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The official monthly magazine of the British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association Limited.

GI GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

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Although every care will be taken, no responsibility is accepted for loss of manuscripts, photographs or artwork. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Association, and no responsibility is accepted for such content, advertising or product information that may appear. Circulation is by subscription. Subscription rate: UK £50 per year, Europe and Eire £65, Rest of the World £95. The magazine is also distributed to BIGGA members, golf clubs, local authorities, the turf industry, libraries and central government.



ISSN: 0961-6977
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WELCOME



James Bledge, left, with some of this year's delegates



Chief Executive Jim Croxton

The Future Turf Managers Initiative made possible by Jacobsen clocked up its fifth instalment last month, meaning over 100 aspiring greenkeepers have been part of one of the most inspirational career development opportunities in the industry.

It was particularly pleasing to see one of the very first delegates, James Bledge of Royal Cinque Ports, who was part of the Class of 2013, assume the role of mentor for this year's group. Our vision is for all of the future mentors to have been part of the programme and James represents a key first step on this journey.

It was a privilege to witness the sharing of knowledge and network building that is such a great part of our industry. The syllabus for FTMI includes the key areas that set the great managers apart – communication, leadership and financial awareness.

Once I'd left Jacobsen HQ in Ipswich it was great to be able to follow the progress of the initiative on social media as the delegates,

mentors and presenters took to Twitter to express their delight with proceedings.

In fact, nowadays you can pretty much follow the progress of anything on social media if you so wish. Recently, I was at a golf club that still has a suggestions book in the clubhouse. It was a years-old tome and it was not surprising to see that the number of suggestions in recent years was miniscule in comparison to the past. I suspect these days suggestions are more likely to be posted on social media, perhaps even before the round is finished.

Feedback is critical if any business is to progress, but a sad result of modern communication opportunities is criticism nearly always comes before any attempt to understand the context or the facts. I know this is one of the hardest things for greenkeepers to stomach, ill-informed criticism with no thought for the impact on those it affects. It is part of our mission to ensure golfers are better educated on greenkeeping matters so as to reduce the incidence of these hurtful actions.

I'm delighted to report that at a recent gathering of golf's governing bodies BIGGA received widespread support in our desire to communicate the challenges members are facing, particularly with regard to issues such as casting earthworm and pest control.

This is good news, which makes it all the more disappointing to see some of our own industry throwing around ill-informed criticism. I was horrified to hear of some really unpleasant abuse received by one of our bright young head greenkeepers on Twitter, from an anonymous 'greenkeeping' account. But it was not an isolated incident and there have been several personal attacks on our members from within the industry, all of which are upsetting for those involved. Our code of ethics prohibits such activity, and any member found to be perpetrating such attacks will be dealt with accordingly. We are hugely committed to supporting the profession of greenkeeping, but it is made harder when individuals within the profession attack their peers on a public platform, mirroring the type of criticism that most irritates at individual club level; I would like to think we are better than that.

WELCOME



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FROM THE EDITOR



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

Write a page in BIGGA's history

A couple of weeks back I made my way to the darkest depths of West Yorkshire, with a very special passenger in tow.

I was heading to the home of Mel Guy, onetime head greenkeeper at South Leeds, which is one of Dr Alister Mackenzie's less heralded designs.

In my possession was the BIGGA National Championship Trophy, usually kept safely under lock and key at BIGGA HQ.

"My old friend, you haven't changed a bit," said Mel as he greeted the trophy at the door. He invited us both inside, but Mel's eyes rarely left the large silver bowl, which he was first presented with at Verulam GC, St Albans, in October 1987.

Verulam may never carry as much notoriety for hosting our first ever championship as it does for giving birth to the Ryder Cup – it was here Samuel Ryder played his golf – but in many ways it is the BIGGA National Championship's spiritual home.

This month's magazine features a great conversation with Mel, where he recalls his memories of the day.

Since then the event has been contested at some spectacular venues across the land, but for our 30th anniversary we wanted to return to the club where it all started. Mel won that first event by a single shot, and the entrants to this year's competition will be hoping for similar excitement.

As always, the BIGGA National Championship is going to be a great celebration, with greenkeepers coming together from all over the country to

rekindle old friendships and enjoy two rounds of golf in a spectacular setting. No matter what your golfing ability, you're all invited, and there's the usual handicap competition to keep everyone interested.

No doubt Course Manager Chris Carpenter MG will have his course looking outstanding. But if you're hosting your first championship this summer, or if you want advice on how to make things a bit special for a club event, you could do worse than take a look at some of the features in this month's magazine.

Steve Chappell, of Gleneagles, is a veteran host of major events, having been in charge of the PGA Centenary Course for the Ryder Cup in 2014. We thought he'd be the perfect man to turn to for advice on how to get your course looking in top condition. These aren't long-term tips, rather they are simple touches anyone can do to elevate the course above the everyday standard golfers expect. As Steve says, if you can make your golfers feel like professionals, just for those few days, they'll thank you for it for a long time.

Elsewhere in the magazine, Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Jimmy Heritage has just returned from a career-defining experience studying in America as part of his prize for winning the award. Jimmy's a great guy and he's taken the time to have a chat with us about his experiences.

I think one of the most important things Jimmy would say is that he never imagined he would actually win the award, and so he would be first to say that no matter who you are, it's always worth entering. You never know, it could change your life.

IN THIS ISSUE

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

24 Jimmy Heritage

A greenkeeper at Maylands in Essex, Jimmy won the 2016 Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year award. As part of his prize he spent six weeks studying turf management at the University of Massachusetts. In this month's magazine the 25-year-old recalls his experiences, and encourages other young greenkeepers to get involved with the awards.



34 Steve Chappell

Steve spent 21 years working on golf courses for club championships, national and PGA events, including at Neath in South Wales. He was then appointed head greenkeeper of the PGA Centenary Course at Gleneagles, where he oversaw the preparation of the course for the Ryder Cup in 2014.



42 Norbert Lischka

A qualified course superintendent since 1992, Norbert has attained his Master Greenkeeper certificate and the Diploma of Continued Professional Development. This month he discusses green speeds and the importance of deciding what is achievable for your course.



46 Adrian Mortram

Adrian is managing director of Robin Hume Associates and a specialist on irrigation. He has worked at the UK's most prestigious courses and has undertaken numerous education sessions for BIGGA. In his spare time Adrian leads an active life, having mountaineered on six of the seven continents and cycled from John-o-Groats to Land's End.



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Jimmy Heritage talks about his experiences since winning the prestigious award in 2016

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Skin cancer numbers are on the rise, and greenkeepers are among those most at risk of harm

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Are you hosting a major event this season and want your course to look good enough for the pros?

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30 years ago we hosted our first national championship, and winner Mel Guy recalls his memories of the day

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How has irrigation technology changed over the past decade?

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The importance of overseeding, and how you can ensure success

ACROSS THE BOARD



Les Howkins MG Chairman

Well, its that time of year again! The Masters is on and I will have a tiring Monday after staying up late to watch the conclusion.

The so-called 'Augusta Syndrome' that has been a blight on spring greenkeeping in the UK for the last 30 or so years was well covered in last month's GI.

But perhaps it is time to rename it 'HDTV Syndrome'?

Back in the 80's when The Masters became a popular addition to the BBC, the only golf you could see on TV was The Masters and The Open. Now golf is on Sky Sports every week from whatever sunny part of the world the Tours are visiting.

I wonder if this has started to encourage the British golfing public to dream of amazing golf courses every day?

Actually, what I really believe is golf courses in the UK have gotten better and better over the last 15 to 20 years and the once huge gulf in

presentation has shrunk to a much more manageable level. I also believe this is down to greenkeepers being better qualified and trained, and increased opportunities for them to network, share ideas and use other resources.

Let's keep up the superb work we do, pat ourselves on the back when we do a good job, and remember to take advantage of the training and networking opportunities provided by BIGGA.

One good news story I heard a few weeks ago is about the legacy left for golf from the Rio Olympics. To date the Olympic golf course, which we heard about so vividly during BTME, is the only venue from the 2016 Olympics that is actually being used, which goes to prove the versatility of golf courses and the staff that run them.

The door has shut on the sale of carbendazim – it's illegal to buy it now – and manufacturers are trying to find a legal alternative that will help us do what we need to out on the course to control casting earthworms.

The focus of BIGGA has moved to communicating with and educating the golfing public on how the latest product removal will impact the ability of greenkeepers to prepare the course to the standard golfers have grown used to. We have got agreement from the other governing bodies in golf to help us deliver this message and we have the summer

months to get this message across. But when we start to get in to the autumn months and pressure increases, please don't feel isolated and think you are the only one with problems tackling worms.

Use your BIGGA network to share your thoughts and ideas and to help you with educating your members. I don't want to hear of greenkeepers losing their jobs due to wormcasts on the course, so don't forget we are here to help and if you come up against resistance, we can speak to your club on your behalf.

The season of regional conferences is now over and what a season it has been. There were amazing attendance numbers, great speaker line-ups and some excellent venues. Well done and thank you to all the regional administrators, regional boards and any volunteers that made these events happen. Also thank you to everyone that made the effort to attend, I'm sure you found the experience worthwhile.

Down here in the South East the weather has been fairly reasonable, but I am aware further north it has been very wet. Let's hope for a good late spring and early summer so we can get the golfers out on the course enjoying themselves. The BMW PGA Championship at Wentworth is just around the corner, our BIGGA support crew are all set and I am really looking forward to seeing how good the course is going to be after all the work the team there has done over the last year.



Wentworth

FUNDING YOUR FUTURE

The Continuing Professional Development and world class education we provide would not be possible without the assistance of BIGGA Partners and BIGGA Education Supporters. Ensuring our members stay at the forefront of the turf management industry takes considerable investment, and we are hugely grateful to the following for their ongoing support.



Individual Contributors: Steven Tierney MG ■ Chris Lomas MG ■ Andrew Campbell MG CGCS
Richard McGlynn ■ Jaey Goodchild ■ Frank Newberry ■ Greg Evans MG



Conference season concludes in style

NEWSDESK



BIGGA Scotland Golf Industry Conference 2017



The Scottish and Central England regional conferences provided a fantastic opportunity for BIGGA members to benefit from the latest greenkeeping education.

Both events took place in spectacular settings, with the Central England event being held in the beautiful ballroom at Kings Norton and more than 70 BIGGA members attending.

Equally impressive was the Scottish Conference, which took place at Perth Concert Hall on Tuesday 7 March.

Topics at the two events ranged from golf club technology through to customer services and golf course architecture. Paul Armour, course manager at Dunbar, said: "I loved the diversity of the conference and how it was not just focussed on grass."

BIGGA's regional conferences are fantastic opportunities for members to not only benefit from some of the best education available in the industry, but also provide a platform to build relationships and network.

Speaking at the first-ever Central England conference, following the region's rechristening at BTME 2017, was Dr Colin Mumford of Bayer

Turf Solutions, Richard Owens of Tillers Turf, and Dr Kate Entwistle of the Turf Disease Centre.

Regional Administrator Roger Butler said: "Kings Norton was a wonderful setting for a great day of education, and I would like to thank all those who attended, particularly our sponsors, for making the day such a brilliant success."

Among the speakers at the Scottish conference were two young greenkeepers, Amanda Dorans of Dundonald Links and Graeme Davidson from Murrayfield, who were given the opportunity to take centre stage at such a high profile event. Graeme said: "Thanks once again for the opportunity to present as it was a great learning curve for me and hopefully it can help my career moving forward."

This year the Scottish conference was expanded, as PGA members and Golf Club Managers Association members were also invited to attend. This provided them with the opportunity to learn more about the hard work that goes into the preparation of a golf course.

One of the secretaries that attended was Les Durno from Cruden Bay. He said: "Congratulations on an excellent conference. The venue was perfect and there were some great speakers."

"It was a great idea to invite PGA professionals and golf club managers, as I don't know if I've ever spent an entire day with our course manager, Alister Matheson, and deputy head greenkeeper Paul Marshall, along with the PGA pro."



Kickboxing family



Derek and Iona Thomson

At The Wynyard, near Middlesbrough, golfers have come to realise that you don't mess with Course Manager Derek Thomson, or his 10-year-old daughter.

The pair have both qualified for the England kickboxing team after success at the English National Championship, held earlier this year.

Derek, 45, and Iona, 10, will both represent England at the world championships, held in Portugal in October.

For native Scotsman Derek, the qualification means he will be wearing English colours.

Derek said: "I wasn't going to do it, but my daughter said she would never speak to me ever again if I didn't. There's a bit of excitement, but I'm more nervous about putting an England kit on than anything."

GI DOGS ON COURSE



Name: Jazz

Owner: Ray McClatchie

Course: Queenwood

Breed: Chocolate labrador

Age: Jazz is a firm resident of 14 years at Queenwood – she joined when she was 12 weeks old – but she does not work weekends any more

Favourite treat:
Oreo biscuits

Favourite spot on the course: The ponds

Naughtiest moment:
Pinching a duckling when she was a pup (the duckling survived)

My dog is happiest when...
When she is out in the Toro Workman with me

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



NEWSDESK

South East Region returns to Walton Heath

One of the association's longest-running events saw the South East Region heading to Walton Heath this month.

Walton Heath has hosted the South East Region's Golf and Dinner Day for more than 50 years, a fact that was noted by BIGGA President Sid Arrowsmith in his address.

Regional Administrator Clive Osgood said: "The excellent work carried out by Michael Mann and his team through the winter included some necessary tree clearance. This was appreciated by everyone who played, as the New Course was presented exactly how a true heathland course should look and play.

"No doubt these cleared areas will soon be re-colonised with heather."

Dinner was served in the Holderness Dining Room, where Pete Smith, chairman of the South East Region, thanked the club for their wonderful hospitality, and for making BIGGA members so welcome on the day, as always.

Prizes were presented by Dr Iain Cruickshank, club captain.

The winners of the Ian McMillan Trophy for members and their guests were Simon Wells and Duncan Scott from Pyecombe, with a combined score of 73 points.

The Surrey Section retained the Silver Salver when the section's top three members scored the best combined score.

The evening was concluded by the presentation of the Ray Day Memorial Trophy to Joe Sexton of Coulsdon Manor, who achieved a gross score of 73 on the day.

The South East Region is grateful to the following for their continued sponsorship: Avoncrop Amenity Products; Banks Amenity; CMW Equipment; DayLinks Golf Course Equipment; Ernest Doe; Grass Roots Trading; Indrigrow; Lister Wilder; Reesink Turfcare; Tacit Golf; P Tuckwell.



The Walton Heath prize winners

THIS MONTH @BIGGALtd



@avrogreenkeeper
@BIGGALtd Despite the constant rain, we are cracking on with tidying up the paths



@Berry97
@TheHomeofGolf Par 3 #Balgove greens reaping the rewards of last year's overseeding #fescue



@St_Leon_Rot
A 'little' winter project building our wedgodrom 3200m² and 1500m² chipping green and bunker practice area



@Baldini1999
Really great day @LittlestoneGC with the @BIGGAKent Section. Golf course was excellent



@weston2005
Starting to shape and dig out bunkers today. Only 55 to go @BoundaryLakes!



@AnthonyStockwel
Fantastic course condition at Walton Heath GC for the SE @BIGGALtd Golf Day. A great day spent in the heather. Thank you @cliveosgood



@JamesBledge
Massively honoured to be asked to mentor @JacobsenTurf @BIGGALtd FTMI. Learned so much off so many amazing people. Fantastic few days!

Wentworth awaits the BIGGA Support Team



The BIGGA Support Team with 2016 winner Chris Wood

A support team of BIGGA members will be heading to The Wentworth Club this May to help prepare the course for the BMW PGA Championship.

The greenkeepers will be on hand to assist Director of Golf Courses & Estates Kenny Mackay and his team throughout the European Tour's flagship event. They will help out with early morning course work and preparation in advance of each day's play.

New Zealander Rob Boyce is a Wentworth veteran and this will be the 19th time he has joined the support team.

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

And involvement in the event may stretch further than members realise. In 2004 David Miller, of Merrist Wood, was allocated with Scott Drummond on the third day. After posting a great third round, the superstitious Scotsman asked David to team up with him and his caddie again for the final day.

Swapping allocations, David was able to aid in history as Drummond went on to claim the PGA Championship victory.

The BIGGA Support Team for the BMW PGA Championship 2017 is: Henry Aggar, Windlesham; Andy Baker, Ely City; Adam Baldwin, Lilley Brook; Tony Bartram, The Richmond; Samuel Bishop, Goodwood; Rob Boyce, Links (Newmarket); Adam Brackley, Worplesdon; Jimmy Butler, The Wisley; Simon Colebrook, Pitcheroak; Stephen Davey, The Wisley; Vincent DeMarzo, Wilderness; Jeffrey Drake, Newbury & Crookham; Andrew Drysdale, Silvermere; Josh Dunn, The Belfry; Lukasz Jurkowski, Beaverbrook; Thomas McCoy, Beaverbrook; Daniel Evans, Maesdu (Llandudno); Jack Fairbairn, Cirencester; Joe Frampton, Sunningdale; Chloe Gallagher, Ramside; Craig Hempseed, Mortonhall; Steve Hirons, Kirtlington; Stephen Hopkins, Burghley Park; Stuart Job, Southwood; Craig Kilgour, Ponteland; Oliver Kirk, Links (Newmarket); Daniel Lang, Chigwell; James Lomas, Hadleywood; Matthew Mackenzie, Ellesborough; Michael Mead, Littlehampton; Ryan Neale, Droitwich; Nathan O'Sullivan, China Fleet; Levi Pethick, Stoneham; Rob Patrick, Stoneham; Simon Rothwell, Whitwood; Jason Shepherd, Hendon; Charlie Simper, Hadleywood; Philip Slater, West Herts; David Smith, Links (Newmarket); David Stewart, Walmley; Anthony Sunney, Wimbledon Park; Lewis Turner, The Dyke; Daniel Waring, Ashbourne; Harry Wells, South Herts; Lee Williams, Rotherham; Jackson Woolley, Sand Martins; Dean Franks, Littlehampton; Anthony Duffied, Ham Manor; Chris Mitchell, Maidenhead; Ryan Wilson, Centurion Club; Kevin Weller, Lingfield Park; Mark McCann, Lingfield Park.



YOUNG GREENKEEPERS' COMMITTEE

Representing the youth of the sports turf management industry



Andy Clark talks about getting to grips with his role as course manager at Crane Valley.

I write this at the end of my first week at Crane Valley. My head is full of new colleagues, a new course and new challenges – including maintenance week scheduled in my first month.

Following all that's new, it'll be a pleasure to look back and give you a brief overview of my time greenkeeping and with the YGC.

I started greenkeeping seasonally at my home club, Cold Ashby. It is a family run club that occupies an idyllic and very hilly corner of Northamptonshire. After a couple of summers, I joined the team full time and soon appreciated the variety our job offers throughout the changing seasons – including running a ski lift up the course's biggest hill during snowy weather!

Exposure to BIGGA through section events, trips to BTME and reading GI, seeing professional

greenkeepers and getting a feel for the formal education that underpins the professionalism of the industry, were all very important to me – and still are.

In fact, fast forward a few years and that is the explanation I submitted to the Regional Board as they considered my application to join the Young Greenkeepers' Committee.

BIGGA gave me faith that hard work and dedication could be rewarded with a fulfilling career, working in environments I already enjoyed as a golfer.

Officially the YGC started at BTME 2015 where we sat, representatives from each region, for our first meeting. I nearly missed it – thanks to even more snow!

Since then I've been immensely proud to be a part of the YGC as we developed our goals, structure and strategy. It was a very open brief we sat down to at that first meeting, which centred around improving the BIGGA experience for younger members, ensuring the future is shaped by them. Now we have clarity in those areas we are able to engage with the members at events like BTME, through GI and on social media.

I moved to Dorset in 2013 and have enjoyed working at Broadstone and then Remedy Oak. I've achieved my Level 3 and competed in the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year finals last year.

I've been fortunate and privileged to be a part of Open Support Teams at Hoylake and Troon, and recently attended FTMI. These are all opportunities that would not have been available had I not first joined and then got involved with BIGGA.

Now the YGC provide a wide range of opportunities to other aspiring young greenkeepers, enabling them to develop their experience, knowledge and networks.

I'll be standing down from the committee in a few weeks, part of our drive to ensure that new ideas and a sense of relevance underpin the YGC. I will, however, keep a close eye on how the guys get on – they're a fantastic group with new talent pushing things forward.

I would strongly encourage any young greenkeepers to get in touch, get involved and get inspired by the what BIGGA has to offer.

Crane Valley



GI AROUND THE GLOBE



Name: Stephen McMahon

Affiliate Member

Location: Spain

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

Most of the head greenkeepers, as we call them in the UK, are considered as foremen. This is applied to those who are not foreign head greenkeepers or consultants that have made their way into a Spanish golf club.

How would you describe the style of courses that you consulted upon?

I have consulted on more than 45 courses, ranging from all the regions of the Spanish mainland, Canary Islands, Mallorca and Portugal. The differences are vast, including the weather, which ranges from wet and cool in the northern regions of Spain, cold to extreme heat in central regions, dry to very dry with occasional heavy downpours on the eastern Mediterranean coast, or the somewhat desert climate in Fuerteventura on the Canary Islands.

How does greenkeeping in Spain vary from the UK?

Most of the courses I have consulted for have foremen, some with over 25 years of experience, yet they are still not considered as head greenkeepers due to the lack of an agronomy degree.

What is the best part of living in Spain?

It is the diversity of the different regions, and even the diversity within each region.



Being from the USA, I compare Spanish cultural and climatic differences to the whole of the USA condensed into one small area the size of Texas.

What is the worst?

Spain is a lovely and diverse country, I guess our only big problem is political corruption.

How does the weather affect your work?

Let's take for example the central region of Spain. Temperatures run from below 32 to 60°F in the late autumn until early spring and from then until late autumn temperatures range from 77°F up to 100°F or even more. This area would be considered the transition zone in the USA, where cool season turf is competing with warm season turfgrasses.

What types of wildlife do you get on the course, that you wouldn't in the UK?

On some courses I have seen grey and red squirrels, ducks, geese, and other waterfowl. Depending on the environment I have seen deer, skunks, porcupines, birds, wild pigs or boars, and in some instances domestic animals like horses, cows and similar that have escaped from nearby farms.

What is the public perception of golf in Spain?

Sadly golf is still considered an elite sport. Mostly this is due to high membership or public fees. This is due to the cost of upkeep. However, they must understand that on a golf course there are more people employed than on a farmland or similar-sized development.

Why do you choose to be a BIGGA member?

In 1974 I came to Spain on assignment with Golden Bear Inc, the Jack Nicklaus Design & Golf Maintenance division of Golfcorp, to develop and put into play the first Nicklaus Signature Course in

Europe. I am a GCSAA member, but Spain had no such association. I wanted to attend conferences and seminars in Europe and so I enlisted with the International Greenkeepers Association, which the late Donald Harradine of Switzerland was the president. This organisation was eventually tied in with BIGGA. A few years later, with eight other Spanish friends involved with golf course maintenance and equipment, we founded what is known today as the Association of Spanish Greenkeepers AEdG.

What one tip would you give to British greenkeepers that you have learnt in Spain?

Years ago when I started my Spanish adventure, one needed to be patient. I still remember that famous phrase, "mañana". At many times, that word meant more than just tomorrow. These days things are fast moving, except for some of the islands in the Canaries due to their independent import regulations. These can hold necessary maintenance items in the ports until the authorities release them. Work permits can also hold up work as they are simple to achieve if you are a member of the European Common Community, but more difficult if not.

GI Ecology

By James
Hutchinson
BIGGA
Sustainability
Executive



Let me just draw your attention to Carus Green in the Lake District and the smashing work they are undertaking with hedges.

Hedgerow layering is a fine art and one which will reap many benefits to the local wildlife. For instance, small birds will use a compact hedge to move from one part of the course to another without attracting the attention of peckish sparrowhawks. The spring flowers of a hawthorn hedge are also an attraction for pollinating insects. The summer and autumnal berries are fab for the dwindling comma butterfly, and so everyone's a winner – apart from the sparrowhawks, but I'm sure they'll survive just fine.

Be aware, however, that nesting season is not far away, so I wouldn't attempt too much hedgerow management until 1 October.

The gang down at Eaton, Norwich, have fashioned this excellent habitat from a deceased ash tree. The tree passed away some time ago, but rather than cutting it down, they made it safe by removing the limbs and the large branches. The tree is now a habitat for bats, birds and anything else which wants to use it - so super work all!

Wait till you get a load of what turned up on an island near Orkney GC – a Northern Harrier – a scarcity of the highest order.

The Ides of March have arrived, therefore a number of swifts, swallows and cuckoos will be descending onto our shores. So with this in mind, let us know when you see or hear of them, or any other rarities, and please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Send your sightings to @Ecology1BIGGA or james.hutchinson@bigga.co.uk



Background:
Carus Green
Hedgerow

Left: Carus
Green
Hedgerow



Right:
Eaton's Ash

ECOLOGY

GI Ecology sponsored by



Sowing of wild flower seed on the course will improve biodiversity, provide a haven for wildlife and provide nectar for our declining population of bees. They also make an attractive feature that, from experience, will receive favourable comments from members. However, early spring mild weather can be misleading as soil temperatures are still cool and the seed generally requires warmer temperatures to germinate.

Germination improvement rate can be gained by storing the seed in a fridge at 4-6 °C for 2-3 weeks before sowing. Don't exceed the sowing rates on the label (mixing it with sand is recommended).

If sown too densely there will be competition between the plants leading to a poorer result with some plants disappearing and others flowering on just a tall stem.





MEMBERSHIP

Latest news and information from the BIGGA Membership Team

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Education continues for members



Here at BIGGA we're extremely proud of the education available to members during BTME in January.

But the Continue to Learn programme is just the start of the education season, and a whole host of events are held across the country throughout spring.

These events are available to all BIGGA members, and are a great opportunity to not only gain world class education, but also to meet with other greenkeepers in your section and share ideas and stories.

One of the areas to hold a seminar recently was the North Wales Section, where 85 BIGGA members were in attendance.

Course Manager Stuart McCall has just joined the North Wales Section Committee and brought two of his members of staff from Chester GC along to an event for the first time.

He encouraged any BIGGA members who have not previously been involved, to take a look at the education opportunities available to them.

He added: "If you don't attend these seminars or workshops, you don't know what you're missing out on. You will always pick up something."

"It doesn't matter how old you are and how much experience you have in greenkeeping, you are always going to learn something new from the seminars."

Stuart was especially interested in the irrigation seminar, where expert Adrian Mortram was on hand to offer advice. An irrigation expert with decades of experience, Adrian has put together a great feature for this magazine, which you can read on page 46.

Stuart said: "It's great that these sort of experts are made available to us, as you just wouldn't be able to get their knowledge and expertise if you stayed at home at your club."

"While the grass is still largely dormant, it's a great opportunity to get out and learn some new skills."

"Adrian has been in the industry for some time and he certainly knew his stuff, and I learned a lot of things that I wasn't aware of before the seminar."



Many BIGGA education events are free to members, and for more information head to the events page on the BIGGA website.



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A balanced growing environment is necessary to produce healthy turf that can withstand abiotic stresses and less than ideal weather conditions. Providian is a complete, balanced plant stress and turfgrass health enhancement package that maximizes the growing environment and strengthens turf to better defend itself when conditions begin to deteriorate.

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- Increases photosynthesis of the plant
- Improves root development
- Speeds recovery of stressed turf
- Promotes a more natural and sustainable green colour





**LEARNING &
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LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

L&D NEWS

Latest news and information from the BIGGA Learning and Development Team

Future Turf Managers Initiative returns for fifth instalment



The FTMI class of 2017

The fifth Future Turf Managers Initiative saw 21 BIGGA members head to Jacobsen's manufacturing facility in Ipswich for three days of incredible education.

FTMI was developed by Jacobsen and BIGGA for up-and-coming greenkeepers who are looking to move into head greenkeeper or course manager roles. Using a combination of industry mentors and professional trainers, the initiative delivers key skills and knowledge that prospective managers require to progress in their careers.

Deputy Head Greenkeeper Kevin Hensman, of Rowlands Castle, said: "The three days were testing and challenging, but delivered everything that I wanted. There wasn't a moment where I felt that I wasn't gaining something - it has been an amazing experience to be a part of."

Since its inception in 2013, nearly a third of FTMI candidates have progressed into the role of head greenkeeper or course manager. Candidates travelled from all over the UK, and even as far afield as Canada, to take part in the initiative.

Karen Proctor, international marketing and communications manager for Jacobsen, said: "FTMI 2017 has been another resounding success. It is rewarding to be able to provide such a valuable experience in conjunction with BIGGA. All of this year's delegates will go away with enduring memories and crucial skills that will benefit them endlessly in furthering their careers. It has been a great pleasure to welcome them to the ever-growing FTMI family."

The event took place from 7-9 March, with the first session being led by BIGGA CEO Jim Croxton.

This was followed by Eddie Bullock, golf facility management specialist, and Lorna D Sheldon, one of the country's most dynamic trainers in personal communication and presentation skills.

Lee Strutt, golf course manager of the Royal Automobile Club, hosted two sessions, before Mike Astrop, tutor for the Institute of Leadership and Management, delivered the final workshop.



FTMI 2017



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

Martin Turna, Fraserburgh; Tom Pattison, Blyth; Frank Tamblyn, Mullion; David Cooper, Downfield; Sam Evans, Fulwell; Graeme Gallimore, Launceston; Alexander Reid, Carnoustie; Allan Duncan, Drumroig; Jack Hetherington, Alnwick Castle; Lee Sayers MG, Mid Kent; Matthew Nutter; Philip Slater, West Herts; Daniel Brown, Lingdale; Steven Eccleston, Hockley; John McLoughlin, Warrington; James Dudley, Warrington; Richard Stephens, Ringway; Stuart Ferguson MG, Dundas Parks; Roger Tydeman, Dulwich & Sydenham Hill; Sam Sweetzer, West Hill; Shaun Anderson, Piperdam; Matthew Aplin, Goring & Streatley; Matthew Plested, Stoneham; Gordon Moir, St Andrews Links Trust; Scott Roberts, Basingstoke; Lewis Birch, Sunningdale; Derek Grendowicz, Raevo Golf Developments.

The following members also achieved their milestone this month: Martin Turna, Fraserburgh; Frank Tamblyn, Mullion; Graeme Gallimore, Launceston; Alexander Reid, Carnoustie; James McLoughlin, Warrington; Sam Sweetzer, West Hill; John Gubb, Bedfordshire; Matthew Plested, Stoneham; Gordon Moir, St Andrews Links Trust; Scott Roberts, Basingstoke; Lewis Birch, Sunningdale; Derek Grendowicz, Raevo Golf Developments

For me, the experience gained from FTMI 2017 is one that will be greatly influential to my progression through the industry.

Not only has it allowed me to learn valuable skills and techniques that management use on a day to day basis, but it has provided me with great like minded friends. I would certainly recommend FTMI to anyone. An experience definitely not worth missing.

JonJo Pitts, Royston Golf Club

FTMI is an experience that has no parallel for greenkeepers looking to progress their careers. The skills you learn are invaluable and give you confidence boost you need to push yourself to the next level. In the past few days I have met an amazing group of people - the mentors, the speakers and most of all, my fellow attendees. The potential for networking is incredible; there are certainly friendships made which will undoubtedly prove helpful throughout our careers. I would recommend FTMI to any aspiring greenkeeper. You will be taken out of your comfort zone but if you commit yourself to participating, you'll gain more from FTMI than you can possibly imagine. Thank you to everyone who had a hand in FTMI 2017: BIGGA, Jacobsen, the speakers and mentors and most of all, I wish all the best to all attendees, former and future alike.

Make Laheen, Cosby Golf Club

The FTMI program is the best thing you will ever do to further your career into golf course management. After 3 intense days I have taken away a vast amount of knowledge that I will enable me to take the next step and for the rest of my career.

I recommend the initiative to anyone looking to further their career. A massive thank you to everyone at BIGGA and Ransomes Jacobsen.

Craig Betts, Aldwickbury Park Golf Club

For me, FTMI totally exceeded expectations. I thoroughly enjoyed the course and learnt a great deal. The guest speakers were exceptional in delivering their course content. Mentors were happy to answer all our questions and pass on their knowledge. It was well organised from start to finish. I feel I have improved my confidence in presenting myself to people on varying different levels; from general chat to public speaking. I cannot recommend this course enough to fellow greenkeepers. Thanks to BIGGA and Ransomes for making this invaluable experience possible.

Craig Harrison, Royal Lytham & St Annes Golf Club



INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS

Steven Tierney MG, Chris Lomas MG, Andrew Campbell MG CGCS, Richard McGlynn, Jaey Goodchild, Frank Newberry, Greg Evans MG

LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

Training bursary launched to celebrate anniversary

The UK's largest supplier of topsoil to the construction, landscaping and amenity sectors has announced the launch of a training bursary.

In celebration of British Sugar TOPSOIL's 20th anniversary, the company will offer two bursaries, each of up to £500, which can be awarded to pay for training courses in the greenkeeping sector.

TOPSOIL Manager Andy Spetch said he felt a training bursary would have the greatest potential to create a legacy and open up opportunities for anyone with ambition, but who may be held back by financial constraints.

Andy said: "Skills and training are fundamental to being successful in the sectors in which British Sugar TOPSOIL operates. Where the cost of training is proving to be a barrier to achieving success I hope the bursary can go some way



Andy Spetch presents the BALI Design & Build Award 2015

to helping overcome it. I expect to be inspired by the determination to succeed that will undoubtedly shine through."

Bursary applications must be made online through the TOPSOIL website, www.bstopsoil.co.uk/

news-events, where an application form can be downloaded. The closing date for entries is Friday 28 April. The bursary is also open to trainees in the groundsmanship, landscape contracting and garden design sectors.

Glyphosate

The long-awaited report for the Risk Assessment Committee has confirmed glyphosate acid will not need to be reclassified and will remain as non-hazardous.

Used for total weed control, glyphosate is reacted to form a salt which is then diluted and formulated into products.

The European Chemical Agency's committee has concluded that the available scientific evidence did not meet the criteria to classify glyphosate as a carcinogen, as a mutagen or as toxic for reproduction.

To make glyphosate work it must be formulated with penetrants and surfactants so it can be taken up by the plant. The original product was formulated with POE-tallow

amine, although it has since been succeeded by several glyphosate brands which have been formulated by other non-hazardous technologies. These can be identified as they have no warning symbols on the label. The UK registration authority has announced that all glyphosate products containing the co-formulant POE-tallow amine will be revoked and must be used by 30 June 2018.

Greenkeepers must ensure that if they have any of these products in stores they must be used by this date. The easiest way to identify POE-tallow amine products is to look at the label and see if there is a hazard symbol – diamond or square. After this date the product must be disposed of using a certified waste contractor.

Sherriff Amenity

Specialist supplier Sherriff Amenity has acknowledged the importance of BIGGA members to the wider industry by becoming the association's latest education supporter.



Sherriff Amenity is the specialist amenity division of Agrovista UK and are hosts of the online Sherriff Amenity Academy, where members can complete online courses and examinations, earning Continued Professional Development credits. BIGGA Head of Member Learning Stuart Green said: "Sherriff Amenity has been a loyal supporter of BIGGA and our members for a number of years and we are delighted they will be offering this great service to our members. BIGGA now has more education supporters than ever before and that can only be a good thing for our members' career development."



Amenity Forum awards

The Amenity Forum Spray Operator of the Year awards are back for 2017.

This year the competition is being run by the Amenity Forum with help from BASIS. The prize for the overall winner is a trip to America for the Golf Industry Show.

ICL and Syngenta will again be sponsoring the competition, which seeks to recognise and reward the industry's best sprayer operators.

Entry to the competition is free, and there are three categories: Sports turf using boom sprayer and hand-held equipment; Landscape and Industrial using vehicle-mounted sprayer; Landscape and Industrial using hand-held equipment.

The awards will be presented at the forum's annual conference in October.

For more details and to enter the competition visit www.amenityforum.co.uk



2016 Amenity Forum Spray Operator winners

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Ask Dr Mumford

With Colin Mumford, Bayer Turf Solutions

Do you need advice with your turf problems?
Email info@bigga.co.uk

Question: How can I make my tees look their best ahead of a championship?

Tees often come second to greens in the order of importance on a course. But ideally they should receive the same practices that greens do. Good cultural practices are the foundation of the best playing surfaces, and tasks such as aeration and scarification on the tees are essential.

It's important to minimise wear around your championship tee markers. Move tees as far forward as you can at least two or three times a week. This means daily damage is distributed over a larger area, but more importantly the match tee is preserved for the championship day.

Ensuring divots are repaired well in advance of your competition is another essential task to keep tees in top condition and maintain good grass cover. Par four and five holes will tend to have fewer divots in comparison to a par three, due to the type of club commonly used to strike a ball. But a good divot mix of grass seed and rootzone is essential for a speedy recovery.

You'll need to ensure there's enough plant growth to recover from wear. Levels of nutrition need to be adequate for good growth, but not in excess, as this encourages organic matter build up and will require more maintenance.

If your course's teeing area is quite small, it might be worth considering enlarging it if there's budget available. The larger the area, the less concentrated the wear will be.

However, if you've got a tournament coming up and the divots haven't recovered, as a last resort you can consider using a dye in the divot mix to mask damaged areas and ensure the area is aesthetically pleasing.

Tweet us your turf questions @BIGGALtd using #AskDrMumford or email info@bigga.co.uk

Fleesensee Golf Resort

Toro has won the contract to supply maintenance equipment to all five courses at the Fleesensee Golf Resort, Germany, for the 2017 season.

Through dealers Stavermann GmbH and Bruce Johnston GmbH, Toro is playing a vital role in the €10m redevelopment of the resort, overseen by BIGGA member Stephen Monk.

“We have worked with Toro for over 16 years and the relationship has been a very successful one,” said Stephen, head of resort greenkeeping and golf course management.

“Through a continual equipment investment plan we have built up our fleet, making us one of the largest Toro users in Germany and Europe. This agreement will provide us with quality machinery to continue to produce the highest standards.”

The latest machinery includes: Toro Flex greens mowers, Smart Power fairway and semi-rough mowers, Workman utility vehicles and a Geo Link Multipro sprayer.

Stephen added: “As a European Tour venue our customers expect high quality playing surfaces on a daily basis and having reliable equipment is extremely important.

“Continual equipment down time is simply not an option for us and Toro is excellent in this department.”



Stephen Monk

The Grove

The Grove has underlined its position as one of the UK's finest golf destinations by claiming 'The Ultimate Golf Resort' accolade at the annual 59club Service Excellence Awards.

The resort received the award during a glittering ceremony staged at The Belfry.

Anna Darnell, director of golf and resort experiences at The Grove, said: “It is an honour to receive an award that underlines our commitment to five-star customer service. It is also testament to our highly-professional, dedicated team who work tirelessly to ensure ever guest receives a first class experience.”

The 59club awards recognise all elements of golf course businesses, including sales, service, operations, retail, food and beverage, venue facilities and management. The Grove was also one of only seven UK resorts to receive the Gold Flag award.



The Grove team at the 59club awards

Ballybunion renovation

The Old Course at Ballybunion, ranked 17 in the Top 100 golf courses in the world, has been subject to a complete renovation of the greens and surrounds under the stewardship of course manager John Bambury.

The former Poa annua surfaces have been replaced with 100% fine fescue greens, which were mapped and reconstructed to appear the same as they were before.

“Really I was coming back to my roots, as my father used to live just 15 minutes away from Ballybunion and it was the first course I ever set foot on as a child,” said John, who joined from Trump International Aberdeen in 2014. “In my job interview I said the course needed to reclaim its top 10 position in the world, and we've developed plans to achieve this over time, with the full approval of the membership.”

As part of the renovation, John Deere and dealer Seamus Weldon of Killarney were selected as preferred supplier for 10 years.



Ballybunion

Mid Herts award

For over a century the City & Guilds Medals for Excellence programme has recognised the achievements of students, and the latest recipient is Ben Croft, deputy course manager at Mid Herts.

Each year around 200 medals are awarded worldwide and Ben was nominated for his Level 4 course work by Oaklands College tutor Andy Wright. He said: “Ben is an outstanding student who fully deserved the award and is another example of the increasing professionalism of the greenkeeping industry.”

Ben's work was assessed by an independent panel at City & Guilds.



Ben Croft and Andy Wright

KUBOTA B2650 COMPACT TRACTOR

Designed with a focus upon ergonomics, Kubota say the B2650 combines functionality and practicality to deliver excellent performance, fuel economy and reliability. The Super B Cabin is the first integrated cab in its class and includes a four-pillar design, with curved glass for greater visibility.



Integrated cab
Provides 360 degree panoramic vision. Almost airtight environment minimizes noise and dust pollution

Constant speed
Multi stage notch-type cruise control provides lighter lever operations, keeping speeds more constant

Cleaner operations
26 HP Kubota Diesel engine

Loaded lever
Lever integrated into console for cleaner look, eliminating requirement for retrofit

Rear
Half lock feature provides fresh air ventilation while keeping grass, hay and dust out

Bi-speed turn
Innovative bi-speed turn function automatically activates when the front wheel turning angle exceeds 35 degrees

High Power
HST features three power ranges

Greater comfort
Suspension seat absorbs shock



MACHINERY RELEASES

Turf Maintenance LIVE!



Eight of the industry's leading innovators will be heading to Turf Maintenance LIVE! on 26-27 April.

The turf care event will take place at The Worcestershire in Malvern Wells and will feature working machines and equipment.

Taking part will be GKB Machines, Husqvarna, Iseki, Jacobsen, Martin Lishman, Rigby Taylor, Wessex International and Wiedenmann.

"There should be quite a buzz," said a TML spokesperson. "We'll be showcasing some of the latest

technology with a serious amount of diverse kit on view, so there's plenty of incentive to make a day of it.

"We're indebted to two associate sponsors, BIGGA and the IOG, both of whom will be awarding CPD points to attendees. Starting time on both days is 10am, with free registration and bacon rolls."

Online registrations are being taken at www.turfmaintenancelive.com or by phone on 0141 814 3366. The event can be followed as it develops on Twitter using @liveturf or on Facebook.



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CONFERENCE PAIRING IN SCOTLAND

On 7 March the GTC was invited to the BIGGA Scotland Golf Industry Conference in Perth.

There was tremendous support from the region, with over 270 delegates attending. All were there to learn and network with like-minded individuals.

The programme, organised by Regional Administrator John Young, Stuart Ferguson MG, chairman of the Scottish Region, and the Scottish Board was fantastic and the enthusiasm by the speakers was brilliant.

They talked about everything from golfing statistics and sustainability, right through to volunteering at major golf tournaments – there was something for everyone.

It was good to meet so many new people, and many familiar faces, and discuss your educational requirements. It seems no matter where you are in the country, greenkeepers thirst for education and learning is everywhere.

The content and material you want to see in your educational programmes, and how you want this delivered, is the same up and down the country.

Listening to the speakers was inspirational and it was amazing to see how, by just doing some small things, you can have an impact on the course, the club, the game, and your own personal development and aspirations.

These small things can be incorporated into your everyday life and can be major features within your learning and development.

Whether you opt to take the formal education routes such as SVQ Levels 2 and 3 (work based learning), or the more academic courses such as Higher National Diploma (HNC) or the slightly more informal route of Continual Professional Development, attending these events is integral to your learning and development.

You can take away so much information that can be adapted and incorporated into your educational programmes, including thoughts and ideas that can enhance not only your job and the club but also you personally.

If you need further guidance on training and education in Scotland or Wales, along with the new funding regimes coming into place from April 2017, you can contact:

Scotland: SRUC Elmwood or GOSTA Training in Scotland

Wales: Bridgend College or Coleg Cambria

You can find all the contact details at www.the-gtc.co.uk/learning/quality-assured-training-providers/

Many of you will be looking to further your career by enrolling in higher educational qualifications. The R&A Greenkeeping Scholarship Programme was established in 2004 to provide support and assistance to those students enrolled in higher professional turf management qualifications. Through a vigorous selection process, The R&A has been able to identify the most deserving students to receive scholarships each year. Apart from the financial assistance available from receiving the scholarship, candidates also gain access to a number of exclusive networking and CPD opportunities.

You can find further information on The R&A's website, www.randa.org, or by contacting Wendy Cole, Manager – Sustainability on 01344 460000. Being awarded an R&A Greenkeeping Scholarship is a special privilege which marks the recipient as an ambassador of The R&A and an example of what the scholarship programme represents.

The GTC are here to provide information on greenkeeper education. If you would like any further help or guidance on greenkeeping education opportunities, please do not hesitate to get in touch.



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'TORO STUDENT GREENKEEPER HAS CHANGED MY LIFE'

JIMMY HERITAGE, MAYLANDS

TORO STUDENT GREENKEEPER

Maylands greenkeeper **Jimmy Heritage** was announced as winner of the 2016 Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year award last September.

As part of his prize, he spent six weeks studying turf management at the University of Massachusetts. In this feature he recalls his experiences while Stateside.

The trip of a lifetime is hard to adequately describe within the confines of a magazine article.

It was a 12,000-mile journey from London to America, across six states and two months and gave me countless memories.

I guess, where better to start than the place I spent most of my time; The University of Massachusetts Amherst, or UMass for short?

UMass is gargantuan. At full capacity it houses 25,000 students, and for turf management there are very few better places to learn.

My prize for winning the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year award included a six-week course of study on what is titled 'The Winter School for Turf Managers'.

This is a highly intensive and scientifically detailed programme of physiology, entomology, anatomy, fertility, pathology, weed science, irrigation management, soil science, arboriculture and resource management, all sandwiched between guest lectures from the USGA, fertiliser companies, famous country club superintendents and other industry experts.

Each subject has its own specialist lecturer, who constantly tests your knowledge via exams, assignments and homework. It's not for the faint-hearted, but the depth of education given through the 40 hours of lectures a week is certainly something worth paying attention to. Thankfully I did, and I was rewarded in graduating with highest honours, an accolade that has improved my confidence immeasurably.



Above: Jimmy Heritage and his award



Check out next month's edition to hear from Toro Young Student Greenkeeper of the Year winner Dan Waring

All credit must go the lecturers as they make it easy to succeed if you are willing to put the work in. The resources available are vast and the rich information from each lecture is enough to get any real turf enthusiast excited.

Speaking of available resources: the Americans have a lot. Money, chemicals, staff, everything!

They don't seem as limited by legislation or money as we are; not that this is a good thing. They can have their chlorpyrifos, we are stewards of the environment and should be proud that our inability to legally use certain bottles of 'jollop' is encouraging a different way of thinking among European greenkeepers. Hopefully this progressive ecological mind-set is something we retain.

It's hard to quantify the experience or the knowledge I gained, but what I will say is that it excites the mind and reinvigorates any jaded feelings towards the industry. It's easy to grow frustrated with the daily trappings of keeping greens, especially in the face of unrealistic expectations from golfers, who often do little to assist us in maintaining the course. But when you sit back and smell the sulphate of iron and think about what we do – we're givers and facilitators of life after all – you've got to say that it's pretty cool, isn't it? If UMass taught me one thing besides all the science and turfy stuff, it's that our industry is incredible.

During the fifth week of my studies at UMass I was lucky enough to fly down to Orlando for the Golf Industry Show, the United States' equivalent of BTME.

In typical red, white and blue fashion it was enormous, too large to peruse thoroughly in a day, but

I thought I'd give it a crack. I was there for longer than a day but I'd been encouraged beforehand to spend some of my time in Orlando relaxing as to alleviate some of the pressures of UMass. This was advice I gladly took as the 29° weather in Orlando was a welcome respite from the consistently -10° to -20° weather and snow storms of Massachusetts. Luckily I'd struck up a rapport with an Aussie called Bill who was around my age and had won the Australian version of Toro's Student Greenkeeper of the Year. This meant we had the same journey throughout, so he was with me in Orlando. This was perfect as it would have been awful to sit in the Jacuzzi, visit the local water park, swim, sunbathe or drink a beer on my own.

The north east of America is famous for its sports bars, where they play a wonderful game called cornhole. Not unlike golf, cornhole requires the accurate release of a bean bag into a hole – genius, and highly competitive. Having played it once I declared myself to be the European cornhole champion and retired at the top.

After seven weeks of building Anglo-American relations, we held a grand finale on the Thursday of our last week of study. Of the 40 something members of my class I'd estimate that 30 of them came out for one last hoorah. It was a fitting end to our time together and culminated in me performing an emotional rendition of Rod Stewart's 'Sailing' to an audience of around 100 in the bar.

I think in those four minutes my singing voice managed to undo all the hard work I'd done building relationships over the past six weeks.

Continued over

'All credit must go to the lecturers as they make it easy to succeed if you are willing to put the work in. The resources available are vast and the rich information from each lecture is enough to get any real turf enthusiast excited.'

The Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year awards are returning for 2017 and now is your chance to get involved. Head to the BIGGA website for more information. Alternatively, scan the QR code opposite



TORO STUDENT GREENKEEPER

After all the study and all the fun I finished my journey in Minneapolis, Minnesota. I was told to expect temperatures below the -20° I'd experienced in Massachusetts but was pleasantly surprised to land at St. Paul International airport on the warmest February day ever in Minneapolis. For the four days I was there the mercury didn't dip any lower than 15° . That's essentially a summer's day in England.

The visit to Minneapolis was so we could check out the HQ of Toro and its individual plants. To see the construction and assembly of the equipment greenkeepers use every day is incredible. The size of the operation at Toro is mammoth and the precision with which they work is admirable. I was very well looked after by Toro's employees and have nothing but respect and approbation for everything they do, from the hard working guys and girls punching sheet metal into the shapes and figures that make our machines, to the engineers and research and development chiefs who are constantly trying to improve their products. The whole Toro experience was eye opening and if nothing else will make me respect the machinery we need to do our jobs that little bit more.



Overall I'd say that my life has been changed by the whole Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year process. I've met some incredible people, done some incredible things, been lucky enough to see into a world that not many get the chance to see into and gained a mass of knowledge and confidence along the way. There hasn't been a day since returning that I haven't used something I gained from it all.

My thanks are especially reserved for David Cole and Christine Wilson at Reesink Turfcare; the team at BIGGA who organise the award; the staff at UMass, Barry, Kyle and Tony; the gentlemen who looked after me at Toro HQ; everyone at Maylands Golf Club; 2016's winner Steve Thorne (a class act all the way); and anyone else who helped to make such a special time in my life possible. I am eternally grateful.

Top: Jimmy getting amongst the machinery at the GIS

Above: UMass campus

Right: Billy Koopmans, Dr Pat Vittum from UMass and Jimmy Heritage

Bottom: Steve McDonald, Jack Lacey, Billy Koopmans, Jimmy Heritage, Matt Ouimette



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For further information please contact Terra Firma on: **01786 478777**

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STAY SAFE IN THE SUN



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SUN SAFETY

Sun protection is nothing to take lightly. By the very nature of the job, greenkeepers spend the majority of their time outside during the best weather of the year.

With almost 90% of all skin cancer cases in the UK being preventable, greenkeepers should wear skin protection, and employers have a duty to ensure appropriate personal protection equipment are made available to their staff. There's no avoiding the fact that skin cancer is on the increase and it's a killer.

DON'T BECOME A STATISTIC.

SLIP on sun protective clothing

- Clothing can be one of the most effective barriers between our skin and the sun
- Clothing should cover as much skin as possible
- Always keep shoulders covered
- A closer weave will provide more protection
- A high UPF rated fabric provides the best protection

SLOP on SPF 30+ sunscreen

- No sunscreen provides complete protection
- Always use a sunscreen with a Sun Protection Factor of 30 or above, preferably water resistant
- Make sure it's broad spectrum and carries a UVA symbol
- Apply a generous amount to clean, dry, exposed skin
- Apply 20 minutes before going outdoors and once out.
- All sunscreens should be reapplied every two hours and more if perspiring or swimming

SLAP on a wide brimmed hat

- Always wear a hat with a wide brim that shades the face, neck and ears
- A close weave or UPF rated fabric will provide better protection
- Warning: baseball caps do not shade the ears and neck

SLIDE on quality sunglasses

- Solar UV radiation can be damaging to the eyes
- Look for the European CE mark which indicates a safe level of protection
- Those labeled with a high EPF will provide best protection
- Ensure they are close fitting and wrap around to stop solar UVR entering the sides and top
- Remember price and darkness of the lens have no reflection on the quality of protection

SHADE from the sun whenever possible

- Shade can provide a good barrier between our skin and the sun
- Seek shade whenever possible, particularly at the hottest times of the day between 11am and 3pm when UV penetration is strongest
- Never rely on shade alone and always combine with personal protection measures

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PESTICIDE WITHDRAWALS WHERE ARE WE?

The end of February saw the loss of another tool in the arsenal of greenkeepers. The loss of carbendazim will not be mourned by all, given its properties that have scientifically been proven to cause damage to the wider environment.

However, for all its faults, carbendazim is an effective pesticide, and now many greenkeepers are left wondering how they will fill the void, despite increased golfer expectations. In this feature we'll take a look at the state of the pesticide industry in the UK and ask how greenkeepers can adapt to changing legislations.

The use of pesticides in any environment is the focus of attention of both regulators and the general public. There is a huge amount of ignorance on what pesticides are, how they work, and their impact on operators, bystanders, sports turf users and the environment. It's a lot to get your head around.

Like medicines, pesticides must be registered by both European and UK regulators prior to being sold to end-users. All pesticides are reviewed on a regular basis at European and national levels.

These reviews access all the latest information on the active ingredients and co-formulants.

The active ingredient is the chemical that impacts on the biological pathway or enzyme system to control the pest, weed or disease.

Co-formulants are chemicals added to the active ingredient and are essential to allow them to be applied to the target pest, weed or disease.

At European level the active substance review means all products must be on the approved list for companies to formulate into usable products.

At national level the formulated product in its usable form is assessed for safe and effective use without causing harm to the environment.

However, it will come as no surprise that products can be lost even after they have been successfully reviewed. Over the past few years we have seen many withdrawals and revocations for a variety of different reasons.

Herbicides

The major components of many broadleaved weed herbicides have been reviewed in the past five years. This has been complicated by the fact that many of the hormone-based products are a mixture of the active ingredients Dicamba, Mecoprop, 24D and



MCPA, which are formulated to give a wide spectrum of broadleaved weed control.

All these actives have now been reviewed, except for 24D, which is under review at present. These reviews have impacted the number of products available and more importantly the recommended rate of use of these actives. The legal label rate will no longer give the level of control greenkeepers have been used to, hence new integrated approaches need to be used.

The drivers for these changes have been multiple but revolve predominately around operator exposure and adverse effects on water quality. This has resulted in a large number of high-loaded products being revoked in 2014 and more recently the loss of the Relay-type products.

The replacement products now have lower doses of application and many have had the knapsack recommendation removed. However, overall the prospects for selective broadleaved weed control are looking positive.

For more information on prohibited and non authorised pesticides scan the QR Code



Continued over

Other ways to tackle worms

1

Remove the food source.

Cultural practices can reduce organic matter levels in the topsoil. For example, collect grass clippings when mowing and remove fallen leaves from trees.

2

Consider improving drainage in badly infested areas.

Worms need plenty of moisture to move around so drying the ground will slow them. Better drainage will also improve the playing surface.

3

Alter the pH acidity of the soil.

Earthworms prefer neutral or alkaline soil, so discourage them by lowering the pH with careful use of acidifiers. Avoid using lime or calcified seaweed on problem areas, but consult an agronomist before altering the pH value of your soil.

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Image by Daniel Potter

Industry reactions to carbendazim withdrawal

'We now need to utilise a fully integrated approach to discourage casting activity in sensitive areas. Rigby Taylor is working to develop integrated approaches to help greenkeepers with the dilemma of needing to manage worm cast legally'

Peter Corbett, Rigby Taylor

'The withdrawal will make it very difficult for turf managers to suppress cast forming worms, and it's further indication of the tightening of UK legislation. The loss of active ingredients poses a threat to our industry, and going forward if we don't steward product use and employ best practice when applying chemical treatments, we risk losing valuable control measures.'

Dr Colin Mumford, Bayer

'The withdrawal is another important loss to the greenkeepers' armoury, which will make it increasingly difficult to maintain the ever higher standards of year-round turf quality demanded by players.'

Daniel Lightfoot MG, Syngenta

'Dealing with the withdrawal will no doubt pose our industry some very difficult questions. There may be a decline in playing quality for many courses, but our members are resourceful and we will find a way to combat not only this problem but any others that come our way.'

Les Howkins MG, BIGGA Chairman

What you need to do now is check your stores for revoked products and obtain advice on how to dispose of them.

When you are applying products with knapsacks or hand held applicators, always check the label.

Soon, 24D will have completed its review and several changes will be implemented – these will be covered in a future bulletin.

Worm cast suppression

The active ingredient in several worm cast suppression products, carbendazim, has now been revoked, and the date you need to use up your products by is the end of August this year.

The reasons for this are complex. Carbendazim was a very popular fungicide up to 15 years ago, but has been outclassed in the arable fungicide sector and subsequently revoked in Europe.

It was discovered that use of this active ingredient in autumn and early spring suppressed worm cast activity on turf and so in the UK the active ingredient was given special dispensation for use and transferred to the biocide register.

Earthworms are a key beneficial species in most situations, but in fine turf the three species that produce casts cause major problems.

Under present guidelines any product that affects worms in a detrimental manner will not get registration for use as a pesticide.

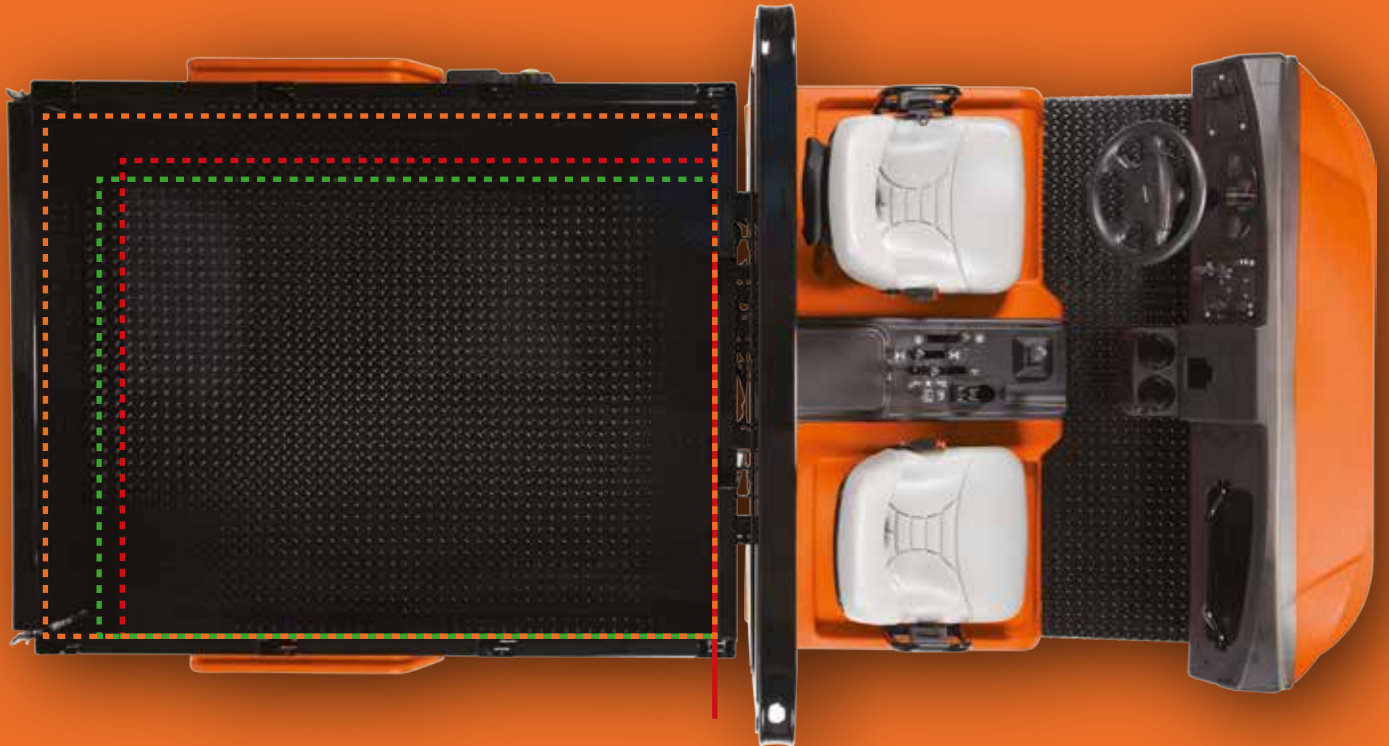
It was also found that carbendazim disrupts hormone systems. Research showed it damaged sperm production in rats and disrupted the development of wombs in other mammals. There were also fears about the effect on fish in watercourses near to where it was used.

The special dispensation for use of carbendazim in the UK was dependent on carbendazim being supported under the biocide directive.

As part of the review process, the registration authorities draw up the work that suppliers need to conduct in order to renew this registration, but due to the relatively small volume of carbendazim being sold in Europe, the suppliers and manufacturers have decided it is not economically worthwhile to support the active ingredient.

The Chemical Regulation Directorate's pesticide database listed nine formulations containing carbendazim, sold under various brand names, but the lack of support has resulted in the revocation of this active as a biocide and hence the use for worm suppression in the UK. ■

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HOW TO PREPARE FOR A CHAMPIONSHIP

STEVE CHAPPELL, HEAD GREENKEEPER OF THE PGA CENTENARY COURSE, THE GLENEAGLES HOTEL

CHAMPIONSHIP PREPARATION

This article is based upon not just the experience I have gained from hosting and working at venues during major tournaments, including four Ryder Cups and three European Tour events.

I have also drawn from the previous 21 years, working on and managing courses for club championships, county and PGA events. From the largest venue to the smallest, championships are the highlight

of the greenkeepers' year. I am sure some of the information within this piece will be nothing surprising, but hopefully you'll be able to pick up some ideas for the next time you're hosting a major event.

Greens & green complexes

The greens are probably the most important area on the golf course. In the eyes of the golfer nothing else matters!

But in all seriousness, the biggest thing I have learnt in preparing for events is that consistency is key, whether that be green speed or firmness.

All golfers – professionals and amateurs alike – will accept slower or faster and softer or harder putting surfaces, as long as they are all the same throughout the course.

Once a target performance is established, whether by the club and committee or the Tour, this

gives you the bench mark to attain and this can in some instances save you time when it comes to set up the rest of the course.

We all have greens that perform slightly differently than the rest and therefore may require additional work, such as a roll or double cut to achieve the target performance.

I appreciate green speed and the use of a stimpmeter is a delicate subject with some people, but I don't see the issue. The stimpmeter defines a measured number to assess consistency from green to green. What that number should be is the subject of feature in this magazine.

When thinking about the whole greens complex, make sure sprinkler heads are trimmed and cleaned and pitch marks are repaired. Attention to detail in these areas can make a huge difference.

Continued over



Above: Neath GC set up for the annual Neath Bell Championship

CHAMPIONSHIP PREPARATION



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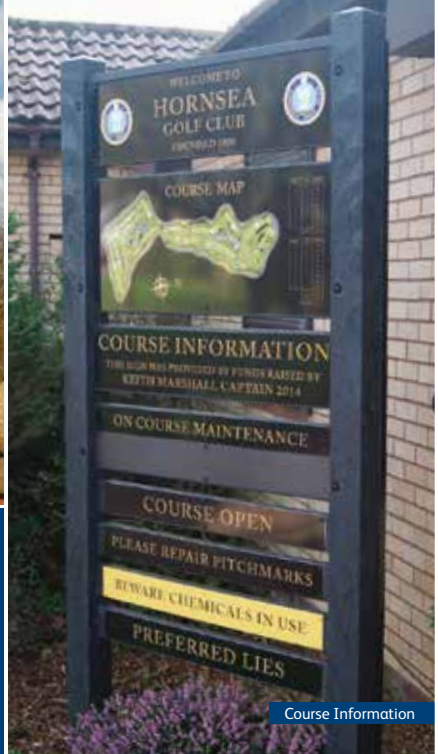
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Players spend a lot of time looking around, while waiting for their partners to putt out. If everything is neat, crisp and tidy it can take the attention away from areas that aren't. While looking at the greens complexes, consider traffic and wear areas around the greens entrances and exits. An application of quick release fertility to these areas in good time will improve the grass cover for your event.

Bunkers

Once again, the consistency of sand depth and firmness is everything. Bunkers are always a talking point. Some golfers will say there is too much sand, while others will say there is not enough.

From my experiences with professional events, the players want firm bunkers with a small amount of raked tilth (10 to 15mm).

On the other hand, club golfers want more sand so they can get under the ball – or so they think! It's an age-old argument, so whichever way you go just ensure they are all consistent.

Presentation of bunkers is also important. Ensure you have a nice crisp edge, an even length of fringe grass and a consistent rake pattern.

You can never underestimate how much visual impact effects a golfer's perception of how something performs.

Finally get clarification on rake placement; are they to be in or out of bunkers? For example, during Tour and PGA events we place rakes out of bunkers on the non-play side of the hazard.

But during regular play our rakes are placed head in, handle out and in the centre of the hazard.



Hazard marking and Ground Under Repair

Get clear direction and advice from club or tournament officials for hazard marking. Our everyday hazard marking is set by the European Tour from previous events. In advance of events I would always paint hazard posts and make sure you have spare posts of all colours painted up and ready to be used.

Don't be afraid to mark GUR and where applicable create a good drop zone. You have not failed if you use GUR, it is exactly what it says. Use the rules, as that's what they are there for.



General presentation

As mentioned before, general aesthetics go a long way, so consider different options to obtain a desired colour over all playing surfaces.

We blanket sprayed all 'inside the ropes' areas, except greens, with a liquid seaweed/iron product prior to both the Ryder Cup and Johnnie Walker Championships to give the desired effect. There are many products and options out there on the market to give your course a bit of sparkle.

Don't be afraid to ask your local dealers or neighbouring clubs for assistance with equipment or staff for events.

After all, we couldn't have successfully hosted the Ryder Cup without help from machinery manufacturers and volunteers.

You will know your own growth rates so plan when the best or last cut can be made to ensure optimum playing conditions free of clippings. Evening 'dry' cuts on roughs and fairways can achieve great results, so consider planning these into your cutting program in the lead up to events. Even if you have the head count to cut fairways the morning of an event, consider the potential mess left from clippings if you are not boxing them off.



Above: Bunker consistency and detail at Medinah for the Ryder Cup 2012

Top left: Posts painted and ready for the course

Bottom left: Freshly painted hole cups

Planning and communication

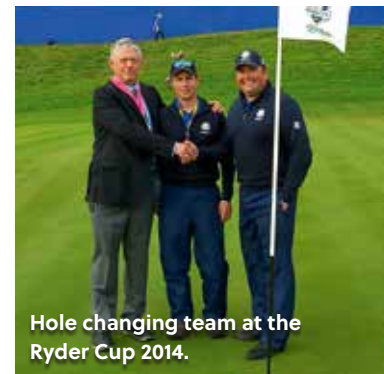
A successful outcome for any event will come down to team work. So it's imperative that you discuss your plans with the team and make sure they understand what you are all trying to achieve. Getting their ideas on how things could be done may help achieve a smoother operation with a better end presentation created. Consider doing some dry runs in advance of the event to ensure timings are practical to fit in with things such as start times.

Hole changing

One thing to consider is changing holes the evening before the event, leaving the hole cup just below the surface for setting in the morning. This is something I used to do at Neath GC ahead of the 'Neath Bell', which allowed me to roll greens after the morning cut before setting and painting the hole.

We would change four holes on each nine to give us time in the morning. It also meant we could keep one person changing all the holes, which gave consistency. Always ensure you have fresh hole cups. They don't have to be

brand new, just clean and well painted. We always have a stock of painted cups and rotate them on a monthly basis. If you do get new pins and cups in for an event, make sure they fit as it's not a great feeling when you go to put them out and the pin won't go into the cup! Painting holes is always a good topic to get a debate started. We do it for televised golf to make the hole visible on screen, however I personally feel for club competitions it's also a great finishing touch to the set up. Club members will feel like they are being treated like a professional for the day.




Hole changing team at the Ryder Cup 2014.

Conclusion


I would say that the most important thing is to strive for consistency. In all the meetings we had with Paul McGinley leading up to the Ryder Cup, it was the one thing above all else he kept coming back to. He would say "the players want consistency" and that applies to all golfers, in my opinion.

Finally have fun, enjoy the experience and remember to create a reward for the team at the end of it. This could be a breakfast in the clubhouse or a BBQ at the maintenance facility. After all, it's always going to be a team effort that produces the best results. ■

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BIGGA NATIONAL



Above: Mel Guy is presented with his trophy in 1987

30 YEARS OF BIGGA NATIONAL

This year we celebrate 30 years of hosting a national tournament for greenkeepers, and we're returning to the course where it all began.

A national golfing event for the country's greenkeepers has been held since 1923, but only came under BIGGA's authority in 1987, when the association came into being. Back then it was known as the News of the World trophy, and the venue was Verulam in St Albans. We're marking the 30th anniversary of the BIGGA National Championship by returning to Verulam for the 2017 edition of the competition, and we want you to get involved.

A parkland course dating back to 1905, Verulam is steeped in history. The course is known as the home of the Ryder Cup, as it's where Samuel Ryder was playing his golf when he had the idea of a match between golf professionals from America and Britain.

Another part of Verulam's great history was written in 1987, when the club hosted BIGGA's inaugural national championship. The winner was Mel Guy, who was head greenkeeper at South Leeds and was appearing in his first national competition.

"I remember brilliant weather, it was absolutely fantastic," recalled Mel. "There was no rain, just glorious sunshine.

"I enjoyed the course, from what I can recall of it. It was in perfect condition, but then I would say that, for the simple reason that I walked away the winner."

The 1987 event was played across 54 holes – the event has subsequently been reduced to 36 – with many of those involved bringing their families along in caravans to enjoy a holiday while the event took place.

"The lads were there for three days of golf," said Mel. "But it probably wasn't as intense as it is now, it was a really great social event."

More than 70 greenkeepers played the course, kept in top condition by head greenkeeper Geoff Smith and his staff.

Using Ping irons and a crookshank head set of woods built by JH Onions, Mel shot 231 over 54 holes.

He said: "I completed the third round and one of the lads came up to me and said it looked like I might have won the 54-hole scratch. I said, 'you must be joking, not with these scores'."

Dramatically, Mel finished one shot ahead of Richard Barker of Longcliffe, who missed a six-foot putt on the last green.

He was also a member of the victorious Northern Region team, which claimed victory in the team competition.

Mel was presented with the BIGGA National Championship trophy, the same one golfers will be competing for at this

year's event. It's a large cup, and Mel said his first thought after being presented with it, was where he would keep it.

"At the time I lived in a single bedroom flat," he said. "And I'm thinking, that's huge and expensive. It won't fit in my flat, and what if I get robbed?"

As it happened, Mel would only have to worry about looking after the trophy for one year, as he left his role at South Leeds to move into sales, meaning he was unable to defend the cup the following year, when the event was held at Ayr Belleisle.

But in 1987, Mel returned to South Leeds to a hero's welcome. He said: "Shortly after I came back it was presentation night at the club and they insisted that I take it along.

"So I got presented with it again and I had to make a little speech. I said 'I would like to thank Dennis Sidebottom for allowing me to take time off. When I asked him if I could go to the competition, he told me not to come back empty handed.

"Well there you are Dennis, I couldn't have brought you anything bigger, are you going to fill it?"

"And to his credit, he filled it. He went to the bar and said 'give us a handful of straws and some serviettes'."

Mel was club champion nine times at South Leeds, where he played for 53 years, before hanging up his clubs in 2012.

His time at the club could have been much shorter after he was made redundant from his role as an engineer and went to the committee to ask about suspending his membership. Instead, they offered to help him out and asked if he would be interested in working on the course.

When a greenkeeper left, he took on a permanent role. "I had no greenkeeping

Continued over

Roll of Honour

- 1987 **Verulam** | Mel Guy
- 1988 **Ayr Belleisle**
Edwin Walsh
- 1989 **Lyme Regis**
Paul Newcombe
- 1990 **Ganton** | Gerald Bruce
- 1991 **Royal St Davids**
Barry Holt
- 1992 **Littlestone**
Richard Barker
- 1993 **Dunbar**
Malcolm Latham
- 1994 **Dartmouth**
Malcolm Latham
- 1995 **St Annes Old Links**
Shaun Richards
- 1996 **Seacroft** | James Dair
- 1997 **Cooden Beach**
Steve Sullivan
- 1998 **Letham Grange**
Event cancelled
- 1999 **Carden Park**
Anthony James
- 2000 **St Annes Old Links & Fairhaven**
Dustin Houghton
- 2001 **Southport and Ainsdale & Royal Birkdale**
Chris Bell
- 2002 **Hillside & Hesketh**
Ian Semple
- 2003 **Hollinwell & Coxmoor**
Chris Lomas
- 2004 **Alwoodley**
Graeme Macdonald
- 2005 **Worksop & Sherwood Forest**
Noel Crawford
- 2006 **Burton on Trent**
Anthony McLure
- 2007 **Dundonald Links**
David Simpson
- 2008 **East Sussex National**
David Simpson
- 2009 **Burnham & Burrow**
Derek McJannet
- 2010 **The Berkshire**
Paul Frith
- 2011 **West Lancashire**
Jason Hunt
- 2012 **Irvine (Bogside)**
Oliver Browning
- 2013 **Frilford Heath**
Gordon Sangster
- 2014 **Liphook**
Gordon Sangster
- 2015 **Fulford** | James Rowles
- 2016 **Bowood Golf & CC**
Gary Burgess



qualifications,” Mel said. “Then one day the head greenkeeper left. I was used to organising people on the job and that’s what was needed.”

“Being a member at South Leeds, it was also a case of knowing what the members wanted.”

The members at South Leeds were delighted that Mel had been able to bring the prestigious trophy back to the club following his Verulam victory.

He would bring the club further renown his performance at the BIGGA National qualified him for the greenkeeping team entered into the Kubota Challenge at The Belfry.

This annual event saw a team of greenkeepers go up against teams from the Golf Foundation, club secretaries and the English Golf Union, and the BIGGA members were again victorious.

Top: BIGGA National prize winners. Back (L to R): Martin Dignum, Yorkshire Mowers; Ken Root, Riddlesden; Dennis Cockburn, Silsden; Colin Garnett, Garforth; Edwin Walsh, Whitefield. Front: Melvyn Guy, South Leeds; Don Roberts, West Bowling; Mick Hannan, Moortown.

Bottom left: Mel Guy reunited with the trophy in 2017

Bottom right: Winners of the 1987 Kubota Golf Challenge. Standing (L to R): Philip Wentworth, North Hants; Richard Barker, Longcliffe; Mike Sheehan, Mere; Ivan Toon, Moor Hall. Sitting: Edwin West, Broadstone; Ray Howlett, Cheshunt; Melvyn Guy, South Leeds; Neil Whittaker, Woburn.

One of the major differences Mel has noticed about the BIGGA National Championship since he took part is the improving standard of golfers taking part. He won the championship while playing off a handicap of six, whereas in 2016, the best ranked player was two-time winner Gordon Sangster, who played off +2.

For that reason, the Challenge Cup was introduced, which takes handicaps into account and is played over 18 holes on the second day of the tournament. It means that everyone who takes part in the event has a chance of winning.

The 30th anniversary of the BIGGA National Championship will be held at Verulam on 2-3 October. If you would like to take part in the event, fill out the application form opposite and return it to Rachael Duffy at BIGGA House. ■

BIGGA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

30TH ANNIVERSARY



Venue: Verulam Golf Club

Date: Monday 2 and Tuesday 3 October 2017

For your chance to win £500 worth of vouchers and become the BIGGA National Champion 2017, fill in the form below to guarantee your entry.

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Handicap (IMPORTANT: please complete, this can be updated nearer the Championship):	
Golf Club / Company Name:	
Please select one of the following:	
I am a Greenkeeper member (Full/Associate) <input type="checkbox"/>	I am an Overseas Greenkeeper member (International) <input type="checkbox"/>
I am a Retired/Life member <input type="checkbox"/>	I am a non Greenkeeper member (Affiliate) <input type="checkbox"/>

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

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Card Number:	Issue No. (Switch Delta only):	
Start Date:	End Date:	Security Code:
Signature:		Date:

Completed entry forms should be sent to: **BIGGA National Championship, BIGGA House, Aldwark, Alne, York YO61 1UF** or e-mail your details to: **rachael@bigga.co.uk**. Please ensure you receive your confirmation of entry by return email. **Deadline for entry is 1 September 2017.**

The main tournament for the Challenge Trophy will be played over 36 holes, medal play, with the best overall gross score producing the BIGGA National Champion, who must be a greenkeeper member. The greenkeeper player with the lowest nett score will be presented with the BIGGA Challenge Cup. There will be prizes for the first five over 36 holes in the gross category. The top three in the nett competition will also receive prizes. After each day of 18 holes there will be prizes for winners of handicap divisions. The BIGGA Regional Team Cup and prize will be calculated from the 8 best nett scores over the first day of play. There will also be various nearest the pin and longest drive competitions, featuring prizes.

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HOW DO YOU DEFINE 'FAST'?

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GREEN SPEED

Green speeds have been on the mind of golfers for decades, there really is nothing new about it.

Speed isn't everything, but you just try and tell golfers that.

Set ups that lead to more regular instances of than three putts on each green are considered unfair and will eventually cause golfers to lose the joy of playing.

But it is during championships that golfers expect the greens to be at their fastest. So what should you be able to achieve, and what speeds are reasonable for golfers to expect?

How can you measure your green speed?

Edward Stimpson designed the stimpmeter in 1935 out of a desire to create a 'principle of fairness'.

Stimpmeters have subsequently been redesigned and refined by the USGA and comprise of a V-shaped aluminium bar, with a notch at the upper side of the ramp that keeps the ball in place until the device is raised from the surface of the green to a set angle.

This guarantees the ball rolls along the bar and onto the green with repeatable velocity.

With consistency assured, the distance travelled by the ball can be compared. On each green, several measurements are taken from various starting points, which are averaged afterwards.

USGA green speed guidelines

Green speed	Daily use	Championships
Very fast	more than 8'6"	more than 10'6"
Fast	7'6" to 8'5"	9'6" to 10'6"
Medium	6'6" to 5'7"	8'6" to 9'5"
Slow	5'6" to 6'6"	7'6" to 8'6"
Very slow	4'6" to 5'5"	6'6" to 7'5"

What should you do?

Taking factors on the greens into account, greenkeepers should adjust speeds to the skill level of the average player, taking into consideration undulations and also position the flag accordingly.

When the greens are cut too low it causes additional stress, increasing the risk of disease. It also requires extra time and effort from staff, as well as increasing the amount of water, fertiliser and chemistry you need to input. Costs will rise as a result.

But bear in mind, any speeds that go beyond the recommended figures for daily play or tournaments can be seen as the greenkeeper either proving a point to their club, or letting their ego get in the way of the needs of golfers. Comparisons between other golf courses are also unhelpful as there are often big differences between rootzones, grass species, light and wind influence and the availability of maintenance resources.



What factors influence green speed and how can you overcome them?

Weather has the biggest impact upon green speeds, but other factors include:

Soil Conditions: Is the soil sandy or humous and organic? What is the thatch level? Hard greens tend to be faster.

Drainage capacity: How fast can rain and irrigation water be drained off?

Drying: How fast does the location dry, depending on shade, sun and wind?

Weather conditions: Rain, fog and high humidity reduce green speed.

Type and density of grass: Dense grass is generally also too wet and dries slowly.

Greens with predominantly *Poa annua* normally have to be mown with a much lower cutting height or perhaps twice per day, especially during the blooming period.

Fertilisation: Leads to slower greens during the day, thus fertilisers with low amounts of nitrogen (1-2gN/m² per application) should be used.

Maintenance: Verticutting, grooming and topdressing.

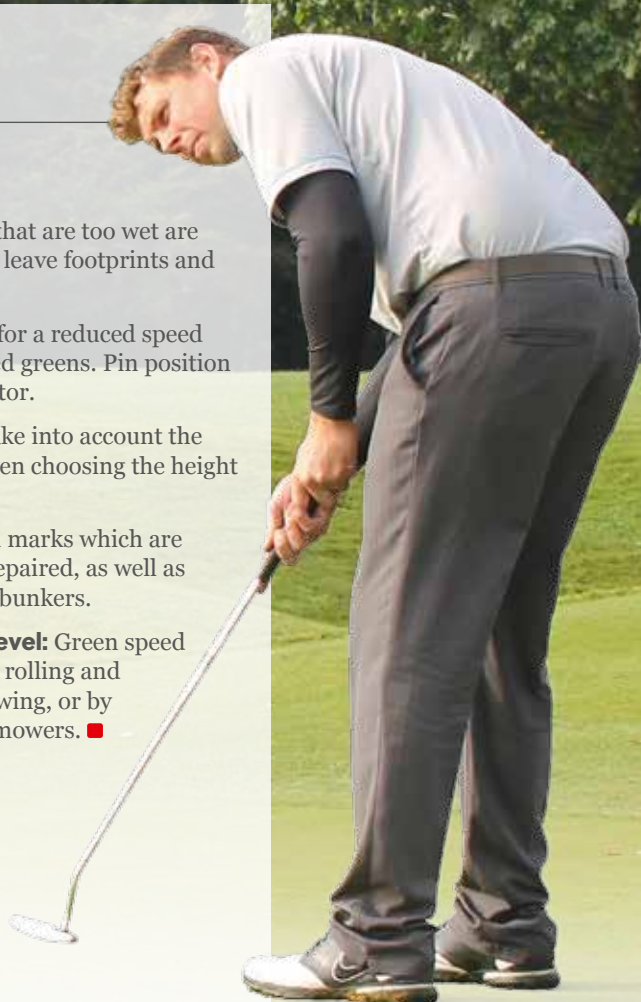
Irrigation: Greens that are too wet are soft, dry slowly and leave footprints and pitchmarks.

Undulations: Aim for a reduced speed on heavily undulated greens. Pin position should also be a factor.

Cutting height: Take into account the previous factors when choosing the height of cut.

Unevenness: Pitch marks which are badly or not at all repaired, as well as sand thrown out of bunkers.

The player's skill level: Green speed can be increased by rolling and ironing, double mowing, or by using walk behind mowers. ■



GREEN SPEED



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FUNGICIDE UPDATE:

WHAT'S THE STORY BEHIND SDHI'S?

Independent trials have reported that Bayer's latest fungicide product, Exteris Stressgard, is an extremely effective treatment of Fusarium.

Bayer unveiled Exteris Stressgard to great fanfare at BTME 2017, hailing the product as the first ever combination SDHI fungicide in the UK, and introducing a new family to help in the battle against Microdochium patch, which occurs on over 90% of UK courses at some point in the year.

This month, Bayer has given Greenkeeper International more details about the product, which it hopes will be an effective weapon against turf disease for the foreseeable future.

The headline claim by Bayer is that independent trials run by the STRI on behalf of distributors Headland Amenity have shown that areas treated with Exteris Stressgard recorded a maximum of 5% disease activity, while an untreated plot showed 75% activity.

The trials were carried out during October and November 2016, when disease pressure was unexpectedly high and five peaks of high disease activity were experienced.

Although the autumn was cold and dry, there was very little wind, which increased humidity. This meant grass leaves were often left damp for over 24 hours, making the perfect environment for disease to thrive.

Mark Hunt, technical director at Headland, is overseeing the trials and has been impressed with the results so far.

He said: "In a normal golf course situation, the greenkeeper would carry out cultural practices and apply non-fungicidal products, as well as a fungicide, in order to help minimise the disease threat. In the trials, we haven't used anything other than two applications of Exteris Stressgard, so we'd expect results to be even better in a 'real life' situation.

"As Exteris Stressgard contains a reduced amount of active ingredient, it needs to have high efficacy. The Stressgard formulation enhances the fungicide's performance, by helping the active to move through the plant, in order to target the disease pathogen."

A new tool for resistance management

Exteris Stressgard is the first new chemistry that's been brought to the turf market in nearly 10 years, bringing in a whole new class of chemical – the Succinate Dehydrogenase Inhibitors group, more commonly known as SDHI's.

The fungicide gives greenkeepers another tool in their diminishing armoury, allowing for more rotation between chemical groups, to help prevent the threat of disease resistance.

Understanding chemical groups and active ingredients

As greenkeepers plan their fungicide programmes, Dr Colin Mumford, Bayer technical support manager, suggested that professionals should have some understanding of the type of chemistry being used. This knowledge will help develop a preventative control plan for this season and into the future, when there may be less chemistry available to greenkeepers.

With the addition of SDHI's, there are now six different chemical groups available to greenkeepers in the UK, and each active ingredient belongs to one of these. Every group has a specific mode of action, which is characterised by the way in which the chemical attacks a particular disease pathogen, or where it's active within the pathogen.

Choosing the right chemistry from different groups can help preserve the longevity of the fungicide armoury and minimise potential resistance build up.

Active ingredients within a formulated product dictate how the fungicide moves and responds within the plant, and products in the same group will combat the pathogen in the same way.

Colin explained: "For example, two individual active ingredients from the Strobilurin group have different pathways into the plant, but they both target the pathogen in the same way. So, I'd advise greenkeepers to look at rotating around different groups to avoid potential development of resistant strains.

"The key to Exteris Stressgard is its co-formulation. It contains two combined active ingredients, one is the SHDI – Fluopyram, and the other is Trifloxystrobin." Fluopyram is an acropetal penetrant, that protects the plant through its systemic action, which moves upwards through the plant, preventing the disease from establishing and damaging it.

Fungicide groups and active ingredients available in the UK 2017

Fungicide group	Active ingredient
Phthalonitrile	Chlorothalonil
Phenylpyrrole	Fludioxonil
Dicarboximide	Iprodione
Strobilurins	Azoxystrobin, Pyraclostrobin, Trifloxystrobin
Demethylation inhibitors (DMI)	Propiconazole, Tebuconazole
Succinate dehydrogenase inhibitors (SDHI)	Fluopyram

Trifloxystrobin is part of the Strobilurin group and is a local penetrant that offers targeted disease prevention by coating the leaf surface, acting as a barrier to pathogens.

Prevention rather than cure

As the turf industry loses more active ingredients, it's becoming essential to treat preventatively for disease, and protect chemistry for the future. In addition to preventing pathogens from taking hold, this tactic brings other benefits.

"Maintenance costs are reduced and playability is improved because potential turf scarring is minimised or even totally eliminated," said Colin. "So the need for remedial work is less likely. Additionally, lessening the impact of a disease improves the aesthetics of the green, as visible symptoms are reduced.

Another benefit to a preventative approach is improved plant health. Healthy plants are protected from disease stress, which makes them better able to withstand other environmental pressures that make them more susceptible to disease.

Colin reminded greenkeepers of the importance of developing preventative programmes that don't depend on curative chemistry. He said: "I suggest greenkeepers do this now, while there's still the safety net of curative and eradicator chemistry available, which can act as a bandage to tackle any outbreaks while programmes are fine tuned." ■

Dr Mumford's top tips for resistance management

- Adhere to the Fungicide Resistance Action Committee (FRAC) guidelines. For more information visit www.frac.info/home
- Rotate chemical groups as much as possible in a preventative, planned approach
- Always read the label, and use the full application rate, as this is always the minimum amount required to achieve control. Using less than the stated rate may encourage resistance to develop
- It's important to choose a product with the right mode of action, for the disease you want to treat



Top: STRI 2017 Autumn Exteris trials
Bottom: Microdochium patch

BAYER EXTERIS

EVERY DROP COUNTS

DR ADRIAN MORTRAM, ROBIN HUME ASSOCIATES

IRRIGATION

Ten years ago I wrote an article for *Greenkeeper International* with the same title as this feature, and now I am revisiting the subject.

Back then I wrote: 'The summer of 2006 undoubtedly had shades of 30 years ago, 1976, with high temperatures, clear blue cloudless skies and constant gentle breezes. As I have little memory of those halcyon days 'long gone by', my father pointed out to me that automatic irrigation then – now over 40 years ago – was in its infancy, far less of a science. Automatic irrigation consisted of moveable rotary sprinklers attached to a skid, which were constantly either moved or turned off by each successive four ball. Only the wealthiest had fully automated pop-up irrigation systems.

Since then I have regularly been involved with BIGGA, delivering a workshop each year in Harrogate to over 200 delegates. The principle areas covered in these workshops has been to look at and to investigate the theory behind carrying out an irrigation audit. The aim of these seminars has been to enlighten greenkeepers and course managers to the principles involved in managing water on the course.

Technology has improved, but more importantly so has knowledge and understanding of water management. So what has changed in the past decade?

Over the past 10 years or so, many of the major championship courses in the UK and Ireland have, when upgrading their irrigation systems, looked to offer a more targeted playing surface-specific approach to water management. This has resulted in a noticeable reduction in water usage, greater efficiency in application and better sustainability of both turf grass species and surrounding flora and fauna.

The days of blanket coverage of an area using as few sprinklers as possible, or blocks of sprinklers working in unison on greens, green surrounds and fairways, is becoming a thing of the past.

The focus is firmly on the finite control of where and how water is applied to the rootzone to ensure a more uniform and consistent playing surface, especially during

major championships. More scrutiny than ever is focused on how consistency and water management through irrigation plays an important role.

Water resourcing has become more important with a far greater number of clubs abstracting and storing their own water from such sources as boreholes, streams, rivers and lakes, rather than relying on using potable water. Water farming – collecting run off from drainage systems and clean grey water gathered using reed bed technology – has been explored by many clubs. Water quality may, in these instances, be an issue and whatever your source of water, regular testing should be undertaken at least annually. STRI, for example, can offer these laboratory services.

Design criteria has also improved. Historically, sprinkler spacing often did not meet the accuracy of today's design criteria, where head to head coverage and spacing, in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations, is regarded as paramount. Correct spacing of sprinklers is critical to providing the best opportunities for accurate and even coverage and water distribution. Poor spacing in the past may be a contributing factor to uneven coverage, as may incorrect sprinkler arc settings and their running times. It may not be obvious at first sight, but the overall shape of the playing surface – green, fairway, walkway or tee – may have migrated over time.

These migrations may not be substantial, but can possibly be identified from old plans. Perhaps an apron has been prepared and gradually incorporated



Background: Good Sprinkler Coverage
Top: Poor Sprinkler Coverage
Bottom: Turfgrass too long affecting correct operation

into the putting surface, or a tee surface reduced in size, leaving sprinklers in longer rough. These subtle modifications may affect the overall distribution pattern and performance from the sprinkler heads.

Improvements in the design of modern sprinklers plays a significant role in improving distribution patterns, as does the correct water pressure at the nozzle. Modern sprinklers are available with variable trajectory and low angle nozzles, enabling flexibility under windy conditions for exposed playing surfaces. Water pressure at the nozzles can be readily checked on site by using a pitot gauge to equate the pressure at the point of delivery with the pressure it was designed to deliver. Low pressure can result in inadequate coverage, while if the pressure is too great it may cause misting and overthrow, wasting water and affecting the continuity of the turf species and natural vegetation nearby. It is not infrequent to find different coloured nozzles on the same green. Yes, there may be extreme times when this is desirable, but it should be the exception rather than the rule.

Ten years ago weather stations were very much in vogue, however, with the advent of modern handheld and in-situ technology, soil moisture probes are now as much in demand. Both these two technological innovations of their day have advantages.

Weather stations allow the course manager to identify evapo-transpiration rates for the whole environment. However, soil moisture is often put to use in identifying the supplemental water requirements,

from irrigation of specific areas or even micro areas of the playing surfaces. However, one should still not neglect the time-honoured technique of daily observation of the rootzone when changing the hole cup, or foot printing on the surfaces, for example. Having all of this information within one's armoury is important, but the skill of the course manager is in how this information is interpreted. It is especially in these environs where having finite control of where water is applied is paramount.

However, it may not be easy to check on the pipework if your irrigation system is older than 25 years.

The pipework is probably uPVC and will be nearing the end of its lifetime. Modern systems now have PE, polyethylene, which is often fusion jointed and has a much longer lifespan. Indeed, as a practice we are now involved with some courses who have PE pipework where this infrastructure is being retained and most other



Continued over

aspects of the irrigation system are being upgraded. While the lifespan of PE is largely unknown, with good initial installation and careful maintenance the anticipated lifespan is 40 years and beyond.

Proactive system management is essential rather than reactive management. Sadly the irrigation system, even though it is the most expensive single item of maintenance equipment on the golf course, is so often 'out of sight, out of mind'. Commonly seen faults include sprinkler heads not set in the turf horizontally and sprinklers set too deeply in the sward, where the jet of water catches the adjacent turf. Both affect coverage and uniformity. Checking all sprinkler heads – the nozzles, arcs, mechanical and electrical operation, damage – and trimming around and resetting to the correct depth should be standard winter and spring work.

Similarly, maintenance of valve boxes should be routine. They are often a cosy winter retreat for all manner of rodents who can play havoc with the system electrics and operation of solenoid valves. Proactive management

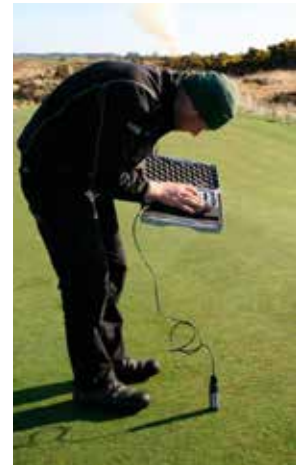
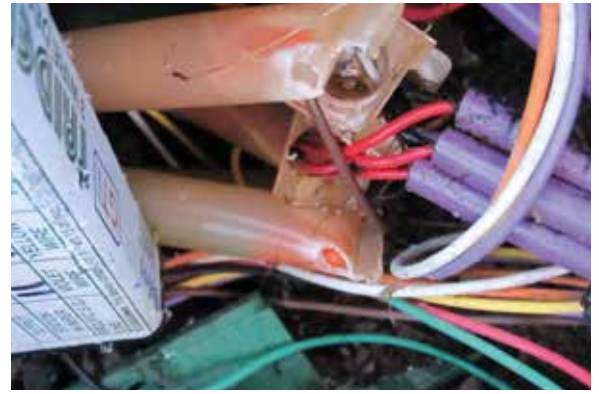
should also take into account the value of education in servicing, maintenance and irrigation design.

So, having discussed the past and the present, what is likely to occur in the future? The availability or supply of water will undoubtedly feature strongly in any discussion, principally cost and justification.

No doubt the Water Framework Directive will rear its head again, when we shall all have to justify the quantities we use. So start keeping water records now, in association with local weather data. Being able to account for the water we use and prove there is no waste by monitoring use should ensure adequate supply.

The principles associated with area specific irrigation will certainly grow, manufacturers will continue to develop and improve technology in controllers, nozzle and sprinkler design and grass seed merchants will continue to strive for more drought tolerant cultivars.

Proactive irrigation management, as well as quality turf management and education, will undoubtedly be the key. ■



Top: Damage to cables from vermin
Bottom left: Sprinkler too deep affecting correct operation

Bottom right: Checking soil moisture for irrigation scheduling



IRRITECH

Irritech are Europe's leading independent irrigation consultancy practice, working throughout the world and specialising in golf course and sports turf irrigation system appraisals and designs.

Irritech undertake all aspects of irrigation system appraisal, design, competitive tendering, procurement and project management. Initial irrigation system appraisals allow the client to become aware of irrigation system operation parameters and health & safety issues. It also allows for future budgeting based upon existing system condition and allows upgrades to be phased over a period of time. Irritech also specialise in water sourcing, such as borehold prognosis, water storage lake design and the use of recycled or grey water.

Detailed design of an irrigation system, with a full bill of materials, allows the client to become aware of section and unit rate costs based upon a known specification or end product. Irritech assist the client at all stages, from initial appraisal through to final contract award. All installation processes are based upon a known basis of contract including warranty items and payment and retention terms, ensuring the product and process is exacting and defined as well as being delivered on time and on budget.

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OVERSEEDING

HOW TO MAKE SURE YOUR SEED SPREADING PROJECTS TAKE ROOT THIS SEASON

Overseeding your greens isn't a cheap undertaking, particularly if the intention is to alter the dominant turfgrass species. With such a significant portion of the annual budget invested in the project, you'll want to give yourself the best chance of success.

Whatever the scale of your project, or even if you're just hoping to tidy up some worn areas of the course, we've teamed up with some of the biggest seed suppliers in the UK to help make sure you over exceed with your overseeding this year.

1

Choose your goal

Before you set out to overseed, decide what you want to get out of the process. Are you hoping to maintain the balance of grass species you have to maintain consistency? If so, one or two applications each year will suffice. Are you hoping to exchange species? Consider seeding up to once a month during the growing season. Replacing a dominant species takes time so keep overseeding efforts consistent over several years.



5

Sowing

If seeds can't make contact with the rootzone, the odds of success are slim, so be sure sowing depths fall below the thatch. Sowing rates are calculated in terms of weight per unit area, and the quantity you need to sow is directly related to seed size. When aiming for species exchange, multiply quantities by five for an annual requirement.



2

Seeds

Choose grass species that have a chance of surviving in your environment.

In the UK, inland soil-based greens should favour Browntop bent, while bent and fescue mixes are well suited for coastal situations. Then when you have selected the species, choose top-rated varieties as they will perform better.

3

Timing

Autumn is traditionally the best time due to high soil temperatures and levels of rainfall that aid germination. Spring overseeding can be just as successful, so long as the seed is allowed to germinate, rather than be hampered by intense mowing and management.

6

Germination

Seed germination takes time so be patient and plan ahead to make sure the weather won't disrupt your plans

7

Nurture to maturity

Seedlings are small and vulnerable so go easy on them. Raise mowing heights to 6-8mm and don't verticut. Your greens should have been intensively scarified, hollow tined and topdressed prior to seeding. Wait to apply nutrients until after seedlings germinate, to reduce competition with grasses you already have.

4

Preparation

Grass seedlings need adequate space to thrive. Proper surface preparation is key to giving young grasses room to take root. Mechanical preparation makes all the difference in helping seedlings make contact with the rootzone, as well as providing drainage and aeration.



Chemical application can also give overseeding efforts a boost by removing unwanted grasses or weeds.

8

Maintenance continues

Form an ongoing plan that adjusts from a nurturing environment through to intensively maintained fine turf. By not neglecting your turf, you won't have wasted your time.

GREENTEK

If you are wanting to increase the percentage of bent and fescue in your greens, then it's time to consider overseeding.

Overseeding is the most direct way to get the grass species you want growing in your greens and it will improve the quality of your playing surface with a consistent, uniform grass cover.

Just don't let your members catch you doing it!

We all know how much members dislike watching seeding activity taking place on their greens when they're playing a round. And the last thing you need as reward for all your hard work are complaints from unhappy golfers.

Luckily there are ways to mitigate this.

GreenTek's Dynamics Range features a very clever Dyna-Seeder unit, which fits discreetly onto your triple mower. Vibratory spikers create neat plant pots for seed to lodge in.

This lets you overseed at any time when the conditions are right. Members won't notice as they'll think you're simply

cutting the grass. For those who think overseeding is an expensive activity, GreenTek believe it doesn't have to be.

Low seed rates with high germination results can be achieved using super precise machinery like the Dyna-Seeder. This can accurately plant pure bent seed at just 5g per metre.

This represents a huge saving on the cost of seed being used. You can also save on man-hours too.

With the right kit you can now undertake the whole seeding operation on 18 greens in hours - not days - and at any warm time throughout the season, for successful germination.

You don't have to wait until maintenance week at the end of the season when the soil temperature is too low. The latest tech allows you to overseed all year round with minimum disturbance. So keep up with your overseeding and you'll soon increase coverage of the finer grasses on your course.

Overseeding is cheaper, easier and more discreet than it's ever been. Your members will love the lush new grass.



OVERSEEDING

Redexim Speed Seed 1600

A Redexim Speed Seed 1600 has delivered 'two-fold benefits to the greens' says Murrayfield Golf Club's Head Greenkeeper Steve Hulme. Delivered by Charterhouse Turf Machinery in September 2015, overseeding now takes less time at this 18 hole parkland course, 1.5 miles from the centre of Edinburgh. Prior to purchasing the Redexim Speed Seed, overseeding was a timely exercise for Steve and his team of nine greenkeepers as it was all done by hand.

The Speed Seed 1600 works by delivering the seed into dimples close to the surface, created by a spiked sarel roller. It is ideal for situations where drill holes

need to be avoided. "It's combined the two tasks into one, reducing the time investment which has given us the opportunity to regularly overseed a bent/fescue mix on our greens."

For the last 12-18 months a key focus for Steve has been to reduce thatch levels on the greens, thus improving the efficiency of any overseeding work. "We've been very impressed with the results we're achieving with the Speed Seed - it's been a win win for us."



BARENBRUG



OVERSEEDING GOLF GREENS? GET ADVICE FROM THE GRASS EXPERTS

www.barenbrug.co.uk/golf



OVERSEEDING WITH FESCUES FOR A FINER PLAYING SURFACE

OVERSEEDING

Overseeding with fescues or bentgrass species is a proven, reliable and cost-effective method for improving the appearance and playability of traditional golf greens.

But any overseeding work must follow a few simple guidelines in order to give the newly sown cultivar the best chance of performing to its maximum potential. Paul Moreton, amenity technical sales representative for Germinal, explains more.

Over the last 10 to 15 years, the combined pressures of time constraints, limited resources and tight budgets have prevented many golf courses from committing to long-term greens species conversion programmes.

As such, Browntop Bents, such as Germinal's AberRoyal and AberRegal varieties, have been chosen for 90% of over-seeding work on traditional parkland greens. Many courses have achieved fantastic results with these high performing bentgrass cultivars, to the point that the introduction of finer fescue species – which, with correct management, can create a smoother, faster-playing surface – has not been deemed necessary.

Recently however, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of greenkeepers wanting to improve their courses by using fescues to achieve the traditional, smooth, non-resistant playing surface that only the finest-leaved species, such as Mirador, can achieve. This changing mindset has coincided with a greater understanding among the greenkeeping profession of the importance of soil biology, nutrition and renovation methods,



 Germinal's Paul Moreton

and with the advent of more accurate and less disruptive renovation machinery.

Which grass species is best suited to a particular course will depend on each individual course's soil type, location and agronomic attributes. But, assuming there are no underlying soil structure, drainage or thatch issues, the following guidelines should be followed when introducing a fescue.

The best time to overseed

While fescues have a reputation as early growers and are well suited for sowing into spring scars, most varieties will only grow rapidly once they have finished reproducing in the late summer. In fact, fescues are notoriously slow growers – hence their main function as low maintenance lawn and fairway grasses – as they put a lot of growth energy into seed stalks from early May onwards, and only revert to full leaf development in late August when there will be a noticeable growth spurt.

Cautious greenkeepers might want to keep a bag of bentgrass seed on hand to quickly repair any early or late season damage or for rapidly repairing damage caused by moving holes.

While this growth pattern can't be manipulated, fescues can be sown whenever there is an opportunity to carry out over-seeding work.

Gradually adding fescues throughout the late spring and summer will build up a seedbank for the critical late season growth window.

How to sow

Modern drills enable greenkeepers to overseed with near surgeon-like levels of precision. While the latest machines offer the greatest levels of seeding accuracy, they are not essential – as long as the seed is distributed evenly into a breach in the soil surface. This is achieved either via micro-cores, tining or groom lines. The seed should be able to find a warm, wet environment into which it can send out a radicle. Dressing the soil surface post-seeding will improve establishment and survival rates by ensuring the seed is properly buried.

Post-seeding nutrition

Despite the hardy, self-sustaining nature of fescues, new seedlings will always stand a better chance of survival if they are fed effectively. Exact nutritional requirements will vary from course to course and the amount of fertiliser required will be entirely dependent on the soil nutrient status and how naturally hungry the greens are. As a general rule, it is never a good idea to encourage new plants to grow by allowing established grasses to suffer. Instead, apply the correct amount of fertiliser as dictated by the soil's nutrient status as this will assist both old and new plants.

Organic or urea-based sources of nitrogen will deliver the best results as these will naturally be taken up more evenly and over a longer time period compared

to synthetic, fast-release fertilisers such as ammonium sulphate, which will also be more susceptible to leaching. The addition of a seaweed based soil conditioner, such as Basfoliar Turf Complete, will improve stress tolerance and help new plants to thrive.

The ideal mowing height

The greatest conflict when renovating any golf green always revolves around the height at which the overseeded sward is cut. To give new seedlings the best start, the most appropriate advice is always to cut as high as possible, but this will be to the detriment of the green's playability and will inevitably upset members.

The key piece of advice at this stage is to maintain a dialogue with the club's committee, members and visiting players so they understand what is being done and what the final outcome will look like.

Once mature, fescues will comfortably adapt to a cutting height of 4 to 4.5mm, but a cut level of this height will prevent new plants from establishing effectively. Instead, raise the height of cut to

allow the new shoots to develop into a tuft with plenty of collars and blades. Once the new plants have formed continuous lines or sprigs of fresh growth it is then safe to gradually reduce the cut level back to a more acceptable height.

Aftercare

Once established, the newly renovated green should be maintained with some moderate tining or slitting during the winter months.

Early sown greens might benefit from a light top-dressing prior to the onset of winter, but the amount of dressing used should be kept to a minimum in order to prevent the need for any excessive brushing which could disturb the new plants.

Finally, don't get disheartened by slow growth rates. Creating the perfect fescue-based green takes patience and time, but the results will be worth it, especially when the greens rival those on the nearest links course. ■

Cabrio: finest in trial, finest on course.

Cabrio is the UK's first Ultra Fine Ryegrass – with the highest fineness of leaf rating on the BSPB's 2017 list it has out-performed all other perennial ryegrass varieties.

It is the ideal cultivar for golf tees, fairways, green surrounds and other fine turf areas, and is available in selected Germinal Grade A mixtures.

Available as seed from Germinal, or ask your turf supplier for turf grown from Cabrio Ultra Fine Ryegrass.

Cabrio: nothing else compares.



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**BIGGA
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SCOTLAND & N IRELAND

Central



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golflinks.co.uk

A great seminar was held at Elmwood by Paul Miller with unusual but effective analogies using sugar and sweets to replicate the breakdown of different forms of nitrogen. It was good to see over 30 members there, with some new faces.

Thomas Nikolai is our next speaker up and during his visit he is carrying out a survey on the effect and marks different golf shoe spikes make on putting greens. More on this next month.

There is just enough time to get an entry into the spring outing at Elie. Contact Gordon Moir, gordon.moir@standrews.com, for a last minute space.

The Pairs Competition makes a start this month. The leagues are shown below:

Crail League: John Reid and Stephen Lawlor; Gavin Neill and Craig Boath; Kenny Niven and Richard Mackay; Trevor Harris and Derek Scott

Elie League: John Bowers and Kennedy Park; Stephen Sutherland and Danie Van Wyk; Phil Hind and Euan Kay; Richard Colley and Kenny Duncan

Leven League: David Gray and Colin Powrie; Sandy Reid and Jim Grainger; James Lindsay and Wes Saunders; Scott Logan and Shaun McNaughton; Mike Clark and Paul Miller

Lundin League: James Naylor and David Grant; John Watson and David Cooper; James McElroy and Peter Wallace; Richard Jenkinson and Kevin Brunton; Charlie MacDonald and Archie Dunn. Good luck to all involved.

Over the months we will highlight blogs by courses in the Central Section area. This month we will start at the Home of Golf, St Andrews. Scan the QR code opposite or go to blog.standrews.com, where Craig Berry reflects on the first nine months of his role as course supervisor of the Eden, Straththyrum and Balgove courses. If you'd like your blog to be featured, or anything else brought to our attention, feel free to get in touch.

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Craig Berry's blog features in the Central Section this month

East



Alan Campbell
@BIGGA_ES
greenkeeper@
alancampbell.
demon.co.uk

The East section's spring meeting was held at Gullane and featured a demonstration of the latest Toro equipment courtesy of Gary Rodgers.

Following the golf there was a fond farewell to Jim Darling, of Aitkens. Jim has enjoyed a long and varied career, starting as an apprentice greenkeeper at Longniddry before heading down south to become a teaching professional at Lutterworth and Stoneham. Jim returned to Scotland to take up the head man's position at Musselburgh Old Course, prior to similar posts at Wolstanton, Kingussie and Kilspeidie. Jim then joined Vitax before spending the last 18 or so years at Richard Aitken. Jim is heading off to sunnier climes in Spain. We all wish Jim well in his retirement and we will welcome him at our events in the future.

The East Section is well represented on the BIGGA Support Team for the Open, with four members involved. They are Jamie Martin, Gifford; Stuart Tait, Renaissance; Shaun Cunningham, Mortonhall; and Craig Hempseed, Mortonhall. Craig is also lucky enough to be helping out at Wentworth for the BMW PGA. Good luck to you all.

On 15 March there was an open day at The Woll featuring a demonstration of John Deere mowers, courtesy of Thomas Sherriff and an educational seminar provided by Rigby Taylor on the benefits of Tetraploid ryegrass and

fertilizers for cool temperatures. Many thanks to all at The Woll for hosting this well attended event.

North



Neil Sadler
gkneil@sky.com

As I sit here writing this month's article, we have just had a couple of glorious days. This got me thinking about the winter weather we had. This winter from the start of November to the end of February we at Portlethen just south of Aberdeen had 215mm of rain compared with 410mm the previous winter. We have been open for play much more this winter and with only 24 days on frost course, the course never seemed to get a rest. It has had a lot more traffic than most winters, which is good for the golfers and club, but it does give us greenkeepers a lot more work. As Mother Nature is ultimately in control of our workload over the winter it would be good to hear from other greenkeepers across our area who record weather data so we can make a comparison between our different courses.

Hopefully all your winter programmes have been finished and your committees did not keep adding to the never ending list of tasks we have to do. As we gear up for the start of the season, you like me may be dusting down your golf clubs and going out for a game. If you are planning to visit other courses remember to phone ahead and check availability and do not abuse your playing privileges.

With the Scottish conference just past, the feedback from the boys that attended was very positive indeed. So very well done to everybody who was involved organising it.

Greenkeepers on the move: Steve Christie is leaving Newmachar to join Portlethen; Dale Robertson is taking charge at Newburgh and not going to Turrieff as I mentioned last month. Sometimes you just can't keep up with the greenkeeping merry go round.



Remember if you are playing at Cruden Bay on 25 April you can pay using internet banking. The account number is 10823583 and the sort code is 83-26-16. The cost is £25. You can also pay for your 200 club ticket by the same manner. Please remember to identify yourself with a personal reference such as your name.

SW Scotland



Amanda Dorans
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 amanda.dorans@lochlomond.com

The weather has been, in a word, appalling! Snow, hailstones, and heavy rain has become the norm and, unfortunately, in our line of work, we can't avoid it. I'm sure, like me, the lure of a duvet day is most appealing to you.

The Spring Outing will be held at Glasgow Gailes on 11 May. I am pleased to confirm that Mark Hunt, Headland Amenity, will provide the education content prior to the golf. I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank Brian Dickson and his team for kindly hosting us at their fantastic venue.

The board is keen to promote new ideas, so please come forward with suggestions for education events or social gatherings. While on this subject, we would like to ask if anyone would be interested in participating in a singles and pairs match play competition?

Good luck to Celia Fox who has retired from Trump Turnberry – now you can spend more time on the fairways!

There was a fantastic turnout for the recent Scottish Conference – in fact, the best ever! Well done to John Young – it is a huge undertaking to bring everyone together. The new venue is fab and I'm sure will continue to grow.

Thank you to Dumfries and County for hosting the recent event. There was a great support from the area. Well done Steven Carmichael for organising.

Applications are open for volunteers for the Scottish Open and Ladies Scottish Open. Please get in touch if you wish to take part.

West



Scott Davidson
 @BiggaWest
 headgreenkeeper@cathcartcastle.net



East: A John Deere open day was held at Woll



East: Woll education day with Rigby Taylor

NEW MEMBERS

SCOTLAND & NORTHERN IRELAND

Alistair Tough	HGK – Saline
Neil Latto	Student – Elmwood
Stewart Hunter	AGK – G West
Michael Dalgarno	AGK – Murcar Links

NORTHERN

Barrie Lee	CM – Chester-le-Street
David Cunningham	DHGK – Filey
Reece Borbely	GK – Low Laithes
David Bateman	GK – Otley
Anton Haraldsen	HGK – Workington
David Hebden	AGK – Pleasington
Martin Cullen	AGK – Dunham Forest
Ray Cotgrave	AGK – Pleasington

CENTRAL ENGLAND

Daniel Mead	CM – Wavendon
Chris Mills	GK – Willesley Park
Paul Horton	GK – Newcastle-under-Lyme
Stephen Conway	GK – Wavendon
Eden Book	AGK – Willesley Park
Kieran Ashman	AGK – Woburn
Andy Gibb	AGK – Woburn
Gary Boulton	AGK – Calcot Park
Ryan Rutland-Jones	AGK – Willesley Park

SOUTH WEST AND SOUTH WALES

Robert Gibson	GK – Forest Hills
Craig Woodman	AGK – Bramshaw
Jac Emanuel	AGK – Cardigan
Samuel Mitchinson	AGK – Shanklin & Sandown
Richard Poole	AGK – Tall Pines

SOUTH WEST AND SOUTH WALES

Claus Grabow	Hedensted
Daniel Luetzger	Golf Club St Leon Rot
Andrew Cook	GK – Chigwell
Andrew Wildman	GK – West Sussex
Ben Scanlon	GK – Chipstead
Daniel Lang	GK – Chigwell
David Richardson	GK – Highgate
James Cornell	GK – The Hertfordshire
Mark Brown	GK – West Sussex
Paul Biggs	GK – Highgate
Rob Currier	GK – Kingswood
Steve Gaines	GK – Camberley Heath
Tadeus Bortkevic	GK – Highgate
Tony Lashmar	GK – Highgate
Trevor Lewis	GK – Camberley Heath
Thomas Clarke	HGK – The Hurlingham Club
Jordan Belony	AGK – Camberley Heath
Jose Moitas	AGK – Puttonham
Sam Cook	AGK – Harpenden Common
Tom Cornwall	AGK – Cooden Beach
William Bradbury	AGK – Woburn
Jorge Manso Grandio	AGK – Coombe Wood
Joseph Scarrott	AGK – Brickendon Grange

SOUTH WEST AND SOUTH WALES

Claus Grabow	Hedensted
Daniel Luetzger	Golf Club St Leon Rot



**BIGGA
NORTHERN REGION**

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NORTHERN REGION

North East



Jack Hetherington
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James Thorpe is leaving Dunstanburgh Castle after 7.5 years of service. Stuart and the club would like to thank him for everything he has done for the club and without him it wouldn't be what it is today. The BIGGA North East committee would also like to thank James for the help he has giving while on the committee.

James is leaving to move to Switzerland where he will be working at Golf de Lavaux and we wish him every success for the future.

John Schofield has moved from Whitley Bay to Morpeth.

Karl Hollingsworth has moved from George Washington to Whitley Bay.

The spring golf day is being held at Bamburgh. See the Upcoming Events page for more details.



The team at Hesketh has joined BIGGA

work, preparing for opening day or carrying out renovations. Feel free to contact me so we can share any news.

Last month 85 people attended the North Wales seminar day in Deeside. There were various topics on offer including irrigation system auditing and components, overseeding, spring fertilisers and spraying legislation.

The following day at Warrington 60 people attended an ecology day, including a talk from the STRI and Rigby Taylor. Thanks to everyone who helped to organise these days. It was great to be inside during Storm Doris, but not so great the next day at work when 15 trees had been ripped out of the ground! Both days were very well attended and keep an eye out on the events page for more offerings in the section.

The committee are working hard to find different events to hold and there is something on nearly every month. As we approach the new playing season may I wish everyone the best of luck for the coming year.

Cleveland



Anthony McGeough
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aol.com

Spring is just around the corner and everyone seems to be putting the finishing touches to their winter renovation work. There has been some great pictures on the Facebook page. I for one will be glad to start working on the course again and enjoy some quiet time cutting grass and making the course actually look like a golf course and not a scene from the Somme!

On 28 February Amenity Technology hosted a plant nutrition seminar at Cleveland GC. I thought it was a great morning pitched well to a mix of assistants and senior greenkeepers, not too complicated to over face anyone but enough to educate and refresh.

AROUND THE GREEN



North East: James Thorpe

North West



Steve Hemsley
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The North West Section would like to welcome all the team at Hesketh GC.

As I write the sun is shining and it's 13 degrees. Could spring be on the way? I'm sure everyone is finishing off winter

WHAT'S ON

SEE OUR NEW
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Email your news to
Karl @bigga.co.uk

Thank you to Peter Marshall and Andrew Turnball for your time.

Now for the famous Baz and Allie quiz results! I was always told it was the taking part that counts and it didn't matter if you finished last, which is good because that's exactly where the Brendan Bombers team finished. That blasted music round did it for us, and a distinct lack of knowledge. On a slightly negative note, numbers were down on recent years which was a little disappointing, but we appreciate that we all lead busy lives. But it would be great to see more faces there to support the hard work of Barry and Allie. The night was again sponsored by Brendan Brown - Northern Lubricants.

Hopefully we have a venue for the spring tournament, but this will need to be confirmed before we can announce it. We are still looking for an autumn venue so if you want to host it, could you please get in touch with either myself or Ian Pemberton.

If any of you would like to add to your CV, we are looking for someone to take on responsibility for the Around the Green section each month. If you want to give it a go, can you message me on amcgeough@aol.com.

Northern



The days are slowly getting longer, and soon no doubt we will all be busy, working flat out preparing our golf courses for the respectful, understanding member.

An education day was held at Pontefract, with 44 members attending. There's a picture of the fantastic day of education below.

Check out the Upcoming Events page for details of what's going on in our section. All the events are £20 and there will be bacon butty and hot drink on arrival and food afterwards. Payment must be made prior to the day. Bank Details: sort code 40-35-33, account no 51389726.

Thank you again to any sponsors who have supported the Northern Section.

Sheffield



I would like to congratulate Andy Unwin of Birley Wood after being selected for the Open Support Team for the 7th time.

Good luck to Paul Bracey on his move from Bondhay to Wortley.

The spring competition will be held at Sickleholme on 15 May, please contact Neil Peters on 07983612309.

Other dates to follow. Hopefully see you there.

North Wales



SECTION NEWS

WE WANT TO HEAR WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON IN YOUR SECTION

Email your news to Karl@bigga.co.uk



Northern: Pontefract education day



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CENTRAL ENGLAND

BB&O



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Check out the Upcoming Events page for details of our section spring golf 'away day' at Camberley Heath. Invitations will be with you in due course.

Mid Anglia



Darren Mugford
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rigbytaylor.com

Our first event of the season is our spring golf day at Mid Herts on 10 May and is the qualifier for the BIGGA National tournament. This year the event will be held at Verulam, which is ideal for our section. Get your entries in for what should be a very popular event.

Are you interested in volunteering at a European Tour event? We are lucky enough to have one in our area, with GolfSixes making its debut on the European Tour schedule at Centurion Club on the weekend of 6 & 7 May 2017. If you have relevant experience and are interested in joining the team email HR@centurionclub.co.uk for details.

Midland



Dave Collins
greendave2004
@hotmail.co.uk

Massive things are happening at Redditch, with the club hosting the Bridgestone qualifying event for the second year running. Well done to Karl Williams and the team.

Congratulations to Tony Cheese, moving to Wrekin, to Scott Nightingale, moving to Kettering, and finally the big one this month, with Andy Wood moving from Robin Hood to Enville.



East of England spring seminar

A welcome to Craig Moss at Henley who has joined his brother Adam on the team. Also massive congratulations to both Ryan Small and Jay Seall who have both completed their level 2 apprenticeship. Well done guys.

Congratulations also to Tom Boyd and Steve Birkett of Druids Heath who both passed their chainsaw NPTC assessments. Also to Paul Law of South Staffs in passing his PA2 assessment.

Many happy returns to Nigel Tyler of Sherriff. He won't tell us how old he is, but apparently it may be a big one.

What a fabulous start to the year with a great day at Kings Norton for the Central England spring conference. Thanks to all the speakers, including Colin Mumford of Bayer, Richard Elwell talking about stress in the industry, Richard Owens of Tillers Turf, Kate Enwistle and finally Graeme Roberts. It was a great day and a great turn out from sponsors too.

Next was a day with Agronomic Services and David Snowden at Ombersley. Once again a great turn out.

And finally there was a day with Maxwell Amenity at Wolverhampton, shared with our friends in the groundsman industry. This was well attended, so thank you to all the industry guys who are helping to support the section.

We are looking at visiting JCB in August, so watch out for that. And our friends at Countrywide will be sponsoring a November seminar with speakers and venue to be confirmed.

Please send your photo in to us for the 2018 calendar. Send them to greendave2004@hotmail.co.uk and we can assess them and put the best ones in next year's calendar.

East of England



Ian Collett
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rigbytaylor.com

On 22 February we had our spring seminar, held at Woodhall Spa. The Seminar was well attended with 41 delegates representing 12 golf clubs enjoying an interesting day. Thanks goes to speakers Nick Gladstone of Hurrells Seeds, David Snowden of Agronomic Services, and Matt Dale of Ground Water Dynamics. All the presentations were of great interest to all in the room. After a great lunch we were treated to a course walk on the Hotchkin at Woodhall Spa by Course Manager Sam Rhodes, who we thank for a great insight to all the work and alterations made on this great course this winter. On the whole the day was a well supported, enjoyable event, thanks to all involved.

I also hear that Bruce Hicks is back at work now after his illness. We all hope he gets back up to speed and normal Bruce activities in the near future. As Bruce has been ill the golf dates for this year are still to be finalised. However I have been told our first golf day is at Ashby Decoy, Scunthorpe, in May, with the actual date to be announced. Hopefully this will be reported along with the other events next month.

East Midlands



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SOUTH WEST & S. WALES

South West



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As this goes to print I imagine a big proportion of those reading this have completed or are about to complete their spring renovation work. I do love this time of year as the course begins to dry out properly and we can all see the back of the hoops, ropes and signs that we have been using.

We were delighted to hear how the members of the section who received a sponsored place to Harrogate made the most of the opportunity, and had a great time while they were there.

I look forward to seeing faces old and new at Celtic Manor on 5 April, as the South West and South Wales sections join forces for what promises to be a very interesting spring seminar.

I was lucky enough to escape for a few days of winter sun and golf, and while playing I met a greenkeeper repairing pitchmarks. Just as we are frustrated with our golfers who fail to repair pitchmarks, he told me that the previous week he repaired 300 on one green alone! It just goes to show that however many miles we are apart, we all face the same challenges.

The section is delighted to announce we have donated £100 to the BIGGA Benevolent Fund from proceeds at the Christmas raffle.

South Coast



Mike Cartwright
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mikecartwright1
@hotmail.co.uk

I'll take this opportunity to introduce myself to those of you who don't know me. I've been head greenkeeper at Highcliffe Castle for near on nine years now, I've been a member of the South Coast Section for around 23 years and have worked at four different clubs in that time.

I like to get to as many BIGGA days as possible so if you attend one you will more than likely see me there.

The spring tournament at Parkstone will have been played by now, or will be shortly, so the results will be in next month's issue. Parkstone is probably my favourite course, so I'm hoping for a good round; I may even break 25 points!

Congratulations to Andy Clark for gaining a place on the Jacobsen sponsored 'Future Turf Managers Initiative'. I've only ever heard good things about this, so well done Andy. Another Andy, Andy Brown, has been appointed course manager at the brand new Boundry Lakes GC at the Hilton Ageas Bowl. Andy has moved from Goodwood to take on the position. I met Andy at the Turf Club meeting at Goodwood so I can assure Reevo, Joe and the team that they have a good man.

Lastly, the Open Support Team has been announced, so well done to Kevan Glass, Tom Smith and Russel Carr for getting in. I apologise if I've missed anyone. I guess you had all better pack your sun cream and waterproofs.

That's all for this month, keep an eye out for the tweets, Facebook and emails regarding golf days and meetups, and try to attend a couple if you can.

Devon & Cornwall



Neil Rogers
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nrogers@country-
widefarmers.co.uk

A group of greenkeepers took an early morning flight up to Edinburgh for a three-day tour of St Andrews and the surrounding area. On the first day we visited the Old Course, the Castle Course and Fairmont St Andrews, with a look around the historic clubhouse of the R&A. Day two took us to Carnoustie, Kingsbarns and we took in a whisky distillery tour. We finished the tour with a visit to Crail and Ladybank. All wonderful venues that welcomed us with open arms. Our thanks go to Colin Webber and Jon Wood for organising everything for us and all of the course managers for their hospitality.

The section committee would like to thank Justin Manester for his work as treasurer over the past couple of years. Unfortunately he has decided to resign his post due to personal reasons. He will be sorely missed.

If anyone would like to take a position on the committee please contact chairman Jason Brooks.

The next date for your diary is the section championship at Bovey Castle on 26 April. A reminder will go out nearer the time.

South Wales



Andrew Hatcher
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andrewhatcher1@
msn.com

There was a good turnout last month for the Amenity Forum meeting held at The Grove in conjunction with Complete Weed Control. There were many interesting demonstrations and information given.

Check out the Upcoming Events page for details of this season's fixtures.

Congratulation to Rhys and his team at Parc GC on the condition of the course for our spring competition. The results were: 1st, Clive Jones, 37 points on the back nine; 2nd, Darryl Jones, 37 points; 3rd, Tom Howells, 36 points; 4th, Rhys Norville, 32 points; 5th, Ian Kinley, 31 points; longest drive and nearest the pin on 18th, Rhys Norville; nearest the pin on 16th, Ian Kinley.

SECTION NEWS

WE WANT TO HEAR WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON IN YOUR SECTION

Email your news to Karl @bigga.co.uk



Members of the Devon & Cornwall Section visited Scotland this month



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BIGGA South East Region

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SOUTH EAST

Surrey



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This month we had the first event in the Surrey calendar, which was the South East Region Annual Golf and Dinner Day held at Walton Heath. Everyone in the room commented that the course has not been seen in as good condition for March for many a year and Michael Mann and his team should be proud of the work done over the winter. There were many winners of the day, but special mentions should go to some of our fellow Surrey members.

Firstly, Joe Sexton for winning the Scratch Medal with 40 points and I believe a 1 over par performance.

Way to go (Surrey Bowl) partner! Also Surrey won the section team prize with Joe, Bradley Warner and Kevin Day posting the eventual winning scores.

Surrey Bowl Entries need to be made before the date closes! Get your partners ready and contact Roger or Lewis to get entered.

20 April is the free third Thursday seminar hosted by John Ross on Stress Management, held at Merrist Wood College. 16 May's free third Thursday will be hosted by Adam Lawrence and will be held at Sunningdale.

Kent



Ben Adams
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ben.adams@
talktalk.net

Firstly some great news for our section and congratulations to Royal St George's, as in 2020 they will be hosting the Open for the 15th time.

Secondly, it was yet another great turnout for our second educational event of the year, with another full house. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our guest speakers for their time and for all those that supported the event.



Joe Sexton

With the success of attendance for the first two education afternoons, the section is looking at hosting more of these throughout the year. We would welcome ideas of educational topics or speakers that you would like for us to organise. This can be done by contacting us on our new email address kentsection@bigga.co.uk.

By the time you receive your magazine we would have had our first golf event of the year, so I hope all enjoyed and we will post the results in the May edition.

I would like to finish with saying thank you again to all our sponsors for supporting our section and a thank you to the rest of the Kent Section board. Don't forget to get involved and join our Facebook page if you haven't already, 'BIGGA Kent Section'.

East Anglia



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Essex



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co.uk

We held our spring golf event on 28 March at Channels. Sadly the venue closed on 31 March, but the club has been a great host to the section over the years and we have 60 players paying homage for one final hurrah!

From one ending to a new beginning, it is congratulations to George Grimes, course manager at Garon Park and his fiancé Hollie on the birth of their second daughter Penelope Rose.

A new start elsewhere in the section sees Sam Young, course manager at Ilford, on the move to take the reins at West Maling in Kent and save a little travelling time into the bargain.

Young Dougie Fernie will be gaining more time to travel as he takes his well earned retirement. Dougie has served Upminster well for many years as their course manager, hosting many section events on the way. Dougie has been a great ambassador for the industry representing both the Essex and previously Surrey sections. We wish you a happy retirement and hope to catch up at future section golf days.

Filling Dougie's shoes (or bar stool) will be Essex Section stalwart Andy Cracknell. Andy moved from Orsett and has been doing a fantastic job managing the course at Frinton for the past six years. Andy will take up his new post at the end of May. Hainault Forest also welcome a new course manager in a move from Stapleford Abbots.

We wish all those starting new roles within the section the very best of luck.

And finally congratulations to both David Langham and Bill Whybrow who will represent the Essex Section after being selected for the Open Support Team later this year.

London



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Sussex



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WHAT'S ON

SEE OUR NEW EVENTS PAGE FOR DETAILS OF WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR REGION

Email your news to Karl @bigga.co.uk

UPCOMING EVENTS

CONTACT YOUR SECTION SECRETARY TO BOOK A PLACE

Scotland

North: 25 April, Cruden Bay, spring outing, 10.30am-12.30pm tee, £25

Central: 25 April, Golf House Club, Elie, spring outing

West: 9 May, East Kilbride, spring meeting

Northern

North East: 26 April, Bamburgh Castle, spring golf day, 10.45am

Sheffield: 15 May, Sickleholme, spring competition, 1pm tee off

Northern: 20 April, Sandburn Hall, 1.30pm tee off, £20

North West: 27 April, Hesketh, spring golf tournament

North Wales: 27 April, Prestatyn, regional qualifier for BIGGA National, 9.32-11.32am tee off, £20 members, £30 non-members

North West: 23 May, Hart Common, Campey Turf Care Pro-Am

Northern: 13 July, Howley Hall, 1pm tee off, £20

Northern: 14 September, Pontefract, 1pm tee off, £20

Central England

BB&O: 4 May, Camberley Heath, spring golf day, 10am tee off

Mid Anglia: 10 May, Mid Herts, spring golf day and BIGGA National qualifier, 11am tee off

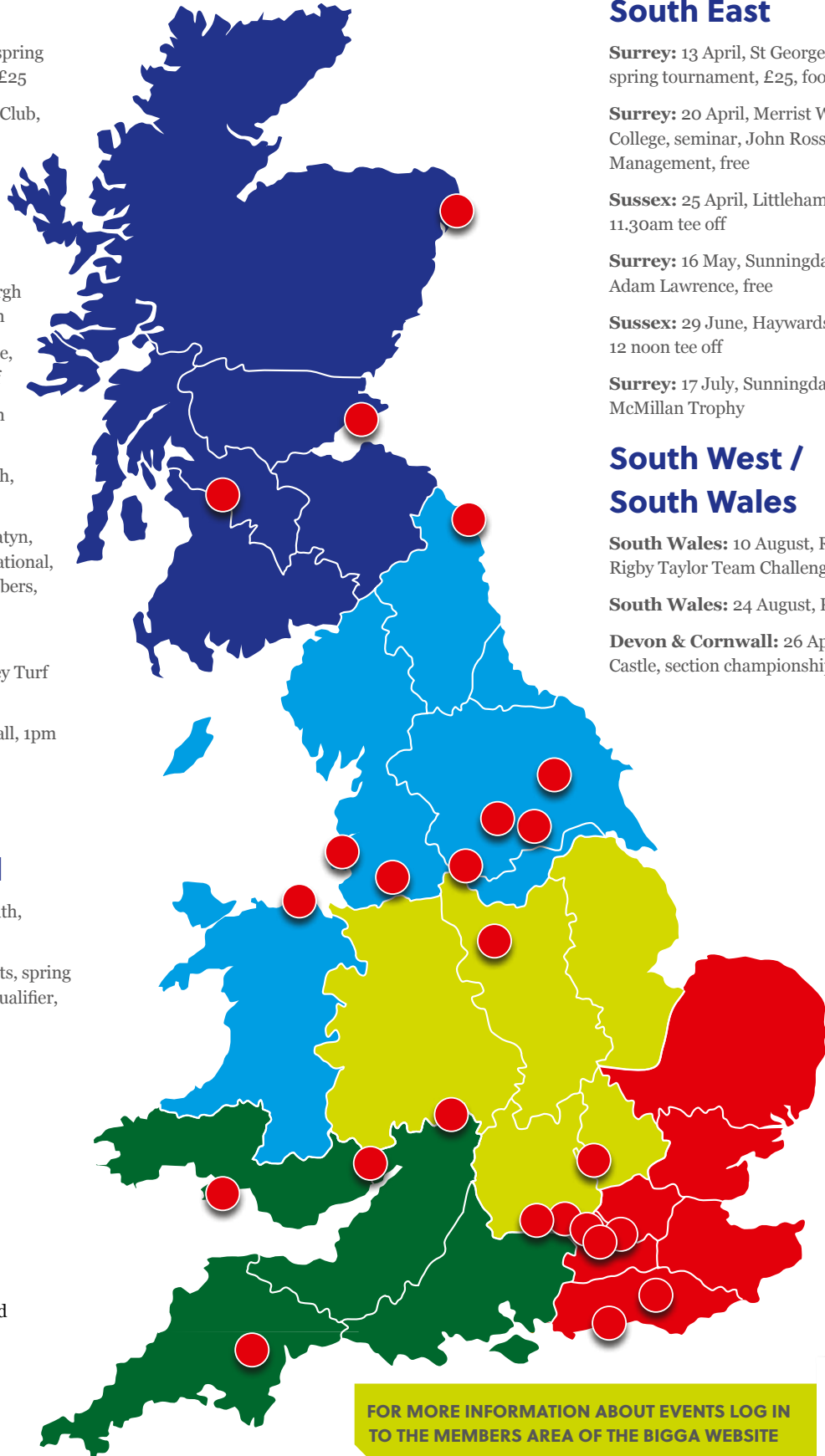
East Midlands: 10 May, Morley Hayes, spring golf day

Midland: 10 May, Broadway, spring competition

BB&O: 12 July, Winter Hill, summer golf day, 10am tee off

Regions

- Scotland/Northern Ireland
- Northern
- Central England
- South West/South Wales
- South East



South East

Surrey: 13 April, St George's Hill, spring tournament, £25, food included

Surrey: 20 April, Merrist Wood College, seminar, John Ross on Stress Management, free

Sussex: 25 April, Littlehampton, 11.30am tee off

Surrey: 16 May, Sunningdale, seminar, Adam Lawrence, free

Sussex: 29 June, Haywards Heath, 12 noon tee off

Surrey: 17 July, Sunningdale, McMillan Trophy

South West / South Wales

South Wales: 10 August, Ross on Wye, Rigby Taylor Team Challenge

South Wales: 24 August, Pennard

Devon & Cornwall: 26 April, Bovey Castle, section championship

UPCOMING REGIONAL EVENTS

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT EVENTS LOG IN TO THE MEMBERS AREA OF THE BIGGA WEBSITE





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Lauren Frazer
Business Development Executive
01347 833832
lauren@bigga.co.uk



Martin Downes has been in the construction industry for over 20 years.

The majority of work has been in the construction, maintenance and remodelling of fields into championship courses throughout Europe.

M Downes Earthworks are involved in prestigious projects across Europe. The company has been chosen to provide specialist services for the renovation of the spectacular L'Albatros course at Le Golf National in France - host of the Ryder Cup 2018. They have also assisted in shaping the Brabazon course at The Belfry and The Evian Resort Golf Club, overlooking Lake Geneva.

The company has been working with leading golf course contractors European Golf Design for the last 10 years.

Martin said: "Creating the perfect contours and surfaces of top class courses depends not just on our extensive ground working capabilities and capacity, but also on the ability to look at

the course designers' plans and bring them to life in the real world environment. We use an expert eye to adjust and improve, according to the lie of the land.

"Accuracy is paramount and that's what makes us the best in the game. We prepare courses which play true and provide players with the challenging details the designer had in mind."

M Downes' specialist course services include: complete construction of courses; creating fairways, bunkers and greens; renovation, reshaping and repair; constructing cart paths; landscaping and drainage; quality assurance.



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



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TIS IRRIGATION SERVICE ENGINEER

TIS (Scotland) Ltd are looking for a Service Engineer to join their team

- Candidates must be able to fulfil a physically demanding role and work as part of a team and as an individual.
- Salary negotiable. Circa £25,000 - £28,000 (after training)
- Onsite training will be given but some irrigation knowledge would be advantageous.
- Vehicle with private mileage included
- Computer Literate
- Contributory pension scheme
- 30 days holiday including bank holidays
- Full driving license required.

For further information or to apply, please email your CV to tis@turfirrigationservices.co.uk by 14 April 2017



SANDOWN PARK GOLF CLUB ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

An exciting opportunity to join our small greenkeeping team at Sandown Park Golf Centre in Esher. Our parkland style setting has three 9 holes courses, grass practice tee and a 36 bay covered driving range. This is an ideal opportunity for an Assistant Greenskeeper looking to forward their career or looking for a new challenge.

The ideal candidate would have had at least one years experience at Assistant Greenskeeper.

NVQ's, PA spraying and Chainsaw Certificates are not essential but would enhance the candidates application. The ideal candidate would also have had experience of course renovation projects have an eye for detail, be self motivated and have a positive working attitude.

Permanent full-time position. 40 hour week, weekend working scheduled on a rota basis. Send your CV and covering letter to: directors@sandownparkgolf.com



SEASONAL GREEN STAFF REQUIRED:

APRIL - NOVEMBER 2017

Golf Course St Leon-Rot, Germany

Desired Experience / Skills

- NVQ level 2/3 or relevant greenkeeping experience
- A high degree of flexibility and willing to work extra hours if required.
- Experience of maintaining or operating Toro irrigation systems a distinct advantage
- Highly motivated and ability to work with own initiative
- Experience of working in a large team with a focus on quality
- Active golf player would be an advantage
- Full driving license

Please send your application with your earliest stating date preferably via e-mail to Ms. Cordula Humbert: Bewerbung@gc-slr.de. Golf Club St Leon-Rot, Opelstraße 30, 68789 St Leon-Rot.



QUALIFIED ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

Woking Golf Club has an opportunity for you to enhance our dedicated team of Greenkeepers to present the course to a standard consistent with a Top 100 Golf Club.

The successful candidate will be required to:

- Be passionate about their role and association with the Club
- Ideally, a golfer or possess knowledge and understanding of the game of Golf
- Be conscientious, flexible and a team player with good communication skills
- Have a keen eye for detail with the ability to produce a high standard of work
- Have a minimum of NVQ Level 2 in Amenity Sports turf and relevant practical greenkeeping

Woking prides itself in its staff welfare and retention and as such offers a package that would reflect this. Please email your C.V to Jo Smith jo@wokinggolfclub.co.uk



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HEAD GREENKEEPER ORMSKIRK GOLF CLUB

A fantastic opportunity has arisen for a Head Greenkeeper at Ormskirk Golf Club, a prestigious course which has played host to the County and PGA Championships in 2016 following many successful years as an Open qualifying venue.

Our plan over the next few years is to return our course to its original health land condition. The successful applicant will be highly motivated and take huge pride in the presentation and layout of the course.

A minimum of 2 years experience as a Head Greenkeeper would be preferable, and they must be able to demonstrate management/budget skills and be fully aware of Health and Safety procedures and recording.

See www.bigga.org.uk advert re application requirements



HEAD GROUNDSMAN ABERDEENSHIRE COUNTRY HOUSE ESTATE

Reports to – Estate Manager
Based at – Sauchen, Aberdeenshire
Contact – 07773718311

Job Purpose - To manage all estate private grounds and maintain all areas to a high standard.

Experience should be around the following but not limited to – a good knowledge of mowing and general grounds care, tree and bush pruning, management of ponds and water ways experience with grounds care machinery, some practical experience with general estate management would be preferable and have a history of working with other team members.

Key responsibilities –

1. Maintaining all grass and wooded areas of the estate to a high standard throughout the year.
2. Maintaining waterways and other areas with assistance from contractors as required.
3. Maintaining other grazing areas and horse arenas on the estate.
4. Carrying out annual shrub, hedge and tree trimming and during with the assistance of contractors as required.
5. Ongoing general maintenance of machinery and estate vehicles.

Liaising with manager on an ongoing basis and working with other team members. Please send a letter of application and CV to james.scullion@linton-house.com

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

Under new ownership since October 2014 Cricket St Thomas Golf Club is growing quickly and rapidly becoming one the leading leisure destinations in the area. As well as operating as a modern forward thinking golf club they offer bar, restaurant, functions and wedding facilities with a reputation for welcoming all.

We are looking to recruit an Assistant Green keeper to join our green keeping team.

Applicants should be hard working, conscientious, passionate about their work and have a keen eye for detail. They should be qualified to NVQ level 2 minimum and have at least 2 years experience. Ideally they would hold PA1, PA2 and PA6 spraying certificates, a full driving licence and have a sound knowledge of machinery maintenance.

This is an excellent opportunity to join a fast growing business which offers a great career opportunity. In return we offer a competitive salary, use of the Club facilities and other benefits.

Applicants should apply either in writing or by email enclosing a covering letter and full CV to: Liam Clarke, Cricket St Thomas Golf Club, Cricket St Thomas, Chard, Somerset, TA20 4DG or email liam@cricketstthomasgolfclub.co.uk

HEAD GREENKEEPER TADMARTON HEATH GC

On the retirement of our Course Manager after 25 years of service An opportunity has arisen for the position of Head Green Keeper at what is considered one of the regions finest courses, established in 1922. The applicants should have meet the following criteria

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Experience as a Head Green Keeper or Deputy Head with good man management skills. | 5. CS 30 and 31 chainsaw certificates. |
| 2. Knowledge of heathland golf courses. | 6. Be conversant with all H&S and COSH regulations. |
| 3. Qualified to NVQ 3. | 7. Be conversant with Purchasing and Budget controls. |
| 4. Spraying Cert PA1 2 & 6 chemical application licenses. | |

An Attractive salary package will be offered to the successful applicant. Application in writing with a CV to: The General Manager, Tadmarton Heath GC, Wigginton, Banbury OX15 5HL. Or: secretary@tadmartongolf.com



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Sunningdale Golf Club wishes to recruit Assistant Greenkeepers and Apprentice Assistant Greenkeepers. Working as part of a world class team in the greenkeeping industry these positions offer excellent opportunities for progression and career development.

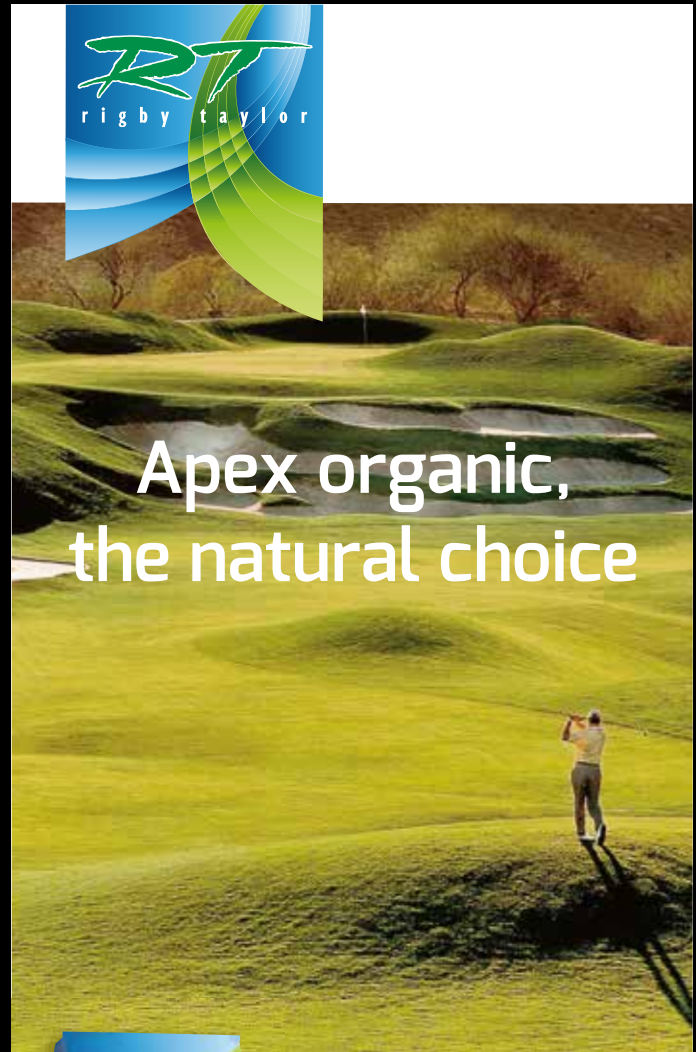
On a day to day basis you will contribute to the maintenance and development of the golf course, its practice facilities and the surrounding estate and be part of our Tournament teams.

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- Platinum Clubs of the World: Ranked No 14
- Golf Course Architecture Magazine World Top 100: Old Course @ No 22 and New Course @ No 53
- Golf Digest Magazine World Top 100: Old Course @ No 23 and New Course @ No 92

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

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PONTICUM BATTLE HELPS BIRCH BLOSSOM

Ellesmere is a parkland course with many beautiful golfing holes, namely the par three ninth, which would not look out of place at the US Masters, said BIGGA Sustainability Executive James Hutchinson.

The course is situated in Worsley, Manchester, and has a reputation of being managed to the highest standard.

However, over time a non-native shrub began marching through the course, causing extensive damage to the environment it was growing in. This shrub was planted on many golf courses in the sixties and seventies where architects, club professionals and the general committee members were hoping to mimic Augusta National with this shrub's green foliage and bright purple flowers.

It didn't work.

The flora in question is Rhododendron (Ponticum), which damages the soil it is growing in by releasing a free phenol via its new leaves. A phenol is a form of

acid, and rhododendron's release a type called diterpenes, which damages the soil to a point where the only other plant can live is another Ponticum. This causes an environmental disaster which, as of 2010, is on Schedule 9 of The Wildlife and Countryside Act as it presents a threat to native flora.

With this in mind, the greenkeepers at Ellesmere, led by Course Manager Jonathon Roberts, have been performing a brilliant task in removing Ponticums from their golf course - with the last few have recently been removed. And it won't be long before flora and fauna become more plentiful throughout the site.

One more thing to note about Ellesmere is the fact it has one of the oldest and most charismatic silver birch trees to be found anywhere! This chap is about 140 years old and is a rarity of the highest order as birch usually only grow to about 80 years old in the UK. Thus, by removing the Ponticum from the course, the team are allowing our native flora to grow without competition.



Ellesmere



Ellesmere's Silver Birch



Rhododendron prior to removal



The same area as above, but with the rhododendron removed



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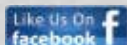
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