfcare Systems, Sherriff Amenity, ICL, Turner Groundscare, David Williams Golf Design, Cheshire Turf Machinery, Farmura and Allturf.



Craig Parkinson married Louise



Ashley Griffiths



Cleveland's Daniel Egan married Joanne



The North East's autumn golf day at Whickham



Autumn golf day at Whickham



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AROUND THE GREEN MIDLAND

Section News

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The ICL pairs final at Woburn

Results: 1st, Gerald Bruce, 40pts; 2nd, Nigel Broadwith, 37pts; 3rd, Steve Mason, 36pts. Trade prize: Steve Alabaster, 35pts.

Upcoming events

Our annual Turkey Trot/ Texas Scramble takes place on Thursday 8 December and this year Dunstable Downs are kindly hosting. This is a team event of usually four players, which is always popular, so keep an eye out for more information on our Facebook page and entry forms will be out in due course. These will need to be returned to Richard Saunders as soon as possible to secure a team for what is always a great fun day.

Sponsor thanks

Headland Amenity, Amtech Amenity, ICL, Countrywide, Banks Amenity, ALS, Avoncrop Amenity, Rigby Taylor, Banks Amenity. The Mid Anglia section would like to thank its wonderful sponsors for 2016 and is very grateful for your continued support with funds for section events.

Midland

This month's big story must be the ICL pairs final at Woburn, sponsored fabulously by our pals at ICL. It was a hard fought front nine, but then on the back nine Dave Fellows and Nick Bird pulled away to beat Adam Moss and Jay Martin. A great game was enjoyed by all and thanks to Emma Kilby and Nick Martin of ICL who attended. Also thanks to driver Gary Watkins and photographer Harvey Brooke. Keep your eyes open for details of next year's doubles competition.

A big congrats to Dale Housden who went off to the States to do tournament support for the FedEx Cup Tour Championship at East Lake in Atlanta. Dale said it was an unbelievable experience.

Stress in the workplace is once again a big talking point and we implore anyone suffering, especially with winter and Christmas nearly upon us, please

BB&O

Forty-four golfers attended the autumn golf event held at Calcot Park. It was played on a lovely autumnal day, but there was a strong breeze. This, combined with some tricky pin positions, provided a stern test of golf and kept scoring down. The top three on the day all tied on 35 points and the winner on countback was Simon Freshwater. Second place went to Ashlee Mills and third was Andy Sellars. Nearest the pin on the 4th was Keith May and on the 7th was Ted Lewis. Nearest the pin in 2 on the 10th was Simon Banks and longest drive on the 18th was George Ball. A huge thanks to Simon Robinson and the team at Calcot for a course which was immaculately prepared and was in top condition.

Farol was the sponsor for this event and a big thank you must go to them, especially to James Moore. Without any of our sponsors these golf days would simply not happen, and to all of them we are extremely grateful.

Upcoming events

A quick reminder that the Turkey Trot, to be held on the Green course at Frilford Heath, is fast approaching. Please return entry forms as soon as possible to secure your place.

On 16 November, Turf Care, along with the BB&O section, are holding an education day at East Berks. For further details of this

refer to our Facebook page and contact Dan Jones at Turf Care or Matt Short, BB&O secretary.

Mid Anglia

Our section passes our congratulations to Brett Cox, course manager at Welwyn Garden City, who has been with the club for an amazing 25 year service. I believe this is his sole employment since starting as an apprentice fresh out of school. 25 years, man and boy. Hope you are looking forward to the next quarter of a century Bertie. More news from Welwyn is Deputy Course Manager Ricky Moggridge recently became WGC club champion for 2016. Well done Ricky from all at the Mid Anglia section.

Twenty-eight golfers competed in our recent autumn golf day which was played at Berkhamsted. The weather was kind and the course presented in fantastic condition, so our thanks go to Gerald and his team for providing a great test for all. Our thanks also go to all at the club for their hospitality in allowing use of the venue. Special mention to Ernest Does for providing refreshments on the way round, this went down really well. We feel a bit of local knowledge may have helped our winner, but with 40 points off such a low handicap, you have to admire a great knock.



Reece Tomalin (centre) has become the first apprentice enlisted on the Level 2 Certificate in Golf Greenkeeping scheme

don't suffer alone. Contact any one of us, including Regional Administrator Roger Butler, if you would like to chat.

Andy Laing has worked hard putting together our autumn section seminar at Henley on Thursday 17 November, sponsored by Avoncrop Amenity. Five great speakers and a machinery demo from Toro form the line-up. See Facebook and the section website for further information. Free to members, £20 non-members.

Continuing on the education track and 16-year-old trainee greenkeeper Reece Tomalin has become the UK's first youngster to be enrolled on the Level 2 Apprenticeship, the Certificate in Golf Greenkeeping. Reece works at Hollywood in Birmingham, and joined the team straight from school, having undertaken GCSE's in 2016.

Upcoming events

After two very successful events this year, be sure to book early and come along to the Christmas event at Redditch on 14 December, starting at 10am and costing £27. The day will be kindly sponsored by Banks Amenity, it's a pairs competition and the pairs will be drawn on the day. Contact

Karl Williams on 07584196172 or coursemanager@redditchgolfclub.com to book your place. Call now to avoid disappointment.

Next year we have confirmed our spring comp at Broadway and autumn comp at South Staffs. Winter comp still to be confirmed.

Sponsor thanks

Big thanks to our sponsors for November, Red Tech. For all your Toro support, contact Graham on 01676 523287 for more details.

East of England

Regional Administrator Roger Butler is looking to conduct an educational trip to St George's Park in November with all members of the region and associated sectors able to attend. Speak to Roger directly as places are limited.

The autumn golf day and AGM was held on 29 September at Sudbrook Moor. Attendance was disappointing but we understand that this time of year can be busy. Those who attended thoroughly enjoyed the relaxed day. Before the golf a short educational event was held by Richard Owens on the workings of a modern turf farm and small ecological projects that

all clubs can take part in. We also held the section AGM before the golf and thank Roger Butler for his guidance in procedural matters. We formally welcome all new members to the committee and thank those who have stepped down after many years of dedicated service. Just to note that Ian Collett is taking over as communications officer, so please furnish him with any relevant stories.

The golf was a 9-hole affair played on a fantastically conditioned course, especially the greens. Nearest the pin was won by James Sergeant of Sudbrook Moor; longest drive was won by Graeme Macdonald of Newark. Third prize went to James Sergeant; second went to Graeme Macdonald; first prize with a display of controlled golf was Bruce Hicks of Boston.

This win was all the more special due to the fact Bruce recently underwent knee surgery and this was the first time in over two months since he's held a club.

Upcoming events

Our next event is the Christmas Texas Scramble golf day at Seacroft, to be held on Friday 16 December.

Teams of four to consist of a minimum of two greenkeepers and up to two club officials, such as greens chair, secretary, manager etc. The day will as usual be sponsored by Rigby Taylor and Mansfield Sands. As usual, this event attracts a good entry and is a great day out so remember to get your entries to Bruce Hicks.

Sponsor thanks

Our thanks go to Sudbrook Moor for their hospitality and catering, Richard Owens of Tillers Turf and Simon Hutton of Fineturf for the educational opportunity, James and his team for the condition of the course.

Thanks to Nigel Lovett and Reesink Turfcare for the quality prizes and continued sponsorship of the section and the autumn golf day. Our thanks go to you all.





BIGGA SOUTH EAST REGION

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@cliveosgood

Kerry Phillips
07715672568
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Contact your section correspondent with news, events or any other information of interest for Around the Green...

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AROUND THE GREEN SOUTH EAST

Section News

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



Members compete for the Surrey Bowl, below, at Foxhills

Surrey

Congratulations to the new Surrey Bowl winners Derek Cunliffe and Charlie Simpson who played against Edward Campbell and Ashley Rycroft. Derek and Charlie won 4&3. Thank you to Dave Wyborn, course manager at Foxhills, for again letting us host the final at the course. I understand it was in fantastic condition as always.



Upcoming events

The free third Thursday seminar this month will be hosted by Dan Lightfoot and Henry Bechelet and will be on winter disease management. Please contact Lewis on biggasurreysection@gmail.com and let him know of your attendance, and also so he can arrange enough refreshments.

Kent

Kent greenkeepers were recently welcomed to the charming Ashford. Despite some recent heavy rains the course had held up well and provided us with a touch challenge. Daunting, tight

tee shots and copious amounts of ditches punished any wayward balls. Such issues obviously did not bother many of our group as the scores racked up quickly as the sun shone down, bathing us in late summer sunshine.

One person who racked up an embarrassingly high score early doors was Matt Corbould from Amenity Technology who had the audacity to score 25 points on the front 9, playing off a handicap of 16.

After his playing partners discussing a 'Rule 19' immediate handicap cut, he started spraying some balls around, before finishing with 41 points and winning the trade prize

Among our greenkeepers, scoring was equally good, but off sensible handicaps. Everyone was very complimentary about the course and the way the Ashford staff had set it up for us in difficult conditions.

Results: 1st, Van Rotherham, Royal Cinque Ports, 40pts; 2nd, Paul Rudkin, Sundridge Park, 40pts; 3rd, George Austin, Corinthian, 38pts; nearest pin, Darren Burton; longest drive, Ben Adams.

Incidentally, Darren Burton will soon be leaving his post as course manager at Lydd to join James Bledge and his crew at Royal Cinque Ports. Very best wishes for the future Daz.

During our prizegiving, Kev Morris and I announced it is our intention to stand down from our respective roles on the Kent section committee at this year's AGM at Redlibbets on 24 November. I think nearly 12 years in the post is long enough for anyone.

Obviously, we would not have considered standing down an option had someone suitable not stepped forward to take on the role of forming a new committee and continuing the success Kev and I have enjoyed in recent years.

That person is Ben Adams of the London Club who, assuming you guys vote him in at the AGM, will push the section forward with his enthusiasm. So, please vote for Ben at the AGM and then help support him in any way you can.

Unfortunately for you lot, I will have one more of these editorials to write after our Turkey Trot so I'll try to sign off with a good one.

London

As we all move into the season of leaf clearing, less mowing and work turning towards improvements, we should all consider personal developments. The London section will be running a few short afternoon lectures at Muswell Hill which will be communicated in next month's Around the Green, once agreed by the committee.

Well done Adam and Paul at the BIGGA National Championship, but sadly they came back empty handed.

Well done all those who helped Phil Chiverton present The Grove to such a high standard for the British Masters, and so well liked and played by Alex Noren.

Upcoming events

The next date for the diary is the Christmas tournament at South Herts on Thursday 15 December. It will be a Texas Scramble with teams of four. Entry forms will go out at the end of November so let's get a full field to finish the hard year's work.



Foxhills

New Members

Scotland & Northern Ireland

Alasdair Macleod	DCM - Loch Lomond
Peter Wallace	First Assistant - Lochgelly
Graham Burnett	GK - Nairn Dunbar
Steven Andrews	Groundsman - Ards and North Downs Borough Council
Ronan McElhinney	Student - CAFRE
Tod Bannerman	Student - SRUC (Elmwood)
James Gordon	AGK - Newmacher

Northern

Chris Hume	CM - Sale
Tom Weston	DHGK - Sale
Dean Wilson	First Assistant - Crow Nest Park
Callum Marshall	GK - Rudding Park
James Hall	GK - Prestbury
Scott Fellows	GK - Rotherham
Nathan Howarth	AGK - Penrith
Andrew Riley	AGK - Lymm
Karl Hollingsworth	AGK - George Washington
Stephen Smith	AGK - Walmersley

Midland

Martin Blackburn	Affiliate - P Tuckwell Ltd
Paul Daffern	Affiliate - Market Harborough
Emma Gamelin	Education Supporter - GBR Tech
Ian Lane	Education Supporter - GBR Tech
Paul Morris	Education Supporter - GBR Tech
Ben Clarke	GK - The Bedfordshire
Dave Workman	GK - Hartley Wintney
Jack Smillie	GK - The Belfry
Liam Campbell	GK - Mapledurham
Paul Ballard	GK - Mapledurham
Will Dix	GK - The Buckinghamshire
Reece Tomalin	AGK - Trentham

South West and South Wales

James Hook	AGK - Tickenham
Scott Simpson	AGK - Royal Jersey

South East

Alex Lamb	GK - Thorndon Park
Christian Gibson	GK - Thorndon Park
David Richardson	GK - The Buckinghamshire
Jamie Graham	GK - The Buckinghamshire
Ross Sullivan	GK - Thorndon Park
Steven Ramsey	GK - Piltdown
Ciaran Brown	AGK - Piltdown
Danny Burchell	AGK - Piltdown
George Rogers	AGK - Sandy Lodge
Paul Challis	AGK - South Essex

Key

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



GREENKEEPERS TRAINING COMMITTEE

YOUR GUIDE TO THE APPRENTICESHIP PROCESS

What is an apprenticeship?

It is when an individual works and learns at the same time.

You will be employed, getting paid and be entitled to all the statutory benefits such as holiday and sick pay.

On completion of the training programme you will be a fully competent greenkeeper.

Employer benefits

Apprenticeships are available to businesses of all sizes and in all sectors.

In England, they are now being driven by the employer. The GTC consulted heavily with employers, training providers, England Golf and BIGGA to develop a rigorous programme of education and training with final graded end point assessments. This will ensure the apprentice is fully competent in the complete range of skills and tasks required to be a qualified greenkeeper.

The benefits of this approach to greenkeeping education ensures apprentices completing the programme develop into a motivated and skilled workforce, which significantly benefits employers.



How do I find an apprentice?

- ▶ Contact local schools and colleges
- ▶ Advertise on-line, Job Centre Plus
- ▶ Contact the GTC, England Golf and BIGGA for potential applicants
- ▶ www.gov.uk/recruit-apprentice

Or, prospective apprentices may contact you directly.

Apprentice recruited – what next?

Contact the GTC, England Golf or BIGGA for further advice or questions. They will be able to guide you to the most appropriate training provider (college) to register the apprentice with.

The training provider:

- ▶ Will carry out an initial assessment
- ▶ Sign a learning agreement
- ▶ Carry out an induction and workplace assessment

The programme of education and training (**The Journey**) will be carried out by the training provider and employer and include:

- ▶ On the job training
- ▶ Off the job training
- ▶ Training manual
- ▶ Learning materials
- ▶ Coaching, mentoring, formative assessments, review and feedback

When the employer and training provider are agreed, the trainee is 'signed off' on their programme of education and training. They have reached **The Gateway** and are deemed ready for the **Final End Point Assessments**.

An independent assessor will be appointed by the awarding organisation to carry out the final end point assessments -

- ▶ On-line test
- ▶ Trainee statement (including course walk assessment)
- ▶ Series of practical end point assessments (5 out of 20)

These will be graded either as pass, merit, distinction or fail. On achievement, the trainee will be a fully competent golf greenkeeper, a valuable member of staff and be awarded the Certificate in Golf Greenkeeping.

How much does it cost?

The Trailblazer apprenticeships for 2016/17 are funded by employers and the Government on a one third/two thirds ratio. So for every £1 the employer contributes, the Government contributes £2. This is up to a maximum funding cap of £9,000.

Funding Band 3

£9,000
Maximum funding cap

Core Government contribution cap of

£6,000

Employer contribution

£3,000

The apprenticeship journey



The overall cost will be negotiated between the chosen lead training provider (college) and the employer. Factors to influence the negotiations will include aspects such as:

- ▶ Does the apprentice need to go into college or can the programme of education be carried out entirely in the workplace?
- ▶ How much will the club rely on the college to support the apprentice or will the support come entirely from the club?
- ▶ Will the apprentice need additional learning support?

What is included in the price?

The cost negotiated for the programme of learning and education will include:

- ▶ Registration and certification with the awarding body
- ▶ Access to the GTC Training Manual and learning materials
- ▶ Programme of learning and education delivered by the training provider and employer which will be on and off the job.
- ▶ Final end point assessments: Online tests
Trainee statements
Series of Practical assessments

This can be up to a maximum of £9,000 per apprentice.

Incentives for employers - 2016/17

For this academic year, the Government are offering incentives to employers for the Trailblazer apprenticeship and these are:



When are the incentive payments made?

The lead providers will receive the initial incentive payments for eligible employers and apprentices.

After the apprentice starts			
	90 Days	365 Days	On Completion
16 – 18 Years	£900	£900	£900
SME	£900		

* The apprentice also has to achieve Level 1 in English & Maths. If additional education support is required a Training Provider can arrange this and there is additional funding support from the Government for this element of the programme.

Useful website links:

- www.gov.uk/government/collections/apprenticeship-changes
- www.gov.uk/guidance/sfa-funding-rules
- www.cityandguilds.com/apprenticeships/trailblazer-apprenticeships
- www.gov.uk/government/collections/individualised-learner-record-ilr
- www.cityandguilds.com/~/_media/apprenticeships/docs/deliver/city-guilds-apprenticeships-reform-guide.ashx
- www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/555650/ILRProviderSupportManual_2016_17_v2_Sept2016.pdf

The GTC is funded by:



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Using artificial grass in golf



Today's artificial grass carpets have come a long way since Astroturf sports carpets first appeared in the mid-1960s.

There followed a spate of leading football clubs, including Luton Town and Queens Park Rangers, who installed simple sand-filled artificial grass carpet pitches, with limited success, in the following years.

Modern carpet grass is much more sophisticated in its appearance and performance, by using the latest 'soft blade' fibres which look just like the real thing and provide a vastly extended product life.

There has recently been substantial growth in the landscaping sector, with consumers using artificial grass for residential lawns and gardens, including patios and balconies. Artificial grass is also widely used in park areas, as well as central reservations and roundabouts where existing high maintenance costs for cutting, treating and re-seeding have been significantly reduced.

Widely regarded as the most realistic carpet grass on the market, Greenacres Artificial Grass has been used on some of the most elite golf courses in the UK as tee mats, for paths and walkways, and for areas subject to erosion.

Greenacres' large 360 x 180cm Course Mat has a super dense, high pile surface which takes a normal golf tee, placed anywhere across the 3.6 metre width, and allows players to tee off from a variety of positions to match prevailing wind conditions and flag positions. Course Mat has proved so comfortable and consistent as winter tees that many players are also gladly using them in summer too. Greenacres also produced smaller range mats for driving range and iron play.

On the course, Greenacres has a variety of synthetic surfaces in widths up to four metres, with a totally realistic grass appearance. These surfaces are ideal for problem areas subject to wear and erosion, banks, pathways, and any area where growing and maintaining natural grass has become difficult or expensive.

A hybrid system will be launched by Greenacres at BTME in 2017. The Nurture range incorporates a super strong mesh backing and allows grass to grow inside and underneath, protecting the seed from wear and erosion.

Continued Over

BUYER'S GUIDE

This unique range is ideal for paths, public parks, goalmouth and sideline areas, and many other similarly critical areas which are subject to extreme wear.

Pro Green is a high quality, low pile carpet which simulates the speeds and ball roll characteristic of a natural green, achieving a Stimpmeter reading of 10.3. Pro Green is ideal for winter greens, as well as home or garden use.

Also launching in 2017 is the Clubhouse range of waterproof, stain and stud resistant carpets for clubhouse and locker rooms. Clubhouse is available in a variety of thick pile surfaces and colours and has a heavy duty rubber backing which provides total dimensional stability, so it can be laid loose for temporary or permanent installation anywhere around the clubhouse and other areas.

Completing the range of artificial grasses for 2017 is a wide selection of specialist surfaces for multi-sports use, mini pitches, tennis, hockey and many other sports.

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Photo courtesy of Kudding Park Region Short Course "Signature Island Green"

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



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HEAD OF AGRONOMY FOR GREENKEEPERS BY N&V, HELSINKI, FINLAND

DPSM Consultants have been exclusively retained by Greenkeepers by N&V to search for a Head of Agronomy to oversee four golf facilities in Finland.

-  Tuusulan Golfklubi - www.tuusulangolfklubi.fi/
-  Vantaan Golfpuisto - <http://vantaangolfpuisto.fi/>
-  Hiekkaharju Golf - www.hieg.fi/
-  Golf Park Leppävaara - www.golfpark.fi/

- Role:**
-  Agronomic direction
 -  Participates in creating a long-term course development plan for each facility
 -  Prepares an annual maintenance program for each facility together with Golf Course Superintendents
 -  Prepares an annual agronomy budget for each facility and achieves financial goals throughout the year

Please apply to Douglas Philip, Director at DPSM Consultants – doug.philip@dpsmconsultants.com - with a copy of your CV and Covering Letter. Closing date for applications is 11th November 2016.

CALLANDER GOLF CLUB

REQUIRES an ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

An Apprenticeship will be considered as training will be provided as required, candidates with parks, grasscutting, or similar experience will be considered.

Please Contact The Greens Convenor
Callander Golf Club, Aveland Road, Callander FK17 8EN
Or E-Mail - callandergolf@btconnect.com

HEAD GREENKEEPER

WEST MALLING GOLF CLUB

Successful applicants will be fully experienced in all types of Greenkeeping and will have already attained a Deputy Greenkeeping position or higher.

- Qualified to NVQ Level 3 or equivalent.
- Spraying Certificates PA1, 2 & 6
- Understanding of Parkland Golf Course
- Leadership and Management skills to motivate current experienced greenkeeping team
- Salary negotiable based on experience

For more information please contact Mr Greg Still (General Manager) on 01732 844785 or email: greg@westmallinggolf.com

HEAD GREENKEEPER

LLANYMYNECH GOLF CLUB.

An exciting opportunity has arisen for a Head Greenkeeper to manage and lead a small team of enthusiastic greens staff at Llanymynech Golf Club.

A members' club, established in 1933, the course straddles the English/Welsh border and is designated a "Site of Special Scientific Interest"

The successful candidate will have a good knowledge of modern green keeping practices and possess several years relevant experience. For further information, see our advert on the careers section of the BIGGA website www.bigga.org.uk/careers/

Applicants are requested to apply in writing with an up to date CV to The Secretary, Llanymynech Golf Club, Pant, Nr. Oswestry, Shropshire SY10 8LB email secretary@llanymynechgolfclub.co.uk

CLOSING DATE - MONDAY 14TH NOVEMBER 2016.

HEAD GREENKEEPER | Lightcliffe Golf Club.

Lightcliffe Golf Club, a prestigious 9 hole golf club, seek to appoint an experienced Head Greenkeeper to manage and lead a small team of enthusiastic greens staff. The ideal candidate will be able to demonstrate a number of years experience in a similar role and as a working member of the team provide valuable leadership, support and experience to colleagues. An enthusiasm to develop new skills and a willingness to keep up to date with the latest greenkeeping practices and legislation are essential.

Qualifications and experience should include:

- NVQ Level 3 or equivalent in Sports Turf Maintenance
- PA1, PA2 and PA6 spraying certificates required
- CS30 and CS31 chainsaw certificates
- Knowledge of the use and maintenance of modern greenkeeping machinery
- Knowledge of automated irrigation systems
- Knowledge of all health and safety legislation relating to greenkeeping equipment and also chemical and waste handling

Reporting to the Greens Chairman, this is a full time position based on 40 hours per week, although some flexibility will be required during the summer months. A competitive salary and benefits package is offered commensurate with the guidelines of the Standing Committee on Greenkeepers' Salaries. Your application should be emailed to lightcliffegolf@btconnect.com for the attention of David Barwick, or alternatively postal applications can be sent to Lightcliffe Golf Club, Knowle Top Road, Lightcliffe, Halifax, West Yorkshire, HX3 8SW. Closing date for applications is Monday 14th November 2016

MUNICIPAL SALES MANAGER



Location: Ipswich
Salary: commensurate with experience

Reporting to: Sales Manager UK and Ireland

RESPONSIBILITIES

- To achieve the annual sales objectives set nationally, as well as any targets that may be set from time to time
- To achieve all margin objectives that are set, and control outstanding receivables for customers you are responsible for
- To agree an Annual Business Plan with each dealer against specific objectives set by the Company, and work closely with the dealer to ensure full support and motivation is provided to achieve this plan
- To carry out end user visits to key and high profile customers, with or without dealer sales personnel present
- To promote all brands and products supplied by Ransomes Jacobsen regardless of whether they are included in individual targets
- To identify dealer training needs and carry out sales training as necessary in conjunction with International Training Manager
- To perform any other duties as requested by the Senior Management of the Company
- To prepare or assist in the preparation of quotations for direct sales for dealers, particularly targeting contractors, specialist vehicle users and large municipalities
- To keep updated records on all dealers, provide timely visit reports following all dealer visits and provide a detailed monthly report on all aspects of your sales operation
- To ensure all receivables are closely controlled at all times
- To identify, develop and promote new sales opportunities
- To identify and report vulnerabilities in the Company sales activities. In particular keep contingency plans and SWOT analysis for each area updated at least quarterly
- To safely maintain and protect all Company assets controlled by yourself
- To ensure all Company systems, policies and procedures are followed and implemented correctly

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS/EDUCATION

- Degree/A Level educated or equivalent
- 5 years commercial experience
- 3 years experience in related industry
- IT literate
- Driving Licence

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

- Commercial Awareness
- Inter-personal skills
- Presentable and articulate
- Should be at ease with engineering/mechanical issues

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& FINALLY...

OTTER PROTECTION IN THE YORKSHIRE DALES

& FINALLY

BIGGA Sustainability Executive James Hutchinson visited Skipton in North Yorkshire to learn how the course is creating habitats to help support a resident population of elusive and enigmatic otters.

Huddled within the scenic Yorkshire Dales, Skipton is a parkland course with magnificent views of Sharphaw, Crookrise and Embsay Crag mountains. Its tree-lined environs hold many places for birds to forage and live, while the ancient stone walls are a haven for invertebrates to dwell within.

Running this fine course is a team of greenkeepers, led by Ian Brown, who are seamlessly creating excellent habitats to go alongside their amenity management. Take their woodland projects, for instance.

It was deemed that sections of the woods were becoming too leggy and tall and as a result require thinning out - this was undertaken in house, thus keeping costs minimal, with the majority of the timber being stacked as ecopiles.

There is also the development of a massive Flood Alleviation Scheme to the East end of the site which required major renovation work to the 125-year-old course.

The team at Skipton worked closely with the Environment Agency to be sure minimal disturbance of the wildlife onsite ensued.

Otters were found by the EA's ecologists prior to developing the scheme, thus leading to careful management of the land therein. Otters receive full protection from the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and The Conservation of Habitats Regulation 2010. The aquatic mammals are also listed as a Biodiversity Action Plan species and must be considered under the Natural Environment Rural Communities Act 2006. BIGGA offered our assistance to see if we could catch one of these beautiful creatures on our remote wildlife cam. No otters unfortunately, but a dipper and a grey wagtail showed up, so all was not lost.

The course is honoured to have a selection of owls patrolling at night, whereas kestrels – the club's emblem – can be seen hovering over the long grasslands, suggesting there's enough voles, shews and mice for them to raise their young.

As I travel the UK, I find many courses with excellent backdrops of colourful fields, mountains, lakes and woodlands. It's not so often that I find courses with all the above, but Skipton has just that, and lots of wildlife too.

Sections of woodland were thinned out

Kestrels are the club's emblem

Skipton is on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales

A grey wagtail caught on the wildlife cam



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Chris Haspell,
Course Manager, Castle Stuart Golf Links
Scottish Open 2016



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