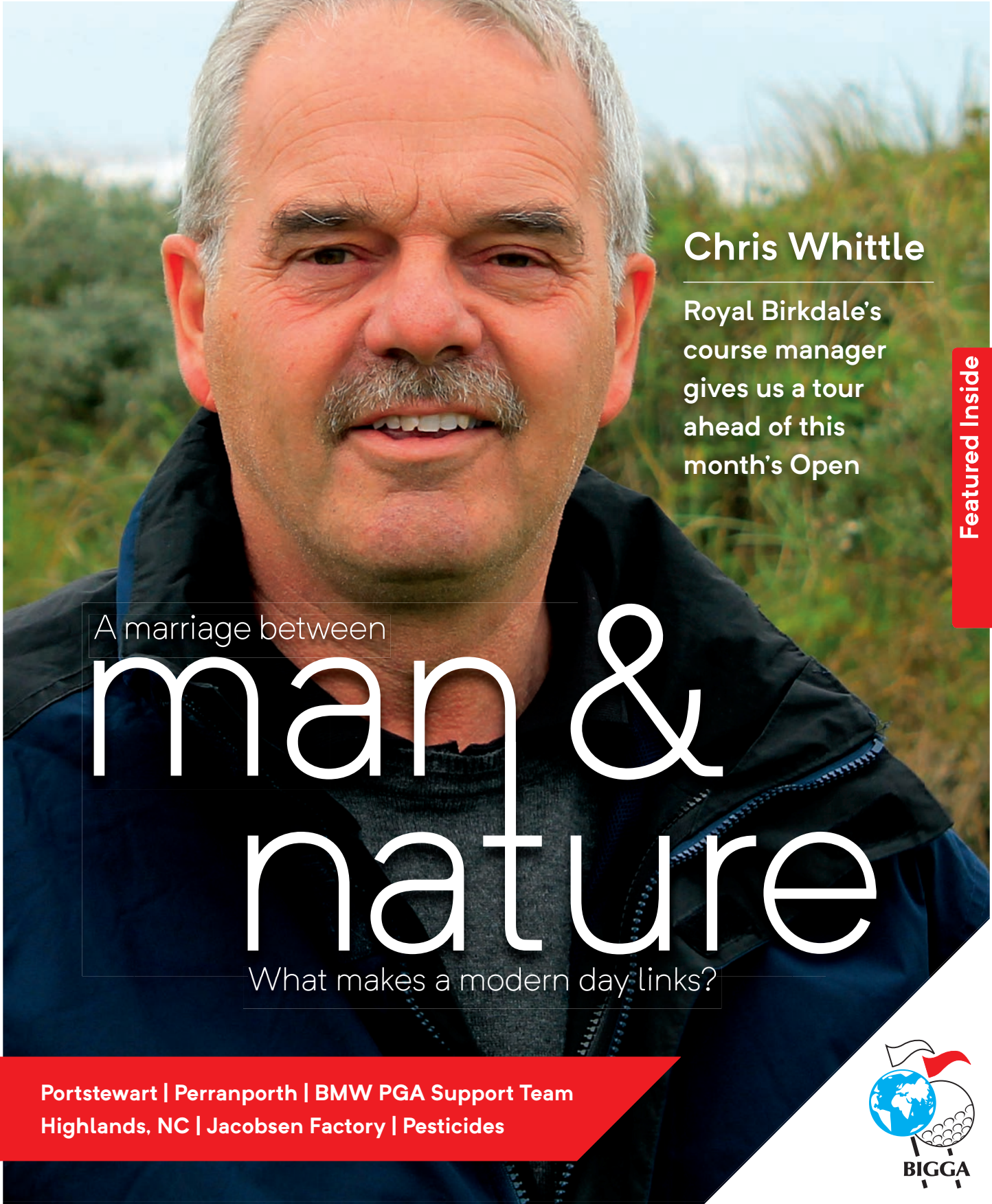




GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

£5.50 | JULY 2017



Chris Whittle

Royal Birkdale's course manager gives us a tour ahead of this month's Open

Featured Inside

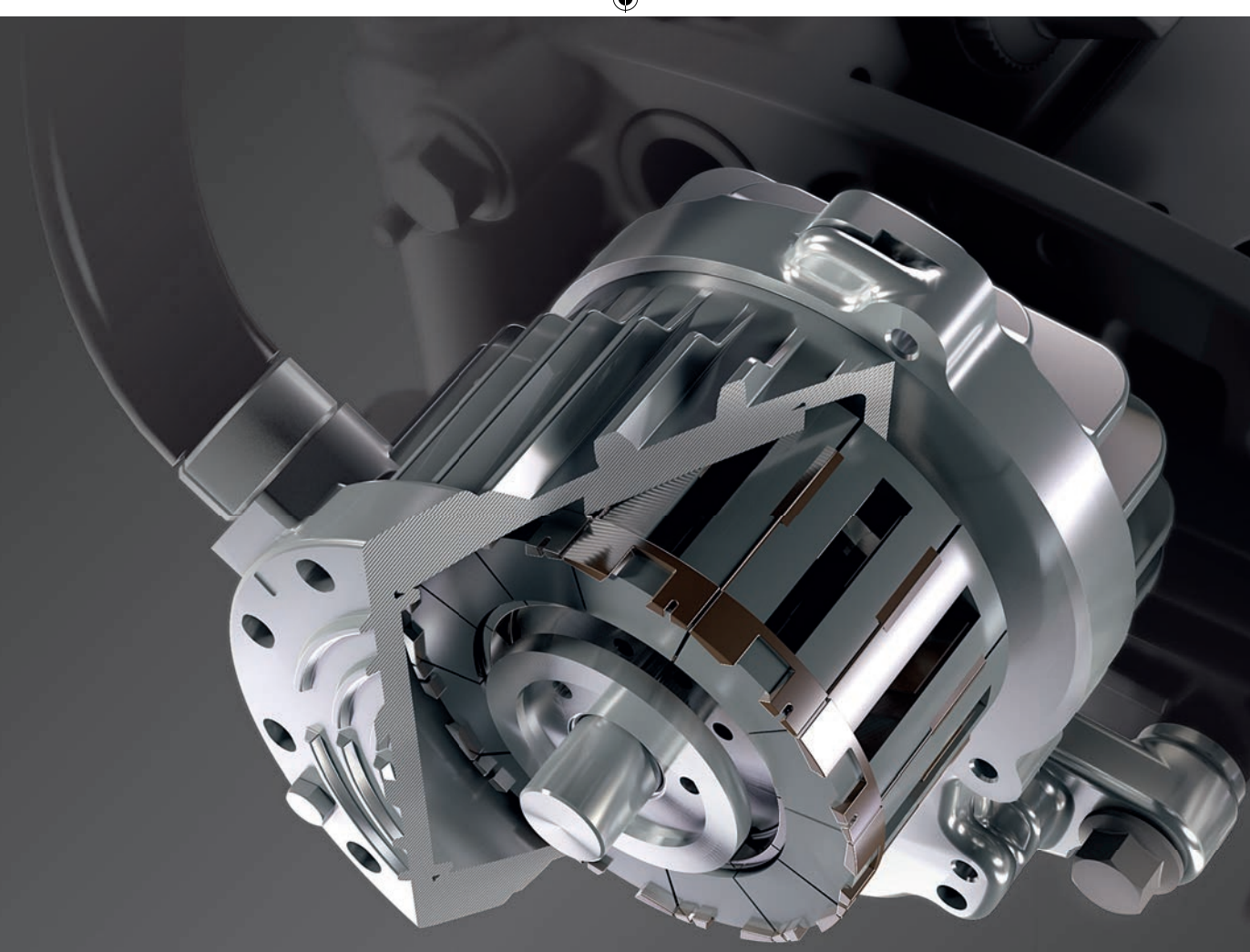
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BIGGA General Manager
Tracey Maddison | tracemaddison@bigga.co.uk

BIGGA Finance & Procurement Manager
Steve Wragg | steve@bigga.co.uk

Contact Us
BIGGA House, Aldwark, Alne, York, YO61 1UF
info@bigga.co.uk | www.bigga.org.uk
Tel — 01347 833800 | Fax — 01347 833801

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



Editorial

Editor
Karl Hansell
Tel — 01347 833829
karl@bigga.co.uk
@karlhansell



Production

Design & Artwork Production
Libbie Waddleton
libbie@bigga.co.uk
Tel — 01347 833817



Advertising

Business Development Manager
Jill Rodham
Tel — 01347 833800 ext 519
jill@bigga.co.uk
@JillyPops12



Printing

Warners Midlands Plc, The Maltings, Manor Lane, Bourne, Lincolnshire PE10 9PH
Tel — 01778 391000 | Fax — 01778 394269

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ISSN: 0961— 6977
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Welcome



The BIGGA Open Support team at Wentworth 2017



Chief Executive Jim Croxton

Golf fans from all over the globe will watch as The Open returns to Royal Birkdale this month, and I'm delighted that once again the hard work of BIGGA members will be at the heart of the championship's success.

From the decades of hard work put into the links by Course Manager Chris Whittle and his staff, to the BIGGA Support Team members who will be on hand to assist with course preparation, the association receives a great deal of exposure during The Open. This makes the championship a key event as we continue our mission to increase awareness of the hard work of greenkeepers across the sport.

Coincidentally, it was the 1991 Open at Royal Birkdale that was the first I ever attended. I watched as Mark Calcavecchia missed the cut, handing his clubs to the greenkeeper who was attending his match as he stormed down the 18th hole. Support Team members are used to being given souvenirs in thanks for their efforts, but an

almost complete set of clubs from a Major champion was unheard of. I pretty much fell in love with The Open that year, but little did I know that 26 years later I'd be back at Royal Birkdale, working on behalf of the greenkeepers to ensure this great profession is represented at the highest levels of the golf industry.

Chris Whittle has enjoyed one of the most charmed careers of any greenkeeper in history and I'm sure the course will be in incredible condition for this, his fifth and final Open. Best of luck to you and your team Chris, and I hope the conditions are such that you are able to show off Royal Birkdale in all its glory.

Summer got underway with a bang during June, with a record-breaking heatwave increasing the pressure put onto greenkeeping teams who were already up against it thanks to yet another challenging spring. It is times like this, when the turf is placed under incredible stress, that our members show their adaptability and the years of education and experience begin to pay off.

However, it was sad to see on social media so many greenkeepers having to put in ridiculous hours due to dilapidated and ineffective irrigation systems. The expectation to produce outstanding courses has never been higher and our members undoubtedly have the education and talent to meet and exceed them. But golf clubs have to take a long-term strategic look at their businesses and give our guys a chance with appropriate infrastructure and machinery.

For many, the recognition of golfers is reward enough, but that doesn't mean it isn't also nice for your efforts to be acknowledged by the wider industry. With championship season in full flow and greenkeeping teams overcoming various challenges to produce incredible playing surfaces, I would urge you to consider nominating a greens team you know for the annual BIGGA Awards. Teams are judged on merit rather than budget, and the confidence boost your staff receive from just being nominated could be just the jolt needed to take the course to the next level.

Welcome



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From the Editor



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

It's time for links to take centre stage

It's Open season, that wonderful time of the year when the eyes of the golfing world descend upon our coastal courses.

For the viewing public July sees a shift from the manicured perfection you see most weeks on the PGA and European tours towards the rough and ready links courses of the British Isles.

Bernard Findlay and his team at Portstewart are first up, playing host to the Dubai Duty Free Irish Open. A week later and the Aberdeen Asset Management Scottish Open will be held at Dundonald Links, where Frank Clarkson and his team have been busy preparing the Ayrshire course for its biggest tournament to date.

And all of this is in preparation for The pen, which returns to Royal Birkdale for the 10th time. Course Manager Chris Whittle has seen it all, and this will be the third Open he has hosted at the club, and his fifth overall. After so long at the pinnacle of the game there's very little Chris doesn't know about hosting a major tournament and so it was fantastic that he took the time to sit and chat to Greenkeeper International about his preparations for the tournament.

Whether you work on a links, parkland or any other style of course, I guarantee you will learn something from Chris. As BIGGA members we're privileged to have such a direct line to the top of the industry.

While we're on the subject of The Open, good luck to everyone who will be heading

to Royal Birkdale as part of the BIGGA Support Team. It's an incredible experience and you'll come away with stories to tell for many years to come. Just ask Russell Black, who was on the Support Team at Royal Birkdale in 1998 and missed the last bus back to the hotel. Thankfully he was rescued, by none other than the recently-crowned Open champion Mark O'Meara.

Far from the links of the British coast, high in the Appalachian mountains of North Carolina, I recently met one of the rising stars of the American course superintendents' scene.

If you think you have little in common with a links venue, you should read the story of Highlands Country Club and Brian Stiehler MG, who attained his Master Greenkeeper Certificate earlier this year. There aren't many temperate rainforests in the UK, but don't be mistaken for thinking there's nothing you can learn from Brian's experiences. Effective man management and building team morale are universal, no matter where in the world you are.

Finally, I just wanted to thank everyone who gave us such great feedback on last month's edition of Greenkeeper International, which saw us launch a dyslexia-friendly version of the magazine online. This has been something we have been passionate about introducing for some time and to my knowledge is pretty much a first across the industry. If you'd like more information get in touch by emailing karl@bigga.co.uk.

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When your course endures 96 inches of rain and you have to change half your workforce every season, you need to be on top of your game. BIGGA's latest Master Greenkeeper talked to us about producing a golf course in the temperate rainforests of North Carolina's Appalachian mountains.



42 Chris Whittle

Chris is the first to admit that he's had a charmed career. Having never worked anywhere other than on some of the UK's top links courses, he's also one of the most experienced course managers on The Open rota. He gave us a great insight into preparations for this year's championship.



54 Bernard Findlay

Northern Ireland is enjoying a renaissance of its links courses, with Royal Portrush due to host The Open in 2019. Just down the road and Bernard has overseen a transformation of Portstewart, host of this year's Irish Open. He gave Greenkeeper International a tour of the spectacular seaside links.



62 Paul Morris

Paul is managing director at GBR Technology. He has a degree in chemistry from Oxford University and an MBA through the Open University. Paul joined GBR Technology eight years ago and this month discusses how wetting agents can be an important tool for today's greenkeepers.



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Preparations are underway as the greatest tournament in golf returns to Southport

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How using a wetting agent can help improve the moisture uptake of your turfgrass

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James Whittick of Velvit discusses how to make the most of your fertiliser budget

Across the Board



Across the Board

Les Howkins Chairman

Well at last summer is in full swing. As I write it is over 30 degrees centigrade and I am watching the course turn brown in front of my eyes. The longest day has been and gone and all my meetings at work are about winter programme and autumn greens maintenance.

It only seems like five minutes since it was the end of winter and we had the usual moans and groans. I suppose this highlights the need for good annual planning and communicating with the golfers about how quickly the seasons change, and the effect these have on the golf course.

One of the articles in GI back in April discussed the Augusta Syndrome. The article was widely discussed on social media, with a mixed reception to some of the things it suggested. Reading the piece again in the middle of summer, while deep into planning and budgeting, the article has

struck a chord. As suggested in the piece, I am aiming to get all winter work done by Christmas, and then the course tidied up and ready for the season by the end of February. Once the weather picks up the grass growth will take care of itself. It will be interesting to see how this all pans out.

We have had the June meeting of the BIGGA Board of Management and plans are advancing well for the new much-needed and long-awaited website. We have appointed a developer that has come highly recommended and they have demonstrated real professionalism in the early part of the process. As a company they have huge experience in websites for member associations, which made them very attractive to us. There is a lot of work to be done over the next few months, but so far things are looking good.

BIGGA will once again have its Tournament Support Team at The Open, with approximately 50 volunteers raking bunkers and being on standby to help with whatever the week may throw up at the fabulous Royal Birkdale course. I am sure the members of the team will have a great week, with lots of networking, making of new friends and feeling part of one of the world's major sporting events. I hope the

weather is kind and the team at Royal Birkdale has a fantastic tournament.

I would like to congratulate BIGGA board member Scott Reeves on completing his Ironman 70.3 triathlon. Scott has been training for a few years and set himself a target time for the event. If I'm honest the time he said sounded a bit ambitious so I threw down a wager. Well, Scott beat the time I challenged him to achieve and in return I donated a sum of money to the BIGGA Benevolent Fund.

It's important we all keep the Benevolent Fund at the forefront of our mind as we need to keep raising money so we can make a real difference to fellow greenkeepers or their families in times of hardship.

Mal Mitchell from Patshull Park GC near Wolverhampton is running a golf day next month to help raise funds for the Benevolent Fund, and places are still available. I hope it goes well and my thanks go out to Mal, all the people at his club and those from all over the country who are helping him out with prizes and the running of the event.

Enjoy the rest of the summer and long may this nice weather continue. To all you guys up in the North West where it is probably still raining, let's hope you get a decent dry spell soon!



Scott Reeves completed his ironman 70.3 challenge

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.



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BERNHARD



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



ICL Continue to Learn scholarship

ICL's unmissable opportunity to gain BTME education returns for 2018

Newsdesk

The Continue to Learn programme at BTME 2018 is quickly shaping up to be the biggest and best event ever, and BIGGA has once again teamed up with our partners ICL to provide a massive opportunity for members to get involved.

BIGGA and ICL understand that attendance at Continue to Learn comprises a significant investment for yourself and your club and therefore you may never have been able to attend before now.

That's where the ICL Continue to Learn Scholarship can help. The scholarship offers five BIGGA members the opportunity to attend the education programme by providing three nights' hotel accommodation and a 15-hour education bundle, worth approximately £500.

Lyle Davidson, deputy head greenkeeper at The Carrick on Loch Lomond, was a part of the first ever scholarship programme at BTME 2017.

He said: "Winning a place on the ICL Continue to Learn Scholarship was brilliant. Being one of the first group of five scholars, sponsored by ICL, to have the opportunity to attend the amazing education, BTME and to network with other greenkeepers was invaluable.

"I returned to my golf club with renewed passion for the job and many new friends.

"I would urge anyone to apply for the ICL Continue to Learn scholarship, after all, you've got to be in it to win it!"

To be eligible for a scholarship, you must be a full member or assistant greenkeeper (in training) member. You should also be CPD active and be able to attend BTME and Continue to Learn 2018, from 21-25 January.



The ICL Continue to Learn 2017 scholars with BIGGA's Sami Strutt

ICL's Ed Carter, turf and landscape – sales and development manager, said: "Last year's ICL scholarship was such a huge success and we're delighted to be able to again offer this great opportunity.

"As BIGGA Partners we're keen to ensure that every BIGGA member has access to the incredible education on offer, and this scholarship is a great way for greenkeepers who may not otherwise be able to afford to attend BTME and Continue to Learn to get involved."

For more information about the ICL Continue to Learn Scholarship or to apply for a place, scan the QR code or visit www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/ICLschol2018



BIGGA Head of Member Development Sami Strutt said: "ICL has long recognised the significant investment that greenkeepers make in developing themselves throughout their careers. BIGGA members are an ambitious bunch, no matter what course they are at or where they live.

"But sometimes financial constraints mean they aren't able to take advantage of the great opportunities made available to BIGGA members, and so it's fantastic that ICL will once again help five members head to Harrogate for what promises to be another incredible week of education."



Perennial partner



BIGGA is proud to announce that it has joined Perennial as a platinum partner.

Perennial is the UK's only charity dedicated to helping people who work in horticulture when times get tough.

Jim Croxton, BIGGA CEO, said: "We have worked with Perennial for many years and it's fantastic that we have been able to join the charity's roll of honour as a platinum partner.

"It's a sad fact that some turf professionals fall upon hard times and, alongside our own BIGGA Benevolent Fund, we are proud to support a charity that is there to lend a helping hand to anyone who needs them."

For more information about Perennial, visit www.perennial.org.uk

GI Dogs On Course



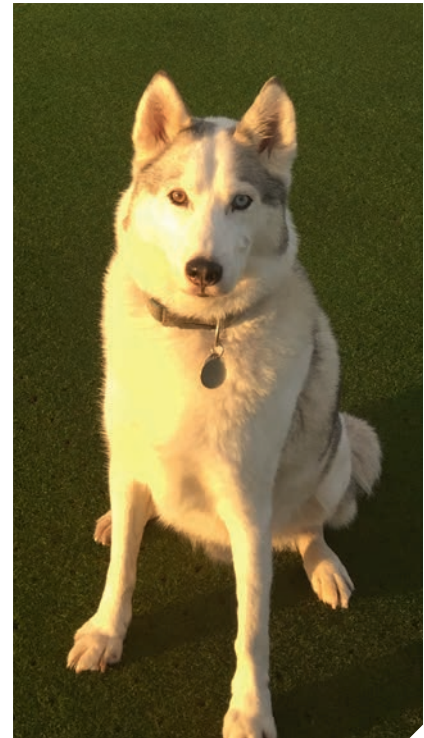
Name: Max
Owner: Graeme Beatt
Course: Royal Portrush
Breed: Husky
Age: 10
Favourite treat: Chicken

Favourite spot on the course:
 5th green, looking out at the beach

Naughtiest moment:
 He snuck into the neighbour's house as a puppy and came out with their Sunday roast chicken

My dog is happiest when...
 Running around the links behind my buggy.

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



Newsdesk

Wetting Agents

Hydrozone and Aquazone STRI tested in 2016



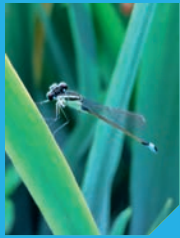
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 Units 6-8, Jupiter House, Calleva Park,
 Aldermaston, Reading, Berkshire, RG7 8NN
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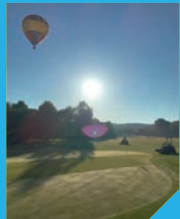


This month @BIGGALtd



@coventrygc

Captured this one of many damselflies busying around the 12th pond today #beautiful



@charliejaylacey

What a scorcher today was! Cutting greens in 18 degrees at 6am @oakparkgolf



@avrogreenkeeper

One minute you're cutting rough minding your own business, the next you're catching a swarm of honeybees



@PHay01

Mr #Toad keeping a watch on the #greens staff this morning @GullaneGolfClub



@Gkbmachines

Thank you for visiting us @BIGGALtd



@Mike2391

Rare Bumble Bee Orchids making an appearance @WinchesterGolf



@BlesicSportsU

Fantastic day awesome ride from @johnwaite3

First wave of speakers revealed for Continue to Learn 2018

BIGGA is excited to announce the first speakers who have confirmed their availability to present at Continue to Learn 2018.

Continue to Learn will again be held at BTME in Harrogate during January and the education programme has grown to become the largest for golf greenkeepers outside of the USA.

Encompassing more than 240 hours of varied and high quality content, the learning is suitable for all those in greenkeeping, regardless of their position or length of time in the industry.

Sami Strutt, BIGGA's head of Member Development said "Continue to Learn at BTME has grown exponentially over the last seven years, with almost double the number of education hours being delivered.

Through responses to the Members Choice survey, BIGGA members play a key role in the design of the annual programme.

Sami added: "We're excited to be welcoming many new speakers to the event as well as welcoming back several firm favourites.

"The programme will be launched at the beginning of October and we expect it to be as popular as ever."

The speakers confirmed so far are:
Micah Woods, Asian Turfgrass Centre;
Adrian Mortram, Robin Hume Associates Ltd;
Bob Taylor, STRI;
Lorna D Sheldon, LDS International;
Paul Miller, Lecturer in Golf Course Management;
Mark Hunt, Headland Amenity;
Michael Astrop, Coach The Mind;
Alan Gange & Francesca Baylis, Royal Holloway University;
Frank Newberry, Frank Newberry Seminars;
Eddie Ainsworth, Avro Golf Club;
James Bledge, Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club;
Wendy Cole, The R&A;
Adam Moeller, USGA.

Continue to Learn at BTME 2018 will see the launch of a new event, specifically for young greenkeepers. Sami said: "Working with BIGGA's Young Greenkeepers Committee, the programme will include sessions relevant to the audience. The opportunity to network with other young greenkeepers and to meet industry figures who could help with career progression will prove invaluable for our younger members."

Further speakers and events will be announced as the October launch of Continue to Learn at BTME 2018 draws nearer.

Continue to Learn at BTME 2018 takes place from Sunday 21-Wednesday 24 January 2018 at Harrogate Convention Centre, North Yorkshire, UK. The education programme overlaps with the BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition that takes place from Tuesday 23-Thursday 25 January 2018.



Dr. Micah Woods (centre) with Nicer Landas and Boy Escaño
Source: Asian Turfgrass Centre

GI Around The Globe



Name: Eoin Moroney
Club: Hauger Golfklubb, Norway,

What is the most unusual feature of your course?

Hauger Golfklubb is renowned for being a very undulating course with some very steep inclines and many difficult greens. One stand out feature is that you can see 17 of the 18 holes from the clubhouse area, which is a big benefit when hosting tournaments

How would you describe the style of course that you manage and what are its most defining features?

Hauger's design is based on an inland links style with some very challenging par 4's offering a lot of risk and reward in shots. The course measures 6,300m and its main attraction is that we have many tees to vary the course up for different tournaments.

How does managing a course in your country vary from the UK?

The biggest challenge we have is the climate and the damage that can bring on a yearly basis. Every season is certainly different and it is really a mixed bag as far as

how the course survives the winter months. Managing a golf course in the Nordic climate demands patience and a willingness to except varying conditions from season to season.

What is the best part of living in your country?

The Nordic countries are renowned for their high quality of life and the laid-back lifestyle that goes with it. The two contrasting climates of winter and summer are a bonus for greenkeepers in terms of getting a break from a long season of hard work.

What is the worst?

I guess trying to defy the odds by producing high class playing conditions is the biggest challenge we have in this country

How does the weather affect your work?

The weather has a huge bearing on the outcome of our course every year. The course conditions coming out of the winter period can vary greatly and we suffer a lot from crown hydration, winter desiccation, ice kill and snow mould. Our focus is to minimise these different problems and ensure best possible conditions in the springtime.

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

At Hauger we have a rich wildlife that is always at the forefront of our thinking. We have a big population of both small and large salamander in our ponds.



Stoats, badgers, foxes and frogs are also regularly observed on the course while we also have a large variety of birds including Eurasian Skylarks, ducks and blackbirds. We have regular visits from reindeer, roe deer and moose that live in the surrounds woodland areas.

What is your club management structure like?

Our club is owned by our members (shareholders), who elect a board of directors who make decisions on any major company issues. We have a general manager who in turn manages the daily running of the club along with the course manager, secretary and head professional.

What is the public perception of golf in your country?

Golf is not a very traditional sport in Norway with the first big golf boom coming in the late 90's. Ever since then golf has been growing steadily but

for the moment has peaked in terms of numbers playing and golf courses being built. Our most successful female golfer is Suzann Pettersen, while we are still waiting for someone to put Norway on the golfing map on the European Tour.

Why do you choose to be a BIGGA member?

I'm a BIGGA member because I enjoy the interaction it gives me from being an international member. It is a great way to keep up with the latest industry news and for me it is good for networking, especially attending BTME every year to find suitable candidates for seasonal positions I have on offer at Hauger.

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

I would say always be willing to give it a proper go and indulge yourself in the language and culture.



Young Greenkeepers' Committee

Representing the youth of the sports turf management industry

Young Greenkeepers' Committee

Young greenkeepers from all over the country are invited to Northumberland to learn more about how to create traditional revetted bunkers.

Bunker Camp 2017 has been confirmed to run from Monday 13 November until Thursday 23 November.

The event will be held at Dunstanburgh Castle across nine days. Young greenkeepers can arrange to visit the Embleton course, on the Northumberland coast, for as many of the days as they are able.

The final day has been arranged as an education day, with presentations being given from James Hutchinson discussing ecology and Adam Newton of the STRI.

Allan Patterson from Turnberry will discuss the changes at the club, while James Bledge from Royal Cinque Ports will also speak.

Frequently asked questions about bunker camp are:

Is the YGC a northern group?

No, this is not the case. The YGC are a national group with representatives from all five regions and one overseas representative.

Why is the bunker camp always at Dunstanburgh Castle Golf Club?

The bunker camp is held at Dunstanburgh Castle thanks to the support of the owner of the course, who provides accommodation and catering to all who attend. If you would like to arrange something similar near you then please do get in touch with either your local YGC representative or your regional administrator.

Who can attend the camp?

Bunker camp is open to any young greenkeeper to attend to not only learn about designing, installing and revetting bunkers but also to help develop your networking skills and contacts.



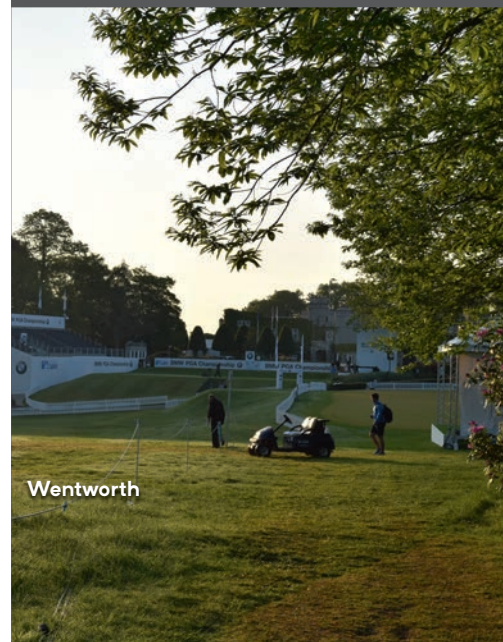
Bunker camp at Dunstanburgh Castle

Charlie reflects on Wentworth experience

YGC member Charlie Simper, of Hadley Wood, attended the BMW PGA at Wentworth as part of the BIGGA Support Team. He said: "It turned out to be a great tournament yet again. I was on bunker raking duties for the weekend and was lucky enough to be grouped with the Big Easy, Ernie Els, and last year's champion Chris Wood, among others.

"It was great to see all the changes Kenny Mackay and his team have made to the course since my last visit, and as usual produced an immaculate golf course for the week.

"This is an experience I would recommend for any BIGGA member interested in volunteering, I guarantee you won't regret it.



Wentworth

Fairhaven achieves GEO Certificate

Fairhaven in Lancashire has joined an elite group of sustainability-minded clubs.

The Lytham St Anne's club has been awarded GEO certification possessed by golf clubs in forty countries.

GEO certification acknowledges clubs that have done the most to promote sustainability at their course.

Fairhaven head greenkeeper Peter Simpson said: "We are very pleased to have got certification. It required us to gather a lot of information about things we do around the course and it's great that we have been able to join such an elite group."

Fairhaven achieved GEO Certified status via the OnCourse programme, and more information about this can be found at www.golfenvironment.org.

Peter reserved special praise for Fairhaven member Steve Jackson, who put a huge amount of effort into preparing the data for the assessment.

James Hutchinson, BIGGA's sustainability executive, completed an ecological management plan for the club. He said: "It was a pleasure to assist such an environmentally minded golf course through the OnCourse section and then on to the consequent GEO certificate.

"I'm over the moon with the outcome so congratulations to Peter and the team."

Fairhaven hosted an Open qualifying event during June and professional golf has been played there since 1934. Among the rare and protected species of flora found on the site are marsh helleborine, large flowered hemp nettle and creeping willow.

OnCourse is an easy-to-use web app that supports and promotes the social and environmental value of golf facilities. OnCourse is managed by the not-for-profit Golf Environment Organization and is supported by The R&A and partners European Tour, John Deere, Jacobsen and Toro, among others.



8th and 9th holes



Early morning dew, 6th green

Newsdesk

TPC Sawgrass 2018



JOHN DEERE

Be part of it

Now is your chance to join the maintenance team preparing the course for the Championship at TPC Sawgrass 2018. Once again we've teamed up with John Deere to offer one full member from each of BIGGA's five regions the chance to be involved with golf's 'Fifth Major'.

To find out more and apply visit www.bigga.org.uk/members/john-deere-tpc-sawgrass-volunteer-programme-2018. Applications must be received by 2 September 2017

GI Ecology

By James Hutchinson
BIGGA
Sustainability
Executive



Background: Eden GC's 'dinosaur egg'
Left: Adam Williams' clumsy buzzard

The stories greenkeepers have sent in this past month have been a little on the amusing side, with tales of dinosaur eggs and raptors finding themselves in embarrassing positions.

Take this unfortunate buzzard, for instance. Adam Williams sent in this snap of a feathered idiot which somehow got itself wedged in a hazel fence. After some careful handling and negotiating of sharp claws, the bird was released back to tell its pals, "you'll never guess what happened to me today".

Or how about this owl which was found injured by the team at Mid Herts GC — did you ever see such a fed up looking bird? Talk about keeping a beady eye on someone.

Elsewhere the madness continued. A large egg appeared in the Eden Course's type 1 stone delivery and after careful consideration by the greenkeeping fraternity it was deemed to be a dinosaur egg. I'm unsure as to the authenticity of this statement, but Dr Paul Miller suggested "sitting on it to see what hatches". Yes, thanks for the help guys.

On a more grown up note, Kevan Glass' bees are doing fine! Look at these beauties at Brokenhurst Manor in Hampshire. Theirs is an excellent project and one which is becoming more and more popular throughout the UK and Ireland.

A good amount of baby deer pics found their way into my inbox lately along with this snapper from Iain Watson — always great to hear that our courses are breeding grounds for all types of animals.

Keep those sightings coming to james.hutchinson@bigga.co.uk or @Ecology1BIGGA on Twitter.

Right: Mid Herts' owl
Below: Richard Roberts' image of a Reeves' pheasant

Right: Brokenhurst Manor's bee hives
Below: Iain Watson's baby deer



Ecology

GI Ecology sponsored by



An ecological community is a term used to describe all the living organisms that live and interact in a particular location.

Golf courses have their own ecological community based upon its grassland habitat, which could also include lakes, streams, sand dunes, heathland, trees and woodland. This rich diversity of habitats encourages biodiversity,

a term which describes the variability of living organisms found there.

Introducing red, hard and sheep's fescues, as in Rigby Taylor's Pure Fescue, into roughs is an example of enriching the ecological habitat, as is the sowing of the 'Super Blue Bee' nectar mixture from the Euroflor range.

Patshull Park charity golf day

A charity golf day is being held in aid of the BIGGA Benevolent Fund.

Taking place at Patshull Park near Wolverhampton, the event is being held on 30 August, with tee times between 9am and 1pm.

The event has been organised by Head Greenkeeper Mal Mitchell, who in 2015 was part of a team who walked 60 miles from Stocksbridge to BIGGA HQ to raise money for the fund. He said: "Hopefully nobody will ever need to use the Benevolent Fund, but it's nice to know that it's there should anyone need it."

"We have had a fantastic response so far. The industry has come forward in great numbers and I am so grateful to everyone for the support we have received from all over the country."

The cost is £160 per team of four, with food included and a variety of prizes on offer. All proceeds will go to the BIGGA Benevolent Fund, which works with past and present members of BIGGA and their families to provide relief from poverty.

For more information or to book a place, contact Mal Mitchell on 07971 132064 or email malcolm.mitchell573@btinternet.com



Newsdesk

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Membership Team
01347 833800 (option 1)



Tracey Maddison
General Manager

traceymaddison@bigga.co.uk



Elaine Jones
Membership Executive

elaine@bigga.co.uk



Rachael Duffy
Events & Membership Executive

rachael@bigga.co.uk

Membership

Full Members Personal
Accident Helpline
0121 698 8046 / 43

Greenkeepers
Legal Assistance
0808 181 9194

Lifestyle Counselling
Helpline
0333 000 2082

Membership

Latest news and information from the BIGGA Membership Team

Have you joined a turf club?



Andy Brown with plug and Julian Covey

Turf Clubs are a great opportunity to gain education and meet other members in an informal setting.

Events are held throughout the year at various locations. If you've never been to a Turf Club, or if you're thinking of volunteering your course for a visit, we thought we'd take a look at one of the latest meetings, to give an insight into what goes on during the day.

Recently members of the South Coast Section were treated to a great Turf Club day at Boundary Lakes, the brand new course attached to The Ageas Bowl, home to Hampshire Cricket Club.

Around 40 members attended the visit, and were given an excellent talk from Course Manager Andy Brown and Julian Covey, who has been instrumental with the build since day one.

Andy has only recently arrived at Boundary Lakes, having previously been head greenkeeper at Goodwood.

Highcliffe Castle Head
Greenkeeper Mike Cartwright

attended the Turf Club and said: "Andy has certainly hit the ground running and has a snagging list as long as your arm, yet by the time you read this the course will be open.

"The course looks great and will definitely be on a lot of people's 'must play' list. The whole site has undergone a massive facelift since I worked there many moons ago. The cricket ground and stands are world class, while the hotel and club entrance really look as if you truly have arrived somewhere special."

Around 1 million tons of landfill was used to shape the course, built at a cost of £4m.

The first greens were sown out in May 2015 using fescue, and the greens team have already achieved impressive root depth.

Mike added: "The six members of the greens team were busy lining and filling bunkers on our visit. I know Ian Reeves, deputy, has been at the club for around 20 years now and you can tell how proud he is of the work they have all done.

After looking around the golf course, Karl McDermott, head groundsman on the cricket ground gave an insight into cricket wicket maintenance. With a Clegg reading at 300+, there are many differences with greens maintenance.

Turf Club days are great way to network and see how other establishments work. If you haven't been on one then keep a look for details of upcoming events, which are always worthwhile.

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 new Exteris Stressgard brochure at www.environmentalscience.bayer.co.uk



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 AMENITY PRODUCTS





Learning &
Development Team
01347 833800
(option 3)



Sami Strutt
Head of
Member
Development
sami@bigga.
co.uk



Stuart Green
Head of
Member
Learning
stuart@bigga.
co.uk



Deb Burnett
L&D
Administrator
deb@bigga.
co.uk

Learning & Development



The Greenkeepers
Training Committee Ltd.



Fiona Lyttle
Manager
01347 838640
fiona@
the-gtc.co.uk



Emma Willis
Administrator
01347 838640
emma@
the-gtc.co.uk

www.the-gtc.co.uk

/greenkeeperstraining
committee

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18 July 2017 @BIGGALtd

L&D News

Latest news and information from the BIGGA Learning and Development Team

Greenkeeper Training

A guide to the range of training provided throughout the UK



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

The range and quality of training available throughout the UK means there is a training course for every greenkeeper. This should improve the quality of greenkeeping and help to produce better quality golf courses to the benefit of all within the industry. Employers should ensure their staff are trained to the highest standards.

For formal qualifications this begins by selecting a training provider that meets the criteria laid down by the GTC. There is a clear link between education, training and economic success and all clubs should invest in the education of their staff. There are now a number of **GTC Approved** Training Providers identified by the **GTC Approved** logo.

On the following pages are a range of colleges and training providers that offer courses which are relevant to those looking to begin their careers in greenkeeping.



BIGGA
Continuing
Professional
Development
cpd

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

Scott Aitchison, Royal Dornoch; David Blair, JCB; Tom Smith, Wickham Park; John Scurfield, Morpeth; Robert Meikle, Crail Golfing Society; Gordon Mckie, St Andrews Links Trust; Jon Methven, St Andrews Links Trust; Craig Boath, Carnoustie Golf Links; Robert Welsh, Greetham Valley.

Congratulations to the following members who achieved their CPD Milestone this month: Richard Johnstone, Nairn Dunbar Golf Links; Scott Aitchison, Royal Dornoch; Jamie Blake, Broadway; Robert Meikle, Crail Golfing Society; Andrew Hatcher, Coed-Y-Mwstwr



Gosta Training Ltd, Glasgow G40 2AB
Contact: Lesley Lowrie
T: 0141 556 3999
E: Learn@gostatraining.co.uk | W: www.gostatraining.co.uk



SVQ Level 2 (SCQF 5) and SVQ Level 3 (SCQF 6) and Modern Apprenticeship in Greenkeeping/Sports Turf and Landscaping. Also available SVQ Level 2 (SCQF 5) Modern Apprenticeship in Sports Turf Groundsman.

Attendance day release or distance learning. SVQ Level 4 Management is available with flexible learning options. Lantra and NPTC Industry related short courses with certification include Pesticide courses, Chainsaw, full range of Machinery training, First Aid, Defibrillation training and more. Candidates may use their Individual Learning Account to fund many of the courses. Training courses are available in the Glasgow and Edinburgh areas throughout the year.



Dart Training
Manor Farm House, London Road, Shardlow DE72 2GD
T: 01332 794910
E: enquiries@darttraining.co.uk
W: www.darttraining.co.uk



DART Training offer work based Level 2 and Level 3 Horticulture, Golf Greenkeeping and Sports Turf Operative Apprenticeships across the East Midlands, parts of West Midlands, Staffordshire and South Yorkshire. NPTC, ROLO and other short courses are also available including, Pesticide Application (PA1, PA2 and PA6a), Chainsaw Operation, Tree Climbing and Rescue, Safe use of Mowers, Handheld Hedge Cutters, Brush-cutter and Strimmer, Tractor Driving, Pest control, Manual Handling, First Aid and many more. DART also offer bespoke courses tailored to your needs. Please contact us for more information.



Scotland's Rural College Cupar,
Fife KY15 4JB
Contact: Mike Clark
T: 01334 658969
E: michael.clark@sruc.ac.uk
W: www.sruc.ac.uk/elmwood



Full-time National Certificate Greenkeeping, block release or fast track and work-based learning options for SVQ Levels 2 & 3 Sports Turf, HNC/D Golf Course Management (full time and distance learning), HNC/D Golf Facility Management (full time and distance learning). Short course in Chainsaw, Tree Climbing and Rescue Techniques, Plant Operations, Pesticide Spraying and NRoSO certification/courses.



East Durham College, Houghall Campus, Durham,
Co. Durham DH1 3SG | Contact: Emma Norbury
T: 0191 518 5587 | E: emma.norbury@eastdurham.ac.uk

Situated in the heart of North East England, and only five minutes' drive from Durham station, East Durham College has an excellent reputation for providing high quality horticulture-related training. The college also recently underwent an exciting £13.25m redevelopment. Houghall provides Level 2 and 3 apprenticeships in Greenkeeping, Sports Turf Management, Horticulture and Groundsmanship. We can tailor apprenticeships to match your exact business and training needs. Houghall also offers a range of NPTC, RHS and College Certificates as part time and short courses including the likes of Brushcutter/Strimmer, Pesticide Application, Chainsaw operation, Pedestrian Mowers, Chippers. Full time Level 2 & 3 Technical Certificates in Horticulture with turf modules. Full-cost bespoke courses in amenity horticulture and turf management are also available.



Berkshire College of Agriculture
Hall Place, Burchetts Green
Maidenhead SL6 6QR
Contact Emma Robinson:
T: 01628 827438
E: erobinson@bca.ac.uk

BCA offers a wide range of courses using industry trained assessors in, Apprenticeships in Sports Turf and Landscaping at Level 2 and 3 as well as NPTC courses including Pa1, Pa6 and Pa2, chainsaw, Brushcutting, Hedge trimming, Tractor Driving. Courses such as Bee Keeping, Mechanics and more.



Anthony Stockwell
Sport Turf Assessor, Apprenticeships,
Business and Community, Court Lane



Hadlow College
Tonbridge, Kent TN11 0AL
Contact: Anthony Stockwell E: Anthony.stockwell@hadlow.ac.uk or
Paul Copsey E: Paul.Copsey@hadlow.ac.uk
T: 01732 85316
W: www.hadlow.ac.uk

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



Capel Manor College,
Bullsmoor Lane, Enfield EN1 4RQ
Contact: Martin Stanton, Sports Turf Academy Manager
T: 03030 031 234 | E: Martin.stanton@capel.ac.uk | W: www.capel.ac.uk

Industry-endorsed Academy established to deliver the new Golf Greenkeeper and Sports Turf Operative Apprenticeship Standards. Part of the Capel Manor College offering which includes apprenticeships for Horticulture Operatives/Supervisors and Arborists plus the full range of NPTC and Lantra-accredited professional short courses (Pesticides spraying, First Aid, Pedestrian/Ride-on Mowers, Safe use of Chainsaws etc.).



Merrist Wood College
Worplesdon, Guildford, Surrey GU3 3PE
T: 01483 88 40 40 | E: mwinfo@guildford.ac.uk
W: www.merristwood.ac.uk



Merrist Wood College offers a wide range of part-time, full-time and online distance learning qualifications in Sports Turf, Horticulture, Landscaping and Golf Management. Choose from Diplomas, Apprenticeships, Degree level programmes and short courses at Levels 2 to 6. Funding is available for Level 2 and 3 Apprenticeships, qualifications for 16 – 18 year olds (fully funded), and qualifications for 19+ applicants (partially funded) subject to eligibility.



Myerscough College

Myerscough College
 Bilsborrow, Preston, Lancashire PR3 0RY
 Contact: Course Enquiries team | T: 0800 652 5592
 E: enquiries@myerscough.ac.uk | W: www.myerscough.ac.uk

Myerscough College is the pioneering centre for Sportsturf and Golf Course Management education in Europe. Courses are available at all levels - from introductory practical skills training to our postgraduate Masters Degree in Sustainable Golf Course Management.

There are options for full-time or part-time online study. Our Foundation Degree, Honours Degree and MA programmes are uniquely available ONLINE and have students enrolled from across the globe. R&A bursaries are available to many students. Our Work Based Training team also provide nationwide Apprenticeship opportunities in Greenkeeper training.



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OAKLANDS COLLEGE

Smallford Campus,
 St Albans, Hertfordshire AL4 0JA
 Contact: Andrew Wight
 T: 01277 737735 | E: andy.wight@oaklands.ac.uk
 W: www.oaklands.ac.uk

Oaklands College offers on-line work-based learning in Apprenticeships and the City and Guilds Work-based Diplomas at Levels 2 and 3 throughout the South East.

We also offer monthly PA1/2 and 6 courses in the Safe use of Pesticides. The college also offers full time provision in Horticulture from Entry to Level 3.

In addition we offer Monthly PA1/2 and 6 Certificate of Competence courses. Full time horticultural courses on offer include Entry 3 to Level 3.



STUDY ONLINE

Our online Foundation Degree, BSc Honours and Masters degree programmes enable students from a wide geographic area (including many from overseas) to gain a degree qualification without having to live in close proximity to the College. These courses continue to grow in popularity and a new cohort of students will start in September, using our dedicated online learning portal to follow lectures, seminars and tutorials as well as exchanging knowledge and ideas with fellow staff and students.



Myerscough College's Degree programmes are validated by the University of Central Lancashire



Myerscough College

www.myerscough.ac.uk
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Myerscough College, Bilsborrow, Preston, Lancashire. PR3 0RY



Pershire College
 Avonbank, Pershore, Worcestershire WR10 3JP
 T: 01386 551 202 | E: info@warwickshire.ac.uk
 W: www.wcg.ac.uk

Pershire College is a national centre of excellence for horticulture and WCG is the largest college provider of apprenticeships in the Midlands. Our landbased apprenticeships are well established and include: Golf Greenkeeping / Sports Turf Operative; Horticulture / Landscape Operative; Landbased Service Engineering Service Engineers / Technicians (includes free training by leading manufacturers: Briggs & Stratton, Stihl and Ransomes Jacobsen). Also short courses in Arborist Cross Cutting & Maintenance PA1, PA2 and PA6 and many more..

WCG works with 1100+ employers and 2500+ apprentices. We have outstanding success rates.



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



Writtle University College | Writtle, Essex CM1 3RR
 T: 01245 424200 | W: www.writtle.ac.uk

Apprenticeships: Level 2 Intermediate Apprenticeship Greenkeeper, Groundsman, Gardener, Landscaper or Nursery Worker. Level 3 Advance Apprenticeship Deputy Head Greenkeeper, Deputy Head Groundsman, Senior Gardener, Parks Officer, Horticultural Technician. Level 2 & Level 3 Diploma in Work Based Horticulture. Level 2 & 3 Diploma in Horticulture (Extended, standard or subsidiary available), RHS Level 2 & 3 Certificate in Practical horticulture, RHS Level 3 Certificate in the Principles of Garden Planning, Construction and planting, RHS Certificate in Principles of Garden Planning, Establishment and Maintenance, RHS Level 2 Certificate in the Principles of Horticulture, RHS Level 2 Certificate in the Principles of Plant Growth, Development and Propagation. Short Courses: Chainsaw Operation & Maintenance, Pesticide Application, First Aid & Health & Safety, Machinery use including Lantra Mower courses.



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The latest news Industry Update

Spider creates world's largest 'Mow-na Lisa'

Head to the hillsides around Dolni Kalna in the Czech Republic and you'll find a turf tribute to the most famous painting in the world.

Dvorak, the manufacturer of the Spider range of remote-controlled slope mowers, has created a giant version of Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa.

Pavlina Novakova, international marketing manager, said: "We wanted an iconic image that would be recognised around the globe. Not only was da Vinci a great artist, but he was also an exceptional engineer. That connection dovetailed perfectly with the innovative technology in our Spider mowers."

The portrait, on a grass canvas measuring 200 metres x 250 metres with a gradient of 45 degrees, was created over a period of three days.

The completed image took two days of detailed surveying and one day mowing using the company's Spider 1 and Spider 2 mowers.

A scale drawing was used to transfer reference points to the hillside using laser surveying technology and then the skilled Spider operators, including the company's managing director Lubomir Dvorak, mowed the 50,000m² image taking direction from the video producer.



Mow-na Lisa

Industry Update

Rothley Park

Rothley Park has completed the installation of a Hunter irrigation system, designed and project engineered by Irriplan.

The system makes use of Hunter's Pilot control system to allow individual control of irrigation heads and was installed by contractor Irrigation Control.

"We have known for some time that our old irrigation system needed replacing," said club

general manager Danny Spillane. "It's too early to judge the impact on our water use, but more consistent use of irrigation has already led to more consistent surfaces. We are using moisture sensors to judge more accurately when to apply water, and we can now get much better control".

The club was able to fund the project partly by creating a bond scheme for members.



Rothley Park

Ely City and ATT

To provide a more even transition between bent and poa grasses in the greens surfaces, Ely City has invested in a set of SMARTUltraGroomer cassettes from the ATT TMSystem range.

When his existing cassette system failed, Head Greenkeeper Andy Baker demo'd the ATT SMARTUltraGroomer cassette and was particularly impressed. Andy was no novice to the system and said: "I'd been wanting these for quite a while but as machinery purchases are normally budgeted over a five year period, I wasn't in a position to get them.

"The main advantage of these is how easily and quickly they can be dropped in and out of our triplex, without multiple pivots and joints which can seize and break."



SMARTUltraGroomer cassettes

Headland Amenity

Cosby Head Greenkeeper Thomas Flavelle is in the process of preparing the course for a sward conversion and has enlisted Headland Amenity to aid the process.

The parkland course will be switching to a 50/50 bent and poa split and Thomas said: "It's evident there's a shift in the way courses have to be managed. We're losing more and more chemicals as the years go by so the focus must be on creating sustainable greens to give surfaces the best chance of thriving through the winter months."

The programme will take five years to complete and Andy Lane from Headland has been enlisted to assist with a feeding and soil preparation programme.



Cosby Golf Club

Exteris Stressgard

Bayer has made its latest fungicide available for purchase, giving greenkeepers a new tool in the fight against Microdochum Patch and Dollar Spot.

Launched exclusively at BTME in January, Exteris Stressgard is available to purchase from Headland Amenity and Rigby Taylor.

Neil Pettican, Bayer head of sales, said: "Over 10 years of development and analysis of more than 100,000 potential active ingredients has gone into the new fungicide, which has been specifically engineered and optimised for turfgrass using Stressgard Formulation Technology. Exteris adds another tool to the greenkeeper's diminishing armoury as it contains the new active ingredient Fluopyram and is part of a totally new chemical group, SDHI."



Exteris Stressgard



Ask Dr Mumford

With Colin Mumford, Bayer Turf Solutions

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

Question: I've tried establishing fescue on my course, but it won't take. Do you have any tips?

Fescue is often used on putting greens to create a dense sward for better ball roll characteristics, but it requires certain conditions to thrive. If you haven't got these, you need to create them before trying to establish this particular grass species.

The conditions required are typically those that are more hostile to other grass species, namely lower nutrition and dryer, free draining rootzone.

However, fescue is not so good at standing up to a large amount of wear from heavy footfall, so it's important that it's not mown at an excessively low height of cut. This helps to reduce stress on the plant, allowing it to meet the demands of a busy golf course.

Annual meadow grass is highly competitive, and in order to encourage fescue, you'll need to make the conditions as inhospitable as possible. This can be done by reducing fertiliser and irrigation inputs, as the fescue is tolerant of these conditions and can outcompete the meadow grass.

When 'stressing' the annual meadow grass, it will start flowering in a last attempt to reproduce. This creates a less uniform surface for a transitional period of around eight weeks, depending on environmental conditions.

An easy way to cause stress is by reducing the organic matter content by removing excess thatch. This minimises the soil's water holding capacity and takes away a key source of nutrition.

Once fescue is established, the dense sward greatly reduces the chances of annual meadow grass seeds getting in and taking hold.

Tweet us your turf questions @BIGGALtd using #AskDrMumford for your chance to win a hamper!

Industry Update

Campey Pro Am

It was a fine but windy day for the Campey Pro Am, making long driving difficult at Hart Common, near Bolton.

A range of New Holland tractors were on display during the event, reflecting the 20-year trading history between Campey Turf Care and Hart Common.

The professional competition was strokeplay, with David Shackley of Mossock Hall winning with 65.

The amateur competition was 9/10 Stableford, with Terry Battersby winning with 40 points. Neil Robinson came second with 34 points and Graham Ellis was third on countback with 31 points.

Mick Jones won the nearest the pin on the 11th, while Neil Robinson won the longest drive on the 18th.



New Holland tractors were on display, while Terry Battersby, pictured with Campey's Ian Campbell, won the amateur competition (insert)

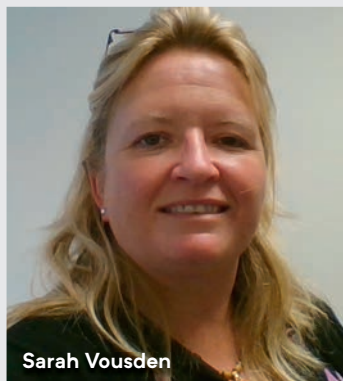
Farmura appointment

Farmura has appointed Sarah Vousden as UK Country Manager as the company continues its integration into the Aquatrols business.

Sarah joins the Farmura team with more than 16 years of experience in the agricultural sector. She most recently served as senior business manager Headland FMC, where she led a sales team and developed the marketing strategy for a range of pesticide and crop nutrition products.

Sarah said: "Farmura has long been a well-known and respected brand within the UK golf and amenity markets. I am

proud to be joining such a reputable company with a strong history."



Sarah Vousden



The Vale Resort

The Vale Resort in South Wales has invested more than £400,000 in John Deere course maintenance equipment, supplied by local turf professional dealer Frank Sutton Ltd of Raglan in Gwent.

The resort, home to two championship golf courses, has bought 16 new high-tech mowers and Gator utility vehicles to enhance the condition of both the Wales National and The Lake courses, and provide its more than 550 members and thousands of visitors with an even better golfing experience.

The latest purchases include four 8700A fairway mowers, four 2500B triplex greens mowers, four 220SL walk-behind greens mowers and four TS Gators. These have joined an existing John Deere fleet of four 8800 TerrainCut rotary rough mowers, four 2653B triplex utility mowers and another two 220SL greens mowers.

"The way the fairways and greens are cut has a direct effect on the playability of the course," said Head Greenkeeper John Borja. "These John Deere machines will undoubtedly help to improve the condition of both courses and make a difference to the way the game is played on them.

"In order to keep the two courses in pristine condition, the cutting direction is alternated each day so that the ground doesn't become stressed. This also creates a striping effect which helps players differentiate between the precisely cut tees, fairways and rough. Having the best machinery is key to making sure our team can prepare the courses to their full potential for members and guests."

Set in 650 acres of Welsh countryside, both courses have a mixture of wooded areas, wide and narrow fairways and water features. At 7,433 yards off the championship tees, the Wales National is one of the longest courses in the UK. Both courses are maintained by a team of 15 year-round staff, with additional seasonal staff.

"Our aim, every day, is to ensure that our golf courses are presented to the highest standards possible and can be fully enjoyed by the players," said John.



The Vale Resort John Deere fleet



New machinery releases

Innovation

Campey GT Air Inject

The Air 2G2 is a self-propelled hydrostatic drive, three probe air injection machine. It injects compressed air into the rootzone which causes a fracturing decompacting effect with no surface disruption.

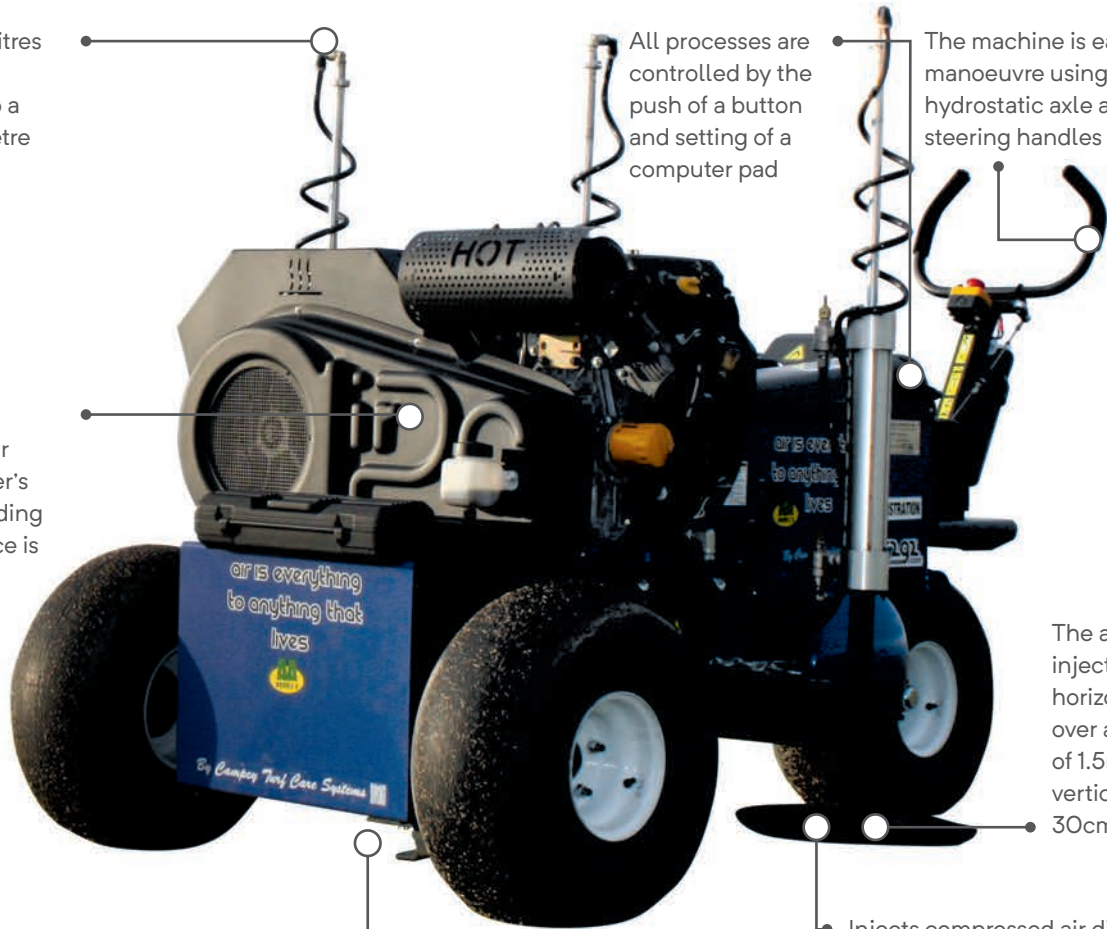


20,000 cubic litres of air is injected by 3 probes into a 500-square metre golf green

All processes are controlled by the push of a button and setting of a computer pad

The machine is easy to manoeuvre using the hydrostatic axle and steering handles

Aeration can be provided all year round at the user's choosing, including when the surface is holding water



The air is injected horizontally over an area of 1.5m and vertically up to 30cm deep

Causes no surface disruption so play can resume straight away

Injects compressed air directly into the ground at 6", 7", 9" or 12" depending on tine / probe fitted, causing a fracturing effect on compacted root zone

Innovation

British Sugar TOPSOIL

National TOPSOIL manager Andy Spetch and sales manager Natalie Gudgin have two new colleagues at British Sugar TOPSOIL.

Kim Campton and Grace Townsend have joined the TOPSOIL team following a move to pastures new by Andy and Natalie's longstanding former colleagues Sam Colman and Sally Walton.

Andy said: "I want our clients to know they can expect the same excellent levels of customer service from the new-look team.

"I wish Kim and Grace every success in their future careers with British Sugar TOPSOIL."

Kim has moved from British Sugar's Customer Services Department, while Grace has joined the company from Bidfood.





The Greenkeepers
Training Committee Ltd.



Fiona Lyttle
Manager

01347 838640
fiona@
the-gtc.co.uk



Emma Willis
Administrator

01347 838640
emma@
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committee

@TheOfficialGTC

Greenkeepers Training Committee

Meet the GTC Board

This month we talk to Richard Flint, Participation and Club Support Director at England Golf



Richard Flint

England Golf has been a member of the Greenkeepers Training Committee for many years and is represented on the GTC board by Richard Flint, Participation and Club Support Director.

England Golf is the governing body for amateur golf in England. It is one of the country's largest sports governing bodies and looks after the interests of more than 1,900 golf clubs and 675,000 club members.

England Golf's updated strategy 2017/21, entitled 'Growing the Game of Golf in England', builds on the hard work of the last four years by adding a fresh focus on things we believe will make the biggest difference in turning around the sport we are so passionate about.

There is no doubt about recent progress. We have seen growing numbers of golfers make their way through the talent pathway

to success on the global stage. We host outstanding championships for the best amateur players. We have started to see participation stabilise and the decline in membership slow down.

England Golf's investment into the GTC, allied with the close relationship it has developed with BIGGA, is vital. Industry collaboration across all sectors within golf must continue in order for the sport to thrive.

England Golf offers a wide range of workshops to support clubs and facilities to grow their business. Each workshop is aimed at key decision makers, in both staff and voluntary roles, to attend together with the opportunity to learn from experts within the industry.

These educational events include changing culture through good governance, business planning, increasing revenue and support for Chair of Greens.

As we know, greenkeepers play a vital role in course maintenance and greenkeeping is a rewarding career in the great outdoors. England Golf was delighted to have been able to support the significant work delivered by the GTC on apprenticeships.

The new apprenticeship Level 2 Certificate in Golf Greenkeeping (0143-20) in England has been developed

by the GTC in consultation with employers, training providers and the golf course industry. As a programme of learning and education the certificate is designed to promote a more rounded greenkeeper qualification and incorporates elements such as soil science, irrigation and drainage.

The employer, through negotiation with the chosen training provider, will decide on how the training is to be delivered. This can be a mixture of on-site training and part time study at college.

The level 2 qualification will take between 18-24 months, although it can be obtained in a minimum of 15 months. The process starts with registering with a training provider and the employer negotiates the package and delivery to suit.

It is important that golf continues to innovate and provide opportunities to share forward thinking and new ideas that help grow the game.

England Golf has launched an initiative to stimulate and encourage innovation and enterprise across the sport. #MoreThanGolf aims to accelerate and build on the considerable work which is already going on to develop new ways of engaging more people and broadening the appeal of golf.

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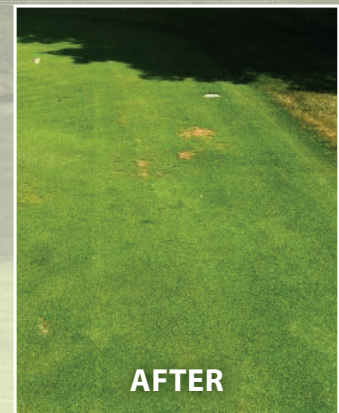
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Greenkeepers Training Committee

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Wentworth

Swedes, swarms and selfies

BIGGA Support Team at the BMW PGA Championship

At the BMW PGA Championship, everyone was talking about the course.

Kenny Mackay and his team have undertaken a £5m renovation of the West Course, with all 18 greens stripped of their old turf, five completely redesigned, and a SubAir system introduced below the surface.

The course got rave reviews from the players and Kenny and his team were widely applauded for their incredible efforts.

As the European Tour's flagship event, the BMW PGA attracts some of the biggest names in golf, with last year's Open winner Henrik Stenson and Olympic gold medallist Justin Rose taking to the field.

Also taking part once again at the event was a team of BIGGA members who had

been selected to form the support team, helping Kenny with the preparation of the course, and joining each of the games during the tournament to ensure all the bunkers were in top condition.

"Being part of this year's BIGGA support team for Wentworth was a fantastic experience I would recommend to anyone," said Vincent DeMarzo, of Wildernesne. "Not only do you gain great experience through it in terms of

how high the standards are set,

how to make use of such a large quantity of staff and equipment, and also the tricks of the trade for the cameras, but you also gain a great chance to network.

"Both within the BIGGA support team, as well as the resident greenkeepers at Wentworth, there was a great atmosphere, which made the whole week even more enjoyable. I would like to thank BIGGA and Wentworth for this massive opportunity, and for their hospitality throughout."



Wentworth



@RobPatrick89

Standard selfie with the
winner of the @BMWPGA
#untilnextyear

Continued over



Kenny and his team

Kenny Reflects

A £5m renovation programme began on the West Course just eight days after Chris Wood's victory last year.

All 18 greens were stripped of their turf and re-laid with 007 DSB Creeping Bent, a brand new grass species supplied by Germinal.

Five greens were completely redesigned, while the course became the first in England to have a SubAir system introduced to all its greens.

Every bunker was redesigned, with 29 being removed completely, and so there was a lot of pressure on Director of Golf Courses and Estates Kenny Mackay and his team to ensure the course performed.

"We are really delighted with the whole programme," said Kenny. "To do that project, from closing immediately after the tournament to growing it in ready for this year, the guys have done an unbelievable job, and to get such positive feedback is just fantastic."

Kenny also took the opportunity to thank the BIGGA Support Team for their efforts once again. With Wentworth's other courses closed during the tournament, it's an opportunity for maintenance to take place, but this wouldn't be possible without the support team on hand to ensure the tournament goes without a hitch.

"What a help it is for us during the championship to have the support team in place. It gives us a lot of peace of mind and it's additional support around us. It allows us at the club to continue to work on the other courses at the same time.

"For the support team guys themselves, it's a great opportunity for them to work on a massive tournament. In England this is the second biggest tournament, after

the Open when it's in England, and so it's great that these guys can get some valuable experience helping to set up the course for a major event."

In Alex Noren the event had a popular winner among the Wentworth team as the Swede is not only a big fan of the course, but his caddie, Lee Warne, also spent a season working as a greenkeeper at the club.

"Lee knows all our guys and he's a good friend of mine, so we were delighted when they won the tournament," said Kenny.

Feedback from the pros

BMW PGA winner Alex Noren

"I think the changes are great. I mean, now you have a chance to set up the course the way you want; if you want high rough or if you want softer greens, harder greens, whatever you want, and I think that's fantastic in a golf course."

Chris Wood, who had the BIGGA logo embroidered on his bag to support the work of our members

"We know how hard it is this time of year in the UK to get perfect greens, and it seems like Wentworth have done everything possible to be able to produce that for us this week."

Lee Westwood

"The whole redesign is really good. It's a massive improvement and the golf course is playing well and tough, as it should do for this championship. The greens are true and consistent."

Justin Rose

"The greens are as good a set of greens as I've seen for a newly-laid surface. They really are rolling well, and they are receiving a shot really well."

Chloe Gallagher

Chloe Gallagher, of Ramside Hall, joined the BIGGA Support Team for the first time, and is encouraging other women to get involved with these great experiences.

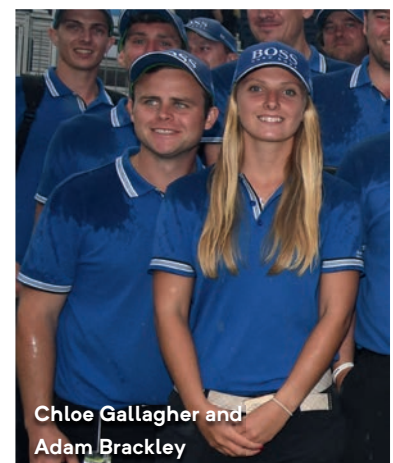
"Going down I was a little bit anxious as I knew I was going to be the only girl," said the 23-year-old. "But everyone made me feel really welcome and we were made to feel like part of the Wentworth greenkeeping team."

The support team undertook a number of roles to ensure the course was in top condition, such as raking bunkers and switching the mats for the mowers.

Chloe added: "There's a lot of pressure to get it right. You have to get it spot on and some of the bunkers were raked three times to get them right."

This month Chloe will be a member of the BIGGA Support Team at the Open, and she's also helping out at the Ricoh Ladies Open later in the year.

"I really wanted to do more tournaments," she said. "I want to gain the experience of setting up a golf course for major events, and I really enjoy the fact that rather than being on the outside of the ropes looking in, you are actually part of the event. I really enjoyed meeting all the people from all over the country and the opportunity to rake bunkers for professional golfers. You are walking alongside professional golfers and all the audience are watching. It's a feeling you can't explain."



Chloe Gallagher and Adam Brackley

@MartinBayfield:

“Meet Sam. Every group at @BMWPGA has a ‘Sam’. They are ‘The Grim Rakers’. Sam is crazy jolly, Sam loves his job. Thank you Sam. #BMWPGA



The Bee Story

At Wentworth it's usually fans who swarm around their favourite golfers, but Richmond greenkeeper Tony Bartram had to contend with a swarm of a totally different kind.

Walking down the 18th hole with his family on the Saturday evening, Tony noticed a number of bees harassing a woman. A beekeeper in his spare time, Tony spotted all the hallmarks of a swarm of honey bees, which happens when a queen bee decides to move her colony to pastures new.

Tony said: “The queen will have dropped out of the lime tree above the woman’s head, and that meant she was now between the queen and the colony, which is why they were bombarding her. I called Rachael Duffy and she let Kenny know about it while I started moving the ropes back, to get people out of the way.

“The bees had formed a big brown huddle on the grass, but there were about 10 groups of golfers still to come through so we had to make sure they didn’t get too close to the swarm.”

The following day Tony rushed to Richmond to collect his

beekeeping gear and was on site at about 4am to get the bees out of the way before the final day’s play started.

“At first light the bees are still cold and subdued, so I was able to pick them up in handfuls and put them into a NUC box and take them back to Richmond the same morning.

“I then had to take all my stuff off and rush back to Wentworth for my match at 11.35am with Joost Luiten and Jordan Smith.”

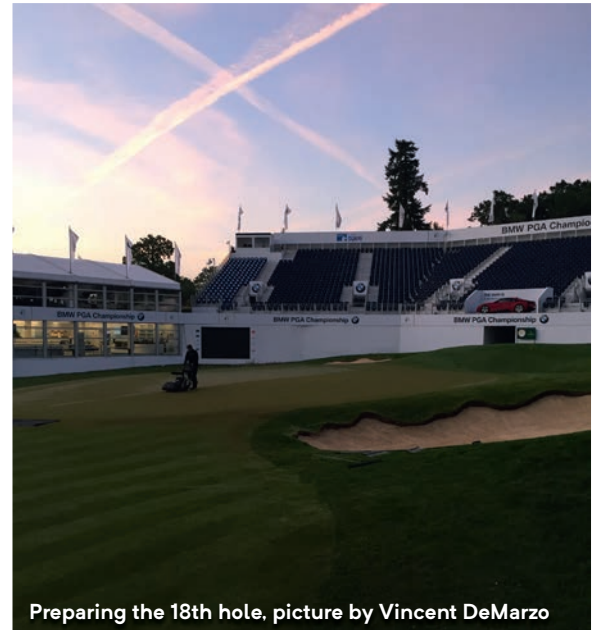
Smith was playing in the competition for the first time, having previously been a scoreboard carrier as a junior.

Tony returned to Richmond on the Monday after the tournament and let the bees out of the apiary he had hoped would become their new home. However things didn’t quite go to plan, when they upped and left the following day.

“Even Richmond isn’t posh enough for Wentworth bees!” said Tony. “I had obviously picked up a diva, which is a shame because we were already getting ready to make BIGGA Wentworth honey, but unfortunately they cleared off.”



Tony Bartram removing the swarm



Preparing the 18th hole, picture by Vincent DeMarzo

Wentworth

“Having watched the tournament for many years, the TV just doesn’t do the course enough justice.

“No matter what job I was given, I thoroughly enjoyed every second and I can’t wait to do something like that again. I would recommend it to anyone, from apprentices to course managers. You will learn something new.

“I can’t praise Kenny and his team highly enough.”

Craig Hempseed

High & mighty

Karl Hansell, BIGGA

Highlands Country Club

Below: Highlands
Country Club

Rain hammers at the window of Brian Stiehler's office, as the 38-year-old leans back in his chair, cup of sweet tea in hand, baseball cap turned forward, talking about his decision to pursue the BIGGA Master Greenkeeper certificate.

His office is packed full of mementos, with dark wood-stained walls adorned with certificates of diplomas and awards, a banner declaring 'Stiehler for Mayor' — he recently ran for election — and shelves with superhero figures and statuettes of John Wayne, Albert Einstein and Penn State's Nittany Lion.

There'll be no course tour today — that rain is lashing down and keeping everyone sane indoors. When Bobby Jones and his father first ventured up into the Appalachian mountains of North

Carolina, they chose to endorse a club that was opening up in the small town of Highlands. But what Bobby perhaps didn't realise is that an average of 96 inches of rain falling on to a clay-based course in the depths of a temperate rainforest would make for tricky growing conditions.

When the first paved road was laid into this area, it was so people could reach the golf course. As such, golf could be said to have given rise to Highlands



as a town. The superintendent has always been considered one of the most important members of the community, being in charge, as it were, of the town's most important asset.

"The club has played a huge role in the development of the town," said Brian. "Among the old timers who have lived here for many generations, if you had a job outside of your own family, you will have worked at Highlands at some point."

When Sid Hudson founded Highlands Country Club in 1926 it took three days to get here from Dillard, Georgia, just 15 miles away. Today the town is a refuge for affluent Atlanta residents and Floridians looking to escape the South's stifling heat. During the summer the population swells from just 900 to more than 20,000 and the proliferation of

Below: Paul Dalton, Brian Stiehler, Chad Stockton



Continued over

Highlands Country Club



MOW LIKE A CHAMPION TODAY



second homes means house prices are hugely inflated.

"The challenge up here is finding the people that want to do the work," said Brian, who explained that most of his staff live in Franklin, 20 miles away. "This is a pretty intense golf club to mow and I've hired a lot of folks, but some don't want to do the work day in, day out."

To fill the staff void, Brian relies on the H-2B temporary visa program. This allows employers to bring foreign nationals to the US to fill temporary jobs. These permits last only 10 months, meaning each year Brian must take on a team of completely untrained labourers, drawn primarily from Mexico.

"This was the first place I worked at that had Latino staff," said Brian. "I have to prove there's nobody local that can do the work, but we have such a small talent pool here that we have no choice but to hire people on temporary visas.

"It's incredibly frustrating as you train someone up and then they have to leave. But last year we didn't get any and we really struggled. The whole year I relied on high school kids and it was a disaster. We made it through

the summer and the members didn't realise, but I couldn't do that again."

By contrast, the members of the full time permanent staff are extremely loyal to Highlands. Most have been at the club more than a decade, and this could be attributed to Brian's incredible faith in building strong personal relationships and working hard to maintain high morale.

The groundcare team are well looked after with modern, warm facilities, and up on the walls are posted motivational messages, which you feel are repeated by the senior members of the team.

"Mow like a champion today" reads one. "Make a decision," reads another.

Brian is also a staunch believer in the Myers-Briggs test, which he finds extremely useful when assigning members of staff different tasks.

Each new employee completes an introspective self-report questionnaire that indicates their personality type. For example, you could be an extrovert or an introvert, and that might define what type of jobs you are best suited to.

"If you understand the dynamics of personalities, it can make your life easier as a superintendent," said Brian. "The worst thing you can do to an extrovert is send them out to do something alone. Maybe they will rush to get it done because they want to get back and be around other people, or it will certainly get them in a bad mood.

"My main guy that does rough here is an introvert and he can sit out there on a mower on his own all day, but then I'm very hands-on and I have the attention of a five year old, so sitting on a mower is no good for me.

"As managers we can grab people and say 'I am your manager and you are going to do what I say because I am your boss'. Well, you can do that, but you are probably not going to last very long."

Outside it's still raining. Protective covers prevent the pick up trucks

'If you understand the dynamics of personalities, it can make your life easier as a superintendent'



that everyone drives here from filling with water, and members of the greenkeeping team are streaming in from their morning duties to grab lunch. But with around eight inches of rain every month, the team are used to working in a downpour.

In 1875 Samuel Truman Kelsey and Clinton Carter Hutchinson drew a line from New York to New Orleans, and from Chicago to Savannah, South Carolina. Where those two lines cross is Highlands, and they believed such a point would become a vital transport hub for the United States.

"What they didn't realise is that it's 4,000 feet above sea level," said Brian.

During winter the average snowfall is around 13 inches, and the course is closed from the weekend after Thanksgiving in November until 1 April, meaning the 40,000 rounds the club hosts each year are compressed into a very narrow window.

In summer this area is substantially cooler than lowland areas nearby, with an average July temperature of 26°C. There's no relief from the rain though, and the team does



Above left:
A motivational sign

Above:
The Highlands team are used to working in heavy rain

Above right:
Office mementos

a substantial amount of drainage projects each winter.

The geography in the mountains means that water moves quickly away once it is removed from the surface. In 2008, Brian undertook a \$500,000 drainage renovation with a company called Turf Drainage of America. During this project they installed two 10' deep sumps on two of the wetter holes, which constantly pumps ground water away from the course. A network of underground drainage runs to these sumps, where the water can be carried away.

With rain falling throughout the year, the threat of disease is relentless. Dollar spot and pythium root rot are among the most common, and to combat the effects, each year the club spends \$120,000 on fungicide alone. The wet weather and warm temperature means the fungicides break down extremely quickly, and the entire course must be resprayed every 14 days in summer.

Greens are comprised of 80% creeping bent and 20% poa annua, while the turfgrass mixture on fairways is an even split between bent and poa.

"Everything we do here is so unnatural, and that's why I have to spend so much on fungicides each year," said Brian, who during his college years enjoyed a year working at St Andrews and so has an appreciation for the way a links course can be produced with minimal inputs. "There's more required of a greenkeeper or a course manager in the United States than in the UK and I think our jobs are made more challenging due to the amount of science we must understand. In St Andrews good solid agronomics were enough to create good courses."

As a student at Penn State, Brian was given the opportunity to join the St Andrews Links team for a year. He had worked at Reading Country Club, in Pennsylvania, since he was 14 but hadn't encountered anything like Scottish links golf, and it made an impression that he still feels today.

Brian said: "That was the best experience of my life. Not just on the course, but I was out of my comfort zone and for three weeks I didn't understand anything anybody was saying.

Continued over



Highlands Country Club

Greens staff

Full time:

Brian Stiehler, superintendent
 Chad Stockton, assistant superintendent
 Paul Dalton, head mechanic
 Kevin Earp, assistant mechanic
 Greenkeepers: Oscar Vanegas, Gary Dalton, Jerry Dalton, Luis Sanchez, Lyn Zalapa, Chris Chavez, Matthew Green, Baldemar Vanegas

Part time/seasonal:

Greenkeepers: Jimmy Lowe, Chris Chavez Jr, Angel Chavez, Gene Green, Sam Hawkins, Matteson Gates
 Brad Knops, head range attendant
 Max Renfro, range attendant
 Kyle Gabbard, range attendant
 Mary Renfro, range attendant

H2-B Visa (10 months):

Jesus	Hector
Alex	Fernando
Fernando	Miguel

Selected machinery

Five Toro 1000	Kubota ST30
Three Toro 3400 Triflex	TYM 390
Toro 5610,	TYM 431
Toro 5010H,	New Holland TN65
Toro 4500,	Kubota Mini-digger
Toro 4700	
Three Toro Workman HDX	Zero Turn Grasshopper
Toro 5800	Amazone Groundkeeper
Kubota STV32	
Toro Bunker Rake	

"The coolest thing is over there it was much more about going back to basics. Here you can get so carried away with all the new products that come out, but there it was solid, basic agronomics. You were trained on everything and I left there knowing I could do any job around the course, such as grind rollers and set mowers."

In the UK we often hear about unreasonable golfer expectations, but in the United States things are even worse, and it's something you have to learn to live with if you are an American course superintendent.

"When there's a loss of products in the UK I think, that sucks," said Brian. "But then I know expectations are different and golf isn't supposed to be played on a perfect surface."

"I felt that in the UK there was more respect for the job we were doing. Here people don't have any concept of what we deal with and there's a lot of moaning among greenkeepers about how much respect we get from golfers. What I say to those people is 'do you like what you do? If you do, just get on with it'. Our members are not going to understand every little thing we do, and I didn't get into this job to worry about that kind of thing."

After St Andrews, Brian spent six months at Augusta National before returning to Penn State, where he graduated in 2001.

He joined Highlands as an assistant superintendent, before being offered the lead role at Champion Hills, Hendersonville. But after just two months he was informed the superintendent at Highlands had resigned, and Brian returned to take up the top job.

"The challenge is you are living up in the mountains and so you have to be very low key when it comes to the entertainment you enjoy. But when you accept a job as a superintendent you understand it's not just a job, it's a lifestyle. If you are not willing to take everything that comes with the job, you are going to have a problem."

Brian threw himself into Highlands life. There was that mayoral bid, and he sits on the Highlands Board of Commissioners. The club prides itself on retaining course superintendents for many years, and Brian has no intention of moving on.

He achieved his CGCS certificate from the Golf Course Superintendents of America and in April became BIGGA's 72nd Master Greenkeeper, and its 23rd in America.

Lunch finished, the team donned their waterproofs and made their way back out into the rain. When your club is one of your town's biggest assets, the work never stops, even on a day when it seems like all those 96 inches of raining were arriving at once.

Below: Bobby Jones Jr's house, overlooking the course



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Update

Pesticide

Updates

The latest course updates on chemicals

Glyphosate

A moratorium that will allow the use of the weedkiller glyphosate for the next 10 years is due to be proposed by the College of Commissioners, the European Union body that makes decisions on the approval of active ingredients.

Glyphosate had been facing a ban due to claims the herbicide is an endocrine disruptor. Endocrine disruptors are chemicals that can interfere with hormone systems in various animals, leading to such side effects as cancerous tumors, birth defects and other developmental disorders.

Research has so far rebuffed these claims, but MEPs appear unconvinced and are asking for additional information and more transparency.

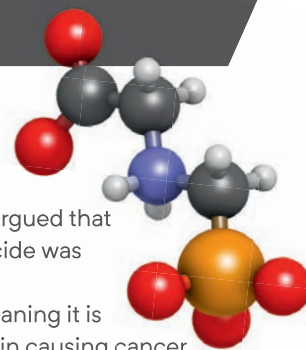
If glyphosate was to be extended for use at the end of 2017, there would be an immediate financial benefit to all residents and taxpayers in the UK.

The cost of local authorities not being able to use glyphosate for total weed control has been estimated to be close to £300m. If this is extended to include the amenity sector, including golf courses, the cost to the economy could reach £500m.

However, MEPs are concerned that, despite rigorous investigation, Glyphosate is dangerous to human health. This is in contrast to a report from European Chemical Hazard Agency's Committee of Risk Assessment, which concluded that glyphosate is non-carcinogenic and should continue to be classified as non-hazardous.

It has also been argued that even if the herbicide was discovered to be carcinogenic, meaning it is directly involved in causing cancer, the public would only ever come into direct contact with it in such a diluted form that it could not be a direct hazard. Other products that are known to be carcinogenic, such as the petrol used in cars, are widely used without fear or restriction.

With this in mind, the ECHA report is believed to be sufficient to achieve the necessary majority in the College of Commissioners that will allow glyphosate to continue to be used for the next decade.



Leatherjackets and chafer grubs

In the managed turf crop industry there are only two active ingredients currently registered for use as insecticides; garlic extract and esfenvalerate.

Neither has a label recommendation for chafer or leatherjacket control, but Rigby Taylor and Ecospray have claimed the active ingredients are effective tools in the suppression of these pests. What makes this interesting for greenkeepers is that they are legally allowed to be used on amenity turf.

Since authorisation for the use of chlorpyrifos ended, turf managers have been searching for a tool in the battle against chafer grubs and leatherjackets, meaning these active ingredients could potentially prove invaluable.

Garlic extract is an active ingredient that is already approved in golf courses for the control of nematodes. Unfortunately, esfenvalerate must not be trodden on for up to five days after application, and so it is impractical for use on the course.

Aware of the need for greenkeepers to find legal chemical methods to manage chafer and leatherjacket populations, Rigby Taylor and Ecospray have been testing the use of Eagle Green Care Granules and other active ingredients with a view to applying for an Extension of Authorisation for Minor Use. This authorisation programme would have allowed greenkeepers to use the product until 31 December 2021 and, due to the importance of this decision to members, the application was supported by BIGGA.

However, the Chemical Regulations Directorate reviewed the applications and confirmed greenkeepers can use the product without the need for an EAMU. All the label requirements are covered by the existing registration and so application could begin immediately.

Although use will be at the owners' risk, EGC Granules have been shown in vitro and other applications to provide control of eggs and early stage larvae on a wide range of species similar to chafer and leatherjackets.

Rigby Taylor and Ecospray claim trials have shown that with correct timing these products are able to suppress populations of the pests, based on turf quality assessments. With the majority of damage caused by predators foraging for these larvae, the amount of disruption to turf should be reduced if greenkeepers were to begin applying the pesticide.

Biodiversity and herbicides

Golf courses are ideal sources of biodiversity, creating environments where a wide variety of species can thrive. However, we should never make the mistake of thinking these habitats are natural. In fact, very few natural environments exist in the UK. Most areas have been managed by man to suit his requirements.

Links courses are a good example of an environment that is heavily managed to provide a unique playing experience and, just as importantly for the Open, a unique viewing environment.

To maintain the desired ecosystem a number of invasive species, such as brambles or unwanted grasses, will need to be managed to avoid them dominating or outcompeting desired species.

An integrated pest management plan is essential, of which herbicides will usually be a major tool. These prevent any species from dominating an environment or from becoming invasive, meaning they require selective management.

Different approaches to herbicide application include:

1. Total Herbicides — these kill all green tissue, either by contact or systemic action

2. Selective Herbicides — this is a more complex group but generally is split into two types

- Broad leaved weed herbicides
- Graminicides — controls grasses but not broadleaved species

Things to consider when treating weeds

Methods of treating weeds selectively

- Boom mounted sprayer only treating selected areas
- Boom mounted weed wiper to control only tall species with a total weed killer
- Hand held weed wiper. Enables very accurate selective applications
- Knapsack sprayer with narrow angle full cone nozzle. Spot treatment using either selective or total herbicide depending on species to be controlled

- Stem injection — ideal for hollow stemmed species

Biological/chemical

- Select a chemical group which controls the problem species
- Key actives may be available as straights but are often sold in combinations. These actives can be mixed to create a combination that controls various weeds.
- Adjust rate to achieve desired control, up to the maximum label rate. This is possible with herbicides, but is not recommended for fungicides.
- Susceptibility to herbicides varies greatly depending on time of year
- At different stages in their life cycle, a plant's susceptibility to herbicide changes. Treat target species at their optimum time for control



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Open

qualifiers 2017

Once again greenkeeping teams from across the country played their part in Open history by hosting regional qualifying events.

For these greenkeeping teams, it's a real chance to show their course off to the professionals, and we wanted to give a shout out to the BIGGA members who had done such an incredible job.

Birkdale, home of this year's Open, sitting just next door.

Martin has been involved with 12 qualifying events for The Open and praised the efforts of his team. He said: "I am only as good as my team,

Pictured here are just some of the teams who have hosted qualifying events at their courses this year. Congratulations to everyone involved.

Martin Twist and the team at Hillside were hosting their fourth Final Qualifying competition in a row. It's the final time qualifying had taken place at the club and was a fitting venue, with Royal

"They get a real buzz from hosting the events and they looked forward to it every year. "It's hard work, but the feedback they get from the professional golfers is absolutely fantastic."

Open Qualifiers



BIGGA President Sid Arrowsmith MG and his team at Frilford Heath

Stuart Hogg MG and the team at West Lincs



Martin Twist and the team from Hillside hosted Final Open Qualifying

Philip Taylor and his team at Alwoodley



Peter Simpson and his team at Fairhaven

Course Manager Brian Green and the team at Remedy Oak



Regional qualifying

- Alwoodley
- Burhill
- Fairhaven
- Frilford Heath
- Little Aston
- Luffenham Heath
- Northumberland
- Panmure
- Remedy Oak
- Sandy Lodge
- The Island
- West Lancashire
- Wildernesse

Final qualifying

- Gales Links
- Hillside
- Notts (Hollinwell)
- Royal Cinque Ports
- Woburn

The Open at Royal Birkdale

Karl Hansell, BIGGA

On The Open rota, there are few course managers with more experience than Chris Whittle.

This month he will present Royal Birkdale to the golfing world for the third and final time, and the 63-year-old took a break from the preparations to reflect upon a career spent exclusively on the UK's top links courses.

Let's get the obvious question out of the way — how have things changed since your first Open?

I took a look at Troon last year and thought, oh dear, this is different.

With 24-hour golf channels these days, they are looking for more content and so you are meeting people from the media that you would never have come across before. For example, The Golf Channel came to interview me the other day, asking for background information about the course.

And you can't deny that expectations are higher than ever. We are given a set of guidelines of what the R&A are looking for and they are in regular contact to make sure we are achieving their targets.

It's up to the R&A to decide how they want the course. During the week of The Open we hand the course over to them. It's their tournament so they make decisions on height of cut and such.

Formby, St Annes Old Links, Royal Lytham & St Annes, Muirfield, Royal Birkdale: your CV reads like a who's who of the UK's top links courses.

I was golf daft as a kid, so you do anything that gets you around the course. I was 17 years old and I worked for a bank and didn't like it. I walked out and literally the same day went down to Formby and asked for a job. I just got lucky as there was a vacancy and that was it, I was in. I guess you could say I've lived a charmed life.

At the age I was when I came to Birkdale I had just done an Open at Muirfield. After those two, where else is there to go? It was always my intention to stay here for a long time, I hoped it was going to be until I retired, and the club has been brilliant to me.

What is it that you enjoy about preparing links courses?

I think on links you are less held back from doing something if you have an idea. In winter, if you want to do something, the ground conditions generally mean you are able to do it. We are able to plan ahead more and the ground is usually quite manageable, so if we do make a mistake, it doesn't take long to correct it.

Below: Royal Birkdale team 1998

Continued over





All links courses are different, and that's the beauty of them. This is the sort of place where you can have 50,000 people on site and not see any of them.

I've also found that changes in the industry keep you sharp and fresh. The whole job moved on from about the 1970s with new technology, but golf also changed about that time. Golf courses got busier in the winter and it's now a 12-month sport.

I remember the first time I saw the vertidrain working. I thought, where has this been all my life? Some things have had a massive influence on the job, and that was one of them.

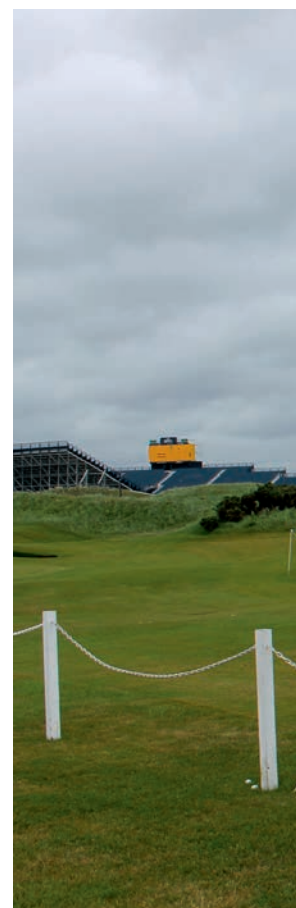
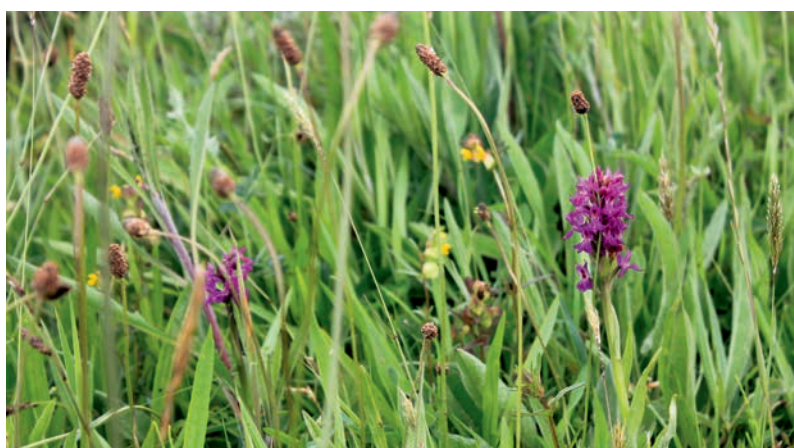
Royal Birkdale is well established on the Open rota. In fact, since first hosting The Open in 1954, it has been the most regular venue for the championship, alongside Royal Lytham, other than HeSt Andrews. Does that mean you have less work to do to prepare for the event?

It's true that the course is pretty well established and so there hasn't been a need for major changes. We've constructed a bunker near the practice tee at the Sky Sports area, but really I just want to present the course in the best way possible.

The 17th green attracted some attention last time around, and so the contours have been changed to make them more subtle and provide more pin positions.

At the end of the tournament there will have been a lot of factual information gathered about things such as where the drives landed and how many putts it took on each green. That information is given to the course architect and if something comes up that shows the course would benefit from an adjustment, then we'll do some work. We are always looking to make sure the course plays how we expect it to.

But we don't usually mess around with what we've got, and what's out there now is what the members have had for the last 10 years. We maintain it to those high standards all year round.



Top left: An area of woodland, planted in the 1970s
Bottom left: Orchids are blossoming on the site
Top right: A new practice green has been constructed by the in-house team

Then, to make sure everything is perfect, we shut the course to visitors in June. There will be a number of patrons' days over the next few weeks, hosted by the R&A and sponsors, but the course will close completely a couple of weeks before the event.

In your experience, what is the key to hosting a successful major championship?

For me, it's about having the right team in place. On the staff there are nine full timers, one part timer and two seasonal. My lads now are really experienced. I think even the one who has been here the shortest has been here seven years. It just means most of my lads have done at least one Ladies' Open or a Seniors' event and most of them did The Open last time.

I delegate duties down as much as possible. I was very much hands-on originally, but you can't do that until you have done everything else. You have to make sure you have done the management side before you can go play out there.

Does that reflect your regular daily management of the course?

Obviously I would much rather be outside, but if I'm paid to manage, I have to do that first. On a day like

today I'm quite happy to be inside, but there are some days when you want to be out there. But it's limiting, because you know the moment you start something, you know your phone is going to go off. The beauty of it is I have good lads, so I know the work is being done. They are very capable of making changes.

My deputy and I plan together, but he runs the course on a daily basis. He is really good, we got him from Royal Liverpool, and he's experienced an Open there, so I am extremely confident in his ability.

We don't have a huge team, but we are helped by the Royal Birkdale Artisans. In exchange for playing privileges they divot fairways, rake bunkers and help clear the range. They give us up to 100 man hours each per year and that frees my guys up to do all the technical things.

What is Open week like for you and your team?

We start at 4.15am in the morning and we want everything on the course finished as quick as we can.

Then we have meetings with the STRI and R&A and decide what we are going to do next.



When the event is on you are really busy and you are getting more and more tired as it goes on. It's funny, you never remember quite what you think you are going to remember.

If everything's going to plan I'll be going home at 10pm and will be back here at 4 in the morning. So there won't be much talking with my wife that week, I just want to get my head down. You are literally going home to sleep and shower and that's it.

The preparations have gone very smoothly so far. The contractors have been brilliant, which is much appreciated, and we're just making sure we have everything covered.

This is the Open, when more of the big names in golf come over to our shores than any other event. What pressure is there on you to produce the fastest greens on the European Tour?

It's quite the opposite actually. The speed of the greens generally depends on the wind as the last thing I want is ball oscillation. We are trying to get a reasonable speed, with lots of grass, which stops the ball oscillating. I would expect the greens to run at 10 feet, or if it's windy they may go 9 feet. The Met Office is on site and the

R&A will be in the meeting and it's their decision about the speed.

I find that when it comes to course preparation, it's actually more frustrating in the build up to the tournament. During the event you have all the information and all the experts on site, but we're on our own at the moment and so it's now when we are going to get our issues. For example, if they are building a stand and it rains for six days, you are going to get a mess, so now is the time when things tend to happen. By the time the event starts, everything should be in place, and to a degree the hard work is done.

How long does it take for things to get back to normal afterwards?

On the Monday after The Open it's very busy with the R&A corporate day. The course is rammed. I remember at Muirfield we thought we were going to have a round of golf and we wandered down at 6am and the tee was rammed already.

The contractors begin taking down the stands, but the course is ridiculously busy. All the volunteers and administrators have gone home and you are left with

Continued over

The day The Open champion saved a greenkeeper

At Royal Birkdale in 1998 it was American Mark O'Meara who secured his second Major of the season by outlasting Brian Watts in a four-hole aggregate playoff (pictured below with the BIGGA Support Team).

That late finish caused some incredible drama, but for BIGGA Support Team member Russell Black, it meant he was stranded after the shuttle bus left for the hotel without him.

Thankfully, help was at hand in the form of the new Open champion and his wife.

Russell, who was working at Westerhope, near Newcastle upon Tyne, at the time but has now been retired for three years, said: "I was assigned to Mark's group for the final round of the Open. His wife accompanied our group, and at the end she gave me an umbrella and a ball.

"We got held up with all the crowds and when I came to look for the bus, they had all left me."

With no means of getting back to the hotel in Southport, both Russell and Kevin Bell of Elmwood College, were left wondering what to do next.

Thankfully, the new Open champion and his wife came over and offered a helping hand.

"They were concerned that I had been left stranded," said Russell. "They asked if there was a problem and I told them I had missed the bus. Mark's wife said 'don't you worry about that, come with us'. I couldn't believe it, the guy had just won The Open."

The new Open champion sat in the passenger seat with the Claret Jug on his knee, while Russell and Kevin jumped into the back seat.

"When we arrived at the hotel I went inside and said 'lads, you wouldn't believe who I have just got a lift off'. They didn't believe a word I said."





just your team, so we can spend the next six weeks trying to get people off the site without making a mess, which can be quite hectic.

We will be litter picking for weeks afterwards. And because people are in the rough around holes, you get a lot of dead, broken grass. On a windy day it blows everywhere and that takes a long time to clear because we have to do it by hand.

Within three to four weeks of the stands leaving the site, you at least expect new shoots coming through. Sometimes all you have to do is run a vertidrain around the spectator routes to bring them back to life, and following the last two Opens, we haven't had to do as much as you think.

People who watched Padraig Harrington win the last Open here in 2008 will notice that there are far fewer trees around the place these days. What's been the thinking behind that removal?

I think Birkdale as a club has always strived to improve things. The course is situated on a Site of Special Scientific Interest and so we have to make sure we manage everything properly.

Left: Chris Whittle

Below: Constructing the TV stand at Birkdale's 18th hole



We are constantly liaising with Natural England and making sure they know what's going on around the course.

We have a lot of rare flower species, such as marsh orchids and helleborines, but unfortunately there were also a large number of conifers planted on the course in the 1970s, and we have had to do a huge amount of work to remove them.

Trees don't fit in with the fixed sand dune habitat, and so they had to go if we were to restore the old Birkdale.

There was so much sand within the bark of the wood that the tree surgeon was installing new blades every week. But it's a links course and we had lost the spectacular views, so we thought we needed to do it.

You've said this will be your last Open. Do you plan to do anything different to mark the occasion?

This will definitely be my last Open, but I'm not sure when I'm going to retire. I think when you put a date on that you start to wind down, and I don't want to do that.

Over the years I haven't had the opportunity to watch much golf. If you think about it, the main aim

of any greenkeeper should actually be to stay away from the golf. You don't want to be involved with the action.

I would like to go out and wander round and see a bit more of the golf. But if the wind's dodgy, I will have got a lot going on, and I don't want to be near the golfers if my radio goes off, that would be awful.

I imagine I won't be able to sit back and say I have enjoyed it until afterwards.

You've been at Royal Birkdale for 22 years. When you do eventually retire, what will you miss most about the place?

The 13th championship tee is my favourite spot on the entire course. It's quite high up and you get a great view of the course and the coast.

But my favourite hole is the 12th. You are close to the sea and it's a very good par 3 without being a monster, it's a real thinking hole.

I am so lucky, I know I am. And I'm not going to give up my job here at Royal Birkdale until I've had enough. Greenkeeping has been good to me, there's no doubt about it.



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Royal Birkdale gets ready for The Open

John Deere

Royal Birkdale in Southport hosts the 146th Open Championship this July.

For Chris Whittle, this will be the third time he has prepared Royal Birkdale for the event, following two more when he was course manager at Muirfield and deputy at Royal Lytham.

Although Chris said the course set-up for 2017 will be very much the same as it was for the last Open here in 2008, there have been a few recent changes to the course maintenance equipment fleet supplied by local John Deere dealer Turner Groundscare of Tarvin in Chester, whose area sales manager Ian Roberts has been looking after Royal Birkdale on both the sales and service side for over 22 years.

Eight new 180SL walk-behind greens mowers have replaced the previous 220C models, and have been joined by two A Series machines, an 8000AE hybrid electric five-gang cylinder mower for the surrounds and an 8800A rough mower. Additional tournament support machinery and staff will be provided for The Open as required.

"Since the last Open at Royal Birkdale in 2008, we have worked very closely with Chris and his team to provide the key greenkeeping staff with technical training at John Deere's Langar HQ, as well as specialist onsite training", said John Deere territory manager Marcus Morris. "This has been designed to help them become self-sufficient in all the main aspects of machinery servicing and maintenance, and understand how to optimise machine performance.

"This ongoing partnership between the club, John Deere and Turner Groundscare helps us all to achieve the best possible results where they matter, out on the course."

On the newest machines in the fleet, which also includes greens, tees and fairway mowers, Chris said: "The new 180SL walk-behinds were recommended to me by John Deere and Turners when it came time to replace the older models, so we got the dealer to send us one on demonstration and it basically sold itself.

"The narrower working width means we get very accurate contour following on our undulating greens, and at John Deere's suggestion we've also had them fitted with groomers, which we've never used before. These help to maintain the quality of cut and finish we're looking for.

"We only use the 8800A rough mower on the semi-rough, as we never cut the rough at Royal Birkdale," he adds.

"This is generally used to mow at two heights, one at around 35mm and the other at around 70mm — it's a Birkdale thing. We might widen this area from five to 10m if required for tournament purposes. Other than that nothing's really changed much at all."

Two new electric TE Gator utility vehicles have also been added to the fleet this year, which now includes three heavy-duty Pro Gators. One is equipped with an HD200 low-profile amenity turf sprayer, one with a cargo box and one with a Dakota top dresser. Aside from the course equipment, the main aspect of running an Open championship that has changed massively in Chris' eyes is how much bigger the tournament has become —

particularly the infrastructure that envelops the event, which had already started to go up on the course in late April.

"I went to Royal Troon last year and it was a real eye opener," he says. "We always get plenty of experienced greenkeeping support for our team behind the scenes, though, and this year will be no different. All The Open venues send a representative, plus we have a mix of local course volunteers, R&A Scholars and our own Royal Birkdale Artisan Golfers on hand to help get the extra work done. In addition, BIGGA will be providing volunteers to rake bunkers with each match during The Open.

"There's always a real family atmosphere around the course during the tournament, probably even more so this year as it will probably be my last Open. There will be people that I've worked with before at other courses, and some I've employed — one lad's even coming over from Pinehurst Resort in the US. He's from Southport originally and was a trainee here. It will be hard work, as usual, but I'm really looking forward to it, and to another successful Open at Royal Birkdale."



JOHN DEERE



John Deere

Perranporth:

Traditions maintained

Laurence Pithie MG

As soon as you step out onto the links at Perranporth, you are left in no doubt that this is a course set-up and maintained as golf should be.

Played on fine, firm turf all year round, there are no flowering cherry trees, no dark green stripes and no lush areas of turf. It is a course that reminds us all of the type of land where golf began centuries ago. This is also one of the main reasons why it has a thriving membership and it is so popular with visitors. This is golf in its raw state, offering players of all categories the opportunity to play the type of golf very different to that seen throughout the televised world.

The site on which the course was built was no more than a sand strewn wasteland of mining remains, lashed by wind and rain over centuries; the last tin mine having closed in 1830.

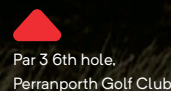
Nearly a century later, well over 100 members composed of local golfing enthusiasts formed a club on land leased by Perranporth Estates for an initial 21 years.

Designed by James Braid and opened for play in 1927, the course is nearly 6,300 yards in length and the 300 acre links site commands magnificent views over the sea and golden beaches. Details of the original construction of the course are listed in the club's 'History of

Perranporth Golf Club' book, which makes for a fascinating insight into how greens and tees were formed before being turfed and rolled. A gang of 30 men were employed at a total cost of £50 per week! Stone picking of fairway sites and removal of vegetation with scythes is a far cry from the world of modern golf course construction.

Interestingly, rabbits were a considerable problem at the time and required a combination of fencing and trapping to keep damage to a minimum. The course is located well above the shoreline on 'blown' sand overlying rock and stone, while grass species are dominated by fescues with smaller amounts of poa annua and rye located mainly on narrow walkways. The site is free draining, with only a handful of areas known to hold water and only after high levels of rainfall.

The maintenance of this course has long been in the capable hands of Billy Mitchell, who began his career at Perranporth in 1962. Billy has been in charge of the course for nearly 50 years, and it is the only one he has ever worked on. To find out more about the



Par 3 6th hole.
Perranporth Golf Club

changes and challenges during his reign. I met up with Billy to discover more.

"One of my first jobs as a young lad was to cut the greens with an 'over-green' mower, which I suppose was the fore-runner to the greens triplex, first introduced to the UK in 1968," said Billy. "There was very little mechanisation in those days and everything was either pulled or pushed apart from a tractor.

"Every day we walked for miles, carrying the tools that we required, rain, hail or shine and without the benefit of waterproof gear. The job was hard work but rewarding and we had more time to complete whatever task was required. Summer seasons were busy but winters were quiet and we could get on with repairs and small scale projects; albeit largely hand-work."

Billy explained how the continuing aim throughout his career has been to ensure the course is maintained as firm, fast running links. That means focusing on fostering an environment, which will allow the fine leaved fescues to flourish. He said: "This has not been without its ups and downs and you need to be strong willed and committed, while having the support of my employers, managers and committees.

"Having a dedicated team of like-minded greenkeepers has also been a god-send. Managing



the course is more of a challenge nowadays since golfers travel more widely and enjoy playing and seeing different courses, most of which are greener than ours.

“On many occasions I have been urged to adopt different practices to make the course more defined and more forgiving in terms of firmness, but I have resisted these and stuck to traditional links maintenance, albeit with modern equipment and techniques.”

To maintain the true links character of Perranporth, Billy must ensure any products applied and the techniques used favour fescues and not *Poa annua*. There are small amounts of poa present along with rye but these are managed and generally limited to where they are inevitable or necessary.

The main challenge is managing wear, especially since the course was designed in an era when play was minimal and largely confined to the summer months. There are numerous pinch-points around greens and tees and even some of the fairways, squeezed between sand dunes, are susceptible to wear. Around greens and tees, finer leaved rye is managed to accommodate wear.

This is done by applying a graminicide to adjacent areas, to keep it in check.

Aeration is carried out regularly and at varied depths using 8 to 12mm tines. However, there is no coring or any need to scarify or verti-cut since this would weaken the fescue and encourage poa.

Nutrient input is organic based with about 50 to 60kg of nitrogen applied annually, plus 70 to 80kg of potash.

The topdressing requirement is 100 to 120 tons per annum, but this is an expensive commodity in Cornwall since the favoured 90:10 mix is transported from the north west, and has been since 1985.

Billy said: “This is probably a rarity these days, but it means our green profiles are entirely consistent.”

Overseeding is done using a mix of chewings and creeping red fescue and is completed in spring via a combination of slit and dimple seeding. Watering is only applied when necessary and the team try and keep soil moisture content to below 15% for as much of the year as possible.

Other aspects of the maintenance programme are the use of compost teas throughout much of the year, along with regular use of a wetting agent. The club used its first fungicide in 10 years in 2016, largely to keep Dollar Spot at bay, and the club has enlisted the STRI as agronomists, largely to monitor and measure results and any tweaks that are required.

The course has only nine bunkers, since there are enough natural hazards in the form of steep banks, mounds and slopes. At least two of the bunkers are irrelevant to play and these may be removed in the near future.

Billy added: “Two other challenges we face are controlling invasive coarse grasses from the putting surfaces and the general lack of definition

Left to right: Nick Dash and Billy Mitchell



Continued over



Perranporth Golf Club

Greens Staff

Billy Mitchell, course manager
 Nick Dash, deputy course manager
 Fred Hemmings, assistant greenkeeper
 Shaun Trudgeon, assistant greenkeeper

Machinery

Greens:	Vehicles:
Toro 3420 Triflex	Mitsubishi Shogun
Toro 3250	Toro Workman x2
Vibe rollers	John Deere Gator
Tees/collars:	Attachments:
Toro 3100	Dakota Spinner Dresser
Fairways:	
Toro 5410	Team Sprayer — tractor mounted
Surrounds:	Toro Procore 648
Honda Push Rotary	Wiedenmann Gxi
Viking Push Rotary x2	Charterhouse Slitter
Roughs:	Sisis Vari- seeder
Toro Sidewinder 3100	Flail mower — front mounted
Lastec Rotary Deck	Aebi
Tractors: Aebi TT75	
Iseki 5390	
Iseki 5470	

Perranporth




 Golfers putting out on the 3rd green

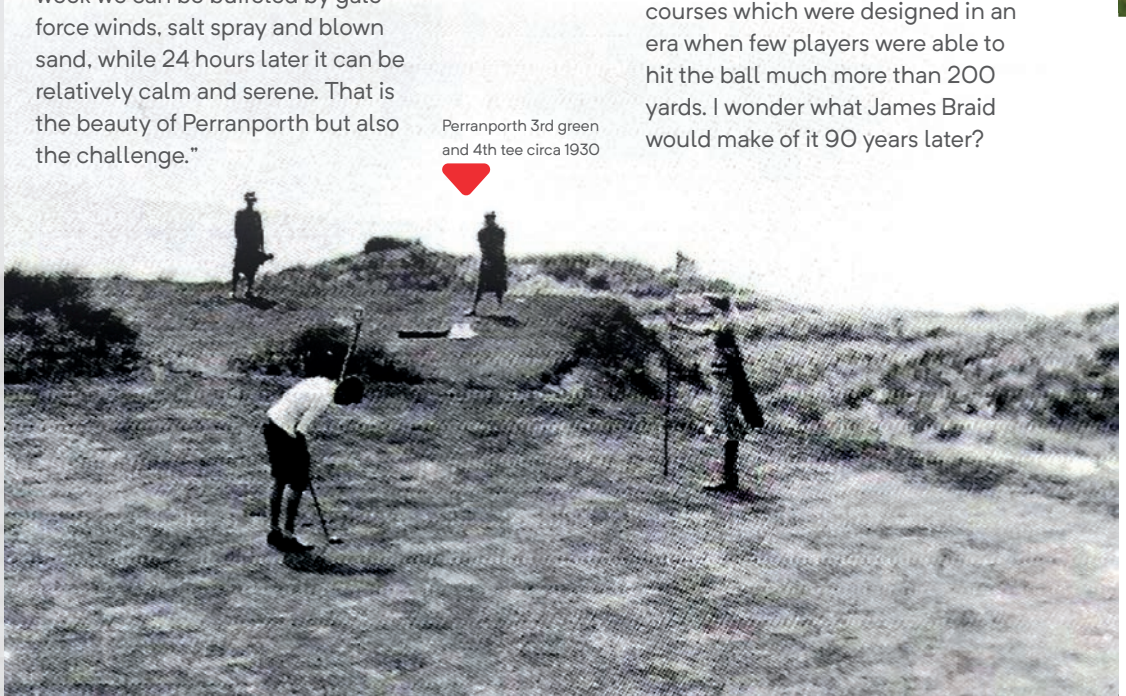
between fairways and rough. To control the former, we have used a graminicide on several occasions, sometimes with mixed results, and so we also need to rely on brushing for effective control, but it is an on-going challenge.

“As for any lack of definition between fairways and semi-rough, this is an issue we may have to address, but it is a delicate balance of not encouraging Poa annua, while accepting the reality of a soil pH of around eight.”

Weed control is limited to key areas, as needed, although there is a need to control earthworms on some fairways, made difficult with the loss of Carbendazim.

“Weather conditions here play a significant part in determining our maintenance practices and their timing,” said Billy. “Although we are not in an area of high rainfall, wind and its drying effect have a great impact on turf. Within any given week we can be buffeted by gale force winds, salt spray and blown sand, while 24 hours later it can be relatively calm and serene. That is the beauty of Perranporth but also the challenge.”

 Perranporth 3rd green and 4th tee circa 1930



After working at the same club for 55 years, the majority as course manager, Billy will soon be calling it a day and looking forward to a more restful retirement. This has come at a time when two other staff members are due to retire or move to pastures new, so there are challenges ahead for Perranporth.

It is pleasing to witness a course being maintained true to its traditional links values, especially at a time when many competing clubs place an emphasis on colour, definition and presentation. Perranporth is a great example of true sustainability; being part of the community, profitable, popular and requiring minimal inputs of water, fertiliser and chemicals.

Although the exposed nature of the course and limited access around some of the greens and tees pose inevitable challenges, it is perhaps club and ball technology which is the greater issue here and at many other courses which were designed in an era when few players were able to hit the ball much more than 200 yards. I wonder what James Braid would make of it 90 years later?



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Building a modern day links

Karl Hansell, BIGGA

Portstewart

In 1992 Bernard Findlay made a name for himself with a series of talks asking whether it would be possible to build a seaside links, or must it be left to nature to shape the course.

This month Bernard and the team at Portstewart host the Dubai Duty Free Irish Open, so we thought there would never be a better time to ask whether, in the intervening 25 years, he'd been able to answer that question.

Founded in 1894, Portstewart isn't a modern club. However, a portion of the course is modern, with The Strand Course being re-routed in 1986, when Bernard oversaw the construction of seven holes through the dunes in an area known as Thistly Hollow.

Portstewart has a history of being developed to designs by those who know it best. In 1934 the course was enlarged to 18 holes and designed in part by James Rea, the greenkeeper at the time. A.G. Gow of Portrush designed the first Strand Course in 1908 and then Des Giffin, a member and school teacher, designed the present 18-hole layout, built by Bernard and his team between 1986-90.

The freed-up nine of the Strand was developed and extended to become a second 18-hole course, known as the Riverside.

"While building the holes in the dunes I started thinking about whether it was possible to build a seaside links, or is it something you should leave to nature?" said Bernard. "I gave a talk with that question as the title and in the audience were the likes of Jim Arthur, which was a bit of a nail biter. I can tell you the answer I gave at the time was yes, you can build a links. But I have since come to realise that you won't produce a better course than nature can. The less you have to do in an existing environment, the better the links course."

"We built the holes for under £100,000, with most of the work done in house," explained Bernard. "For example, we had one very skilled man on a digger, who, amongst other things, would remove large sections of botanically valuable flora, making changes to shape and replacing sections with a minimum of disturbance."

Bernard was born in South London, but both he and his greenkeeping brother Joe moved over to Northern Ireland to take

up course management roles. Joe joined Royal Portrush in the mid 70s, while Bernard landed the Portstewart role in 1986.

Royal Portrush is the more famous of the courses and will host The Open in 2019, but at Portstewart there was the chance for Bernard to really make his mark on this part of Northern Ireland's Causeway Coast.

"The workforce at Portstewart had been used to making do with relatively little, and consequently they were very practical greenkeepers who had a really great knowledge of the site. I came in at the age of 29 and ever since it's been a learning experience.

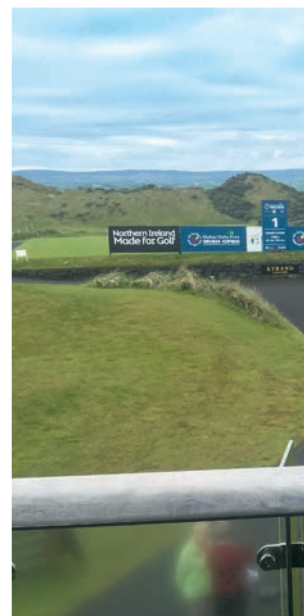
At Portstewart, there are two main problems that are preventing Bernard from having the links at the level he would be happy with. The first is the prevalence of sea buckthorn, and the second is the amount of ryegrass in the turf.

What makes this particularly annoying is that human hands introduced both. The moral of the story being, you can't beat nature.

The dunes at Portstewart are spectacular, with the highest measuring 35m. The system was declared an Area of Special Scientific Interest in 2000, but prior to that designation, and with the system constantly moving and evolving, it was felt in the 1940s

The Strand Course runs through an area known as Thistly Hollow

Bernard Findlay overlooking the first tee



Continued over

'I have come to realise that you won't produce a better course than nature can. The less you have to do in an existing environment, the better the links course.'

Portstewart





Portstewart Golf Club

Greens staff

Bernard Findlay, Course Manager

Brian McConway, Deputy Course Manager

Derek McMorris, Mechanic

Kieran McDonnell, Apprentice mechanic

Raymond McMath

Rodney McLoone

Eric O'Neill

Sam McAfee

John O'Brien

Neil Gibson

Jonathan Hemphill

Ian O'Neill

Nick Menzies

Ingmar Wolbert

Darryl Walker

Jonathan Doey

Liam Gillie

Part-time

Billy Johnson

Geoff Bradley

Jack McNeill

Stephen Taylor

Brian McKeever

Machinery

Toro

2 x 6700D Fairways

1 x 4500D Semi-rough

4 x 3150 Greens and aprons

6 x Hover pro's

1 x Procore 660 tractor mounted disc sower

1 x Procore 648


1 x 1750 Sprayer

1 x Bunker rake

1 x Hydrojet

1 x Proforce Blower



 The Strand course overlooking the River Bann

that something was needed to stabilise the sand. Sea buckthorn was introduced on to the dunes to prevent sand blowing on to a narrow gauge railway, used to transport large rocks from a quarry up river, alongside the range of sand dunes to the river estuary. The rock was used to armour the mouth of the river.

But sea buckthorn isn't native, and if left unmanaged it will colonise the sand dunes, turning them into a dense scrub and threatening the native wildlife. By the mid 80s, bushes covered 70,000m² of dune, 50,000m² of which was on golf course property.

Over the last 30 years Portstewart has been a "building site", according to Bernard.

"This isn't a complaint," he added. "Just a statement of fact. We are always doing something big, whether it be seven new holes in Thistly Hollow, nine new Riverside holes, or building the new clubhouse.

"I had always wanted to remove the buckthorn but this project seemed massive. However, in 2012 I was able to convince the club it was the right thing to do and since then we have removed 30,000m². The remaining 20,000m² will go before I retire."

The Northern Ireland Environment Agency has witnessed the success of the greenkeeping team and the commitment from the club to rid

the are of sea buckthorn, and so through a management agreement has agreed to pay for and take part in the removal of the bushes on the dune system at Portstewart.

The prevalence of ryegrass in areas of the course remains a big problem for Bernard. He explained: "After a presentation to the club council in 2012, it was agreed that I should start treatment of this weed grass.


"However, with concerns over the effect on green fees, I was later told not to proceed. A succession of high profile competitions in recent years has meant that there has never been a right time.

"I have since been assured by my greens convener that I may at last proceed with treatment of ryegrass after this year's Irish Open."

But during the Irish Open, Bernard's concern was not with the 450 million households worldwide that would see the course during TV coverage. Rather, he was aware of the scrutiny the course would come under from the 40 volunteer greenkeepers who came on board to assist course preparation during the event.

Bernard said: "Generally, when the public and most golfers look at a golf course they use what I would call a 'lazy look' and see nothing but grass, having no concern about botanical composition. But most greenkeepers know much better than that."



 Portstewart's clubhouse

The membership will again be reminded that treatment of ryegrass will require several applications of chemical over two to three seasons, allied with vigorous, regular over-sowing of desirable grass species.

"It will be a challenge to meet the raised expectations of golfers that have just seen a well-prepared course on TV, now being treated with a chemical to remove patches of ryegrass," said Bernard. "Over recent years would-be visitors

have become increasingly aware of maintenance that may upset their round of golf and frequently make enquiries about such activities prior to booking. Communication to all concerned will be very important."

Joe Findlay has since retired from his role at Royal Portrush, and Bernard Findlay is increasingly aware that he will eventually pass on responsibility to a new course manager. His sole aim now is to pass on the three courses at Portstewart in the best shape possible.

In the shed continued

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Portstewart





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Georgia on my mind

How Jacobsen's Augusta move impacts the mower manufacturer

You won't have noticed, they have made a point of ensuring standards haven't been affected, but Jacobsen's American headquarters have shifted states.

In leaving its historic base in Charlotte, North Carolina, parent company Textron has established a superhub of brands in Augusta, Georgia, in a move the company hopes will improve efficiencies across all its sectors.

Textron Specialized Vehicles is a massive organisation. From its Augusta base the company makes brands such as E-Z-GO Golf Cars, Cushman Utility Vehicles, and Textron Off-Road Vehicles.

Other brands synonymous with the Textron organisation include Cessna Aircraft, Bell Helicopter, Beechcraft Aircraft and Arctic Cat.

Now you can add Jacobsen mowers to that list.

Jacobsen is undertaking an 18-month relocation to the site and Greenkeeper International was the first magazine invited along to check out the facility, as the move entered its halfway stage.

"In Charlotte we were at capacity," said Gina Putnam, Director Channel Development at Jacobsen. "We couldn't make any modernisations or grow the operation, or do any of the things modern technology will allow us to do to improve our machines."

The factory, or West Campus as it is referred to, is located in south Augusta a few hundred yards from Textron Specialized Vehicles' corporate headquarters. The facility was purchased by Textron in 2015 from cleaning products producer, Proctor & Gamble. In total, the buildings cover 680,000 square feet, including manufacturing and administrative space. Although that is shared between Jacobsen and sister companies E-Z-GO, Cushman, Textron Off Road and others, when you compare it to the 300,000 square foot site at Charlotte, it makes for a huge upgrade.


"For the first couple of months we were in here it smelled fantastic,

because P&G used to make washing powder here," said Gina. "One of the main benefits of bringing the various US elements of our business together in Augusta is that there will be a lot of sharing ideas and ways of looking at things between our product management, engineering and manufacturing engineering teams. Maybe someone will see one of our designs and say 'have you ever thought about doing this?' Or we, who have been designing mowers for centuries, will say 'have you thought about doing it like this?'"

Jacobsen has been operating in Charlotte since 2001, when the company moved from its former home in Racine, Wisconsin. The Charlotte facility had nine production lines, whereas Augusta will have three. However, the modernisation of the facility means more mowers will be built more efficiently, and Jacobsen claim the machines will be better than ever.

"We're going to be building smarter, rather than quicker," said Gina. "Our Charlotte facility had been there years, it hadn't gone through any significant modernisation and it was beginning to show its age."

By contrast, a multimillion dollar investment will ensure this facility features some of the latest tools. With 99% of the machines being

 Jacobsen has moved to a new facility in Augusta, Georgia



Jacobsen

built by machinery and skilled assemblers, the ability to ensure high standards are maintained is vital.

A magnetic strip runs down each production line, with a cart attached that transports the mower through the various stations. At each point another stage of construction takes place, until a completed mower emerges at the end. However, if the system detects that the work at a station hasn't been completed, this will be flagged up, and the process will be

stalled until each stage has been fully completed.

Gina explained: "The cart will not move from station one to the second station until everything that needs to be done is complete. If it hasn't had something like the circuit quality checked, it will stop the entire line. This all ensures we are over exceeding customer expectations."

"For example, vital components of every machine have a serial number. You can track this number from the start of the building process to the finish to ensure there is the quality that needs to be there. This level of care hasn't been available to us before."

Jacobsen began integrating with the rest of the Textron Specialized Vehicles operation in January 2017, with the entire process expected to take 18 months to complete. During the intervening period construction will take place both at Augusta and Charlotte, with processes steadily shifting to the new site.

Textron Specialized Vehicles has called the Augusta area home since E-Z-GO was founded there



One of the Jacobsen production lines

Continued over

@BIGGALtd July 2017 59



Jacobsen

in 1954. The company already employed 1,400 people in Georgia, with the move creating up to 150 further jobs with Jacobsen. Existing staff in Charlotte were offered a relocation package in the move, which was supported by the Augusta Economic Development Authority.

In bringing the various divisions together under one roof, Textron Specialized Vehicles has been able to improve its buying power. Whereas parts would have been purchased independently by the divisions in the past, they can now work together to create a better "efficiency in manufacturing" to deliver the best value for the customer, said Gina.

"With the old system, we all had individual supply chain people. So Textron looked at us and said 'why don't you buy all the parts in one

place?' In terms of supply chain, it made sense to centralise all that, and our buying power has improved.

"This is evolution not revolution and throughout this entire process our aim has been to make sure the customer journey with us hasn't been affected. We are using all the innovation, modernisation and manufacturing technology that's out there to provide the utmost in quality for the golf course maintenance industry."

And the team also hopes that the Ransomes Jacobsen factory in Ipswich will get a boost from improvements Stateside.

"The Ipswich factory has been there a long time, but it's a bright, modern factory, following ongoing heavy investment from Textron in

 A mower nears the end of the production line

the RJ business since its acquisition in 1998," said Gina. "The guys working those lines have been there for a long time and Ransomes mowers have been built in the UK since the 1800s. I don't see that changing any time soon and Ipswich manufactures its own distinct product lines, as well as some of the models that are also produced in Augusta and Charlotte for the US market.

"But we imagine this factory will become a blueprint for the future. We are learning lessons here that will be put into practice in Ipswich.

"Our hope for the future of Jacobsen is that the same great team is able to provide innovative products with the fantastic quality of cut we have always delivered."



Left: E-Z-GO Bumpers

Below: Inside the Jacobsen Factory



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



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GI/E2Castle/7/2017

The benefits of using a wetting agent

Paul Morris, GBR Technology

'For a surface to be readily wetted the surface energy of that surface needs to be above the surface tension of the liquid that you want to wet out.'

Wetting Agents

The above statement is the underlying principle that drives the need for a wetting agent.

The good news is that silica, and sand is largely silica, has a high surface energy — above that of water in fact. So water alone will readily wet sand.

However, hydrophobicity — water repellancy — within a rootzone may arise from organic material, such as plant material, plant breakdown material (particularly under anaerobic conditions),

fungi, insect decay and excrement and especially under low soil moisture content.

A golf green has very specific requirements as it needs to tolerate close mowing and provide a near perfect putting surface. Disruption of that surface, in addition to presenting a negative visual aspect, can also affect the run of the ball. This is certainly to be avoided and a greenkeeper will go to very great lengths to ensure the consistency and health of his greens. Hydrophobic soil that does not allow ingress of water and water-soluble nutrients will lead to dying turf, which will be

visible as localised dry patch. A good wetting agent programme can eliminate or minimise this.

The most common method is the use of a monthly residual. Ten to 20 litres per hectare are applied monthly during the main growing season, usually from March til October. Applied monthly however, you need a wetting agent that will lower interfacial tension sufficiently, but also one that will maintain an effective soil concentration over the time between applications — the latter point is quite important.



With water washout and biodegradation depleting your surfactant over time, products that can resist these better are able to maintain the benefits more consistently between applications and this may be more apparent as conditions get more challenging.

So what can you expect from wetting agents?

In 2016 GBR Technology commissioned an STRI test programme on three-monthly residuals and an untreated control running from April through until October. The test site was an area of golf green turf grown on a sandy loam root zone at the STRI experiment ground in Bingley, Yorkshire. The turf used for the trial had suffered dry patch in the past. The trial included two periods of 'dry down', which meant withholding irrigation and using covers when required to keep off rain water. Multiple plots were treated and statistical analysis performed on the results, so the conclusions derived were based on real differences rather than those within experimental error.

The final conclusions were:

- The residual wetting agents significantly reduced the incidence of dry patch formation when the turf was put under moisture stress
- Average soil moisture content remained higher under moisture stress when using the wetting agents, but was not affected at normal moisture content
- The wetting agents significantly sped up the rewetting of the soil profile after a dry down period
- The wetting agents significantly reduced the hydrophobicity of the soil

The above benefits are certainly good ones and are seen based on the particular parameters tested, but what other benefits should we expect?

In essence, a good wetting agent should produce more uniform conditions across a green by ensuring that water contents are more consistent from point to point. We can see too that wetting agents allow a greater dry down without the same risk of developing dry patch — useful in the preparation for tournaments when water application may be reduced in order to speed up greens.

The use of wetting agents should really be seen as part of the process of better water management. Wetting agents should not be a tool that means you can pay less attention to this aspect.

Knowledge of rainfall and irrigation coverage versus evapotranspiration rates can be valuable information that will lead to long term increased understanding on water requirements.

Continued over

Wetting agents are an important tool for the modern greenkeeper



Measuring soil moisture with a reliable probe and examining small cores —visually and with a water drop test to examine hydrophobicity — can build knowledge of a site's water requirements and hydrophobicity. It's easy to think that water washout might be a significant factor in depleting a wetting agent over time, but in a dry summer where a wetting front doesn't get to penetrate far below the surface, then it's clear biodegradation will be the main factor in reducing your wetting agent over time.

The behaviour of water in the profile can be quite complex. The profile will contain porosity — do you know how much percentage airspace you have in your profile? We can think of this in terms of macropores and capillary pores. Macropores are larger ones and capillary pores are smaller, where the surfaces of the pores exert a significant surface energy effect on the flow of water within them.

When all pores are filled — both macro and capillary — we reach a state of saturation. Models of water flow under saturated conditions are based largely around considering hydraulic forces. In this state, soil air has been excluded — except that dissolved in the water — and conditions will quickly become anaerobic.

The state where the capillary pores are filled with water but the macro pores filled with air can be considered as being at 'field capacity'. In this state conditions should be aerobic and there is sufficient moisture. But as water content decreases further you eventually reach the wilt point of the plant. Approaching wilt point, the plant starts to suffer. Cortical cells shrink, further reducing water contact, and the plant starts to die. A good level to reach is somewhere between field capacity and wilt point.

Water can be an expensive resource when used in high volume. On soils and

vegetation, water that falls can run off across the surface, heading to watercourses, and it can flow away through macropores. This can mean the loss of valuable water that could have gone to the rootzone and can also lead to leeching of chemicals into watercourses. Water that sits on the surface and evaporates directly would also have missed its chance to be taken up by the plant.

Wetting agents can significantly reduce run off, prevent flow of water through macropores and dramatically reduce the tendency for water to sit in upper thatchy layers. Bear in mind too that a thatchy surface that becomes water logged will dramatically reduce the diffusion of oxygen into, and carbon dioxide out of, the rootzone, which can increase anaerobic conditions.

Wetting agents use surfactants. The market for surfactants in agriculture is in excess of £1 billion globally, largely as adjuvants,

and the effects surfactants have on surfaces can make a tremendous difference across many applications. Their use in turf wetting is well established and products continue to be refined to a degree to maximise performance.

Marketing claims on wetting agents try to distinguish products and gain sales, so it can be hard at times to know if the underlying science supports one product over another.

Ultimately though, the choice of what product to use will depend upon technical and other factors. A good programme tailored to your needs should help you produce the finest playing surface possible through a range of difficult environmental conditions.

GBR Technology Limited

GBR Technology Ltd has been established since 1993 and entered the amenity market with wetting agents eight years ago.

With expertise in surfactants, wetting agents is a core area for GBR Technology with direct sales in the UK via the technical sales force and in Scotland via Terra Firma and in Yorkshire via Greenkeeping Services. We also manufacture products for other companies and export to end users and resellers.

In recent years GBR Technology's portfolio has grown significantly. With new products the company has developed and manufactured in-house, as well as a wide range of fertilisers, turf nutrients, grass seeds (from Hurrells), plant protection products and ancillary products.

GBR Technology comes from a premium quality lubricants heritage, supplying fluids and greases into a wide range of industries and we are also a significant supplier to the UK Ministry of Defence. Lubricant sales continue to flourish and the company offers engine oils, hydraulic fluids, greases and other lubricants into amenity markets.

The company holds the ISO 9001 quality standard and prides itself on a high level of customer and technical support. The aim in the amenity sector is to continue to grow strongly, bringing high quality products to market for our customer base of end users and other amenity companies.



Indigrow

Research has been a major factor in the increased use of wetting agents and Indigrow has been at the forefront of this development. Indigrow's work has led to high quality products, which utilise the latest triple-surfactant technologies and market leading, highly concentrated penetrants. Recent studies led to the development of Magnum 357 Calibre, a new technology advanced water management tool which combines three different surfactant technologies. The product provides even spreading over turf surface, efficient water penetration and water holding capacity through the use of reverse block co-polymers.

As soils dry out, hydrophobic compounds polymerise and water repellency increases. Once critical low moisture content is reached, soils shift from wettable to non-wettable, impacting infiltration and unsaturated flow in affected soils.

Using a highly hydrophobic soil as a control, Magnum 357 Calibre and a market leading competitor's product were compared. Individual samples of the soil were treated with the two wetting agents, and the MED test was repeated after 24 hours.

Soils that had received Magnum 357 Calibre and the market leader were able to be penetrated with pure water in under five seconds and hence scored zero on the scale. The treated soils were left for seven days and the test repeated. Again, both wetting agents scored zero. These simple but effective test showed that Magnum 357 Calibre is as effective as the market leader in curing soil hydrophobicity and allowing water penetration, even on root zone types which are known to be very resistant to water movement.

More details on the research can be found at www.indigrow.com or by email at growth@indigrow.com.



Headland Amenity

Various application rates have no effect on the impact of using TriCure AD, the wetting agent from Headland Amenity.

TriCure AD can be used to combat Dry Patch and hydrophobic conditions on fine turf and can be just as effective over a range of different application rates, according to conditions, expectations and soil types.

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Wetting Agents

Six tips for making the most of your fertiliser budget

James Whittick, Director, Velvit

Here at Velvit we have been manufacturing fertilisers, wetting agents and bio-stimulants for 19 years.

It never ceases to upset me when I hear of turf industry professionals inadvertently paying too much for these types of products.

I'd like to share with you some of our tips for making the most of your fertiliser budget, which for many of you is under increasing pressure to be reduced.

There are fundamental and overriding agronomic reasons that will define your fertiliser choices but, once these are fulfilled, there are a number of things to consider so you do not overpay for your product.

1. High-nutrient versus low-nutrient concentration

There are extremely good reasons for using low level nutrient fertilisers such as a 6-2-4 or 4-0-4, especially on high value, shortcut turf areas. It is all about a light application with many granules per square metre, giving even coverage and top results without speckling or uneven growth.

However, there are certain circumstances when high nutrient content fertilisers can be used to good effect. Preseeding is just such an opportunity to buy the most concentrated product to do the job. A 12-18-12 is twice the

concentration of a 6-9-6, but it costs less than twice the amount to manufacture. Both have the same typical preseed NPK ratio 2:3:2.

You will get the most bang for your buck if you buy the higher concentrated preseed. Roughs, some fairways and sports pitches with plenty of retained soil nutrients are other areas which won't suffer for using higher concentrated fertilisers.

2. Check the nitrogen percentage

Controlled release fertilisers have an important place in the ranges used by turf professionals. They help even out the peaks and troughs of colour, growth and sward performance. It is usually all about the nitrogen and so always check what percentage of this nutrient is controlled release in your chosen fertiliser.

If you're looking for a fertiliser with true, measurable longevity then the percentage of nitrogen that is controlled should be 60-85%. This is ideal to give an initial nitrogen hit and then a good, solid release over your three, four or five months. There are good reasons for also choosing fertilisers with 35-55% of nitrogen coated, but any less than 30% may not



give you the longevity that is claimed. Check the label carefully and make sure you are getting what you are paying for.

3. Homogenous or blend?

These two granular fertilisers are often pitched against each other by aggressive salesmen, but both have their place. At Velvit we manufacture and offer both and we know where and how they should be used. Homogenous NPKs are more expensive to make, and therefore also for you to buy, but if your budget can cover it, use them on your high value areas such as greens and tees. However, if your budget won't stretch then a blend will work well, as long as it is top quality and from a manufacturer such as Velvit who has the knowledge to make them correctly. For all other areas of higher cut turf such as fairways and roughs, a



blend will give you flexibility and performance with a saving on your budget.

4. Be clear on your delivery costs

Typically rates charged by couriers to deliver a full 1,000kg pallet are around £45 to £55. If you are paying substantially less than your salesman may have wrapped the costs into the product price. Often, therefore, you are paying double for the transport. Always ask for product and transport costs clearly split out from each other and in this way you can compare all quotes equally. If you are trying to squeeze the prices down ask for a discount on the product only and keep the transport clear and separate. In this way you can compare product with product.

When I see tenders where a distributor is forced to submit one "delivered price" for a fertiliser that may be taken in any size drops, from 20 bags to 300 bags, then you know that they will be forced

to wrap the highest possible transport cost into the quote, just in case half-pallet deliveries are all that is taken. Don't force salesmen into this corner, keep delivery costs clear and separate.

5. Pack size can save a lot of money

This is especially true for liquid fertilisers. The per litre price for a liquid in a 20 litre drum compared to a 10 litre drum is around 28% cheaper. From 10 litre to 200 litre drum it is around 50% cheaper and from 10 litre to 1,000 litre IBC it is 74% cheaper per litre.

There is a lot of plastic involved in a 10 litre can (per litre) and the price of packaging is on an upward trend.

There are also some much smaller savings to be made with granular fertilisers in big bulk bags. But with less plastic involved in a bag compared with a barrel, they are a much lower percentage, perhaps 2-3%.

6. Granule size choice

It costs in the region of 15-25% more to make a 1-2mm fertiliser granule compared with a 2-3mm grade. Of course, many situations absolutely have to have a mini-grade product, but where it is not absolutely necessary then consider the saving to be made by choosing a larger granule. Your main concern with larger granules is probably speckling but as long as caution is taken by choosing a quality fertiliser with the correct NPK levels for the situation, your spreader is calibrated correctly and the application rates are correct, then this should be avoided.

Here at Velvit Ltd, sold through trade distributors only, we follow all the above principles, and many more as well, to bring you a range of fertilisers, wetting agents and bio-stimulants that are professional, trustworthy and on which your budget can be efficiently spent. Consider my tips and get the very best for your money.



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Around the Green Northern



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North East



Paul Walton
@paul_walton20
paul_walton14@hotmail.co.uk

I'm sure everyone will have been out with their Primo Maxx as it's like a grass factory out there.

It's been a number of weeks since my trip to TPC Sawgrass and I'm reminiscing on some fantastic memories. Thank you BIGGA and John Deere for the opportunity. I can't stress enough for any BIGGA members out there to apply. It's a short video application to get you going. More details on the BIGGA Facebook page and the BIGGA website. I promise the experience won't disappoint.

What's on near you

See our events page for details of what's happening in your region



North East: John Scurfield

Good luck to those who enter!

There will be a game of footgolf held on the 28 of June at Knotty Hill at 4.30pm. The North East Section play the Championship side Cleveland in a 9-man team shoot out. I'm sure the result will be on Facebook by the time this article is printed. Bring your shin pads Cleveland.

Tyneside is opening a new golf centre and academy on Sunday 2 July. The new practice facilities will include a putting green, chipping green and dedicated short game target area.

There is also a new 6-hole par 3 course. Sounds like you lads have had a busy few months at Tyneside and I will definitely be down to have a look.

Welcome to our new North East Section committee member John Scurfield of Morpeth.

A woodland management day was held at Chester-le-Street.

North West



Steve Hemsley
@BIGGANorthWest
steven.hemsley1@ntlworld.com

Well, hands up who is sick of cutting grass? A cold, dry spring was followed by wet and warm temperatures which kicked everything off royally. I'm sure every course in the region now has good definition, with members saying "Why are the greens slow?"

A warm welcome from the section to all the team at Gathurst who are now members. We look forward to seeing you all soon.

On 26-27 July at Bolton Old Links there is the PGA Northern Region Championship. If anyone is looking for volunteer tournament prep experience please contact me for details.

A more detailed report will be given next month for the Turf Club Trip to Birkdale to see the preparations underway for this year's Open.

If anyone has any news of squad movement, marriages, births etc please feel free to contact the section so that we can publicise it for you.

Finally, just a word to say please review your security measures at your facility. Golf clubs all over are being watched and targeted so look at ways to make it very difficult to steal anything. Keep machinery not being used inside, don't leave utility vehicles with trimmers unattended while having lunch and communicate to the club with regard to trackers and other security measures.



North East: Woodland Management Day



North West: The Gathurst Golf Club team have all joined BIGGA

Sheffield



Wayne Lazenby
 @SheffieldBigga
 wlazenby5@gmail.com

The section would like to congratulate our secretary Neil Peters on getting married. Hope you have many years of happiness together.

We would also like to wish Eric Johnson a belated 82nd birthday. He's still a very active member of staff at his golf club.

Just a quick reminder of our autumn competition at Coxmoor on 6 October. Hope to see some new faces there.

Congratulations to Scott Reeves who completed the Half Ironman. The event comprises of 1.9km swim, 90km bike ride and 21.1km run and Leyland course manager Scott completed the challenge in 6 hours 14 minutes.

Cleveland



Anthony McGeough
 amcgeough@aol.com

I'm sat in front of my laptop writing this little segment and I realise that I don't have too much to write about. The Cleveland information highway has become a little sparse of late. To help make this a little easier to write it would be great if everyone in the section could send me some news. It could be anything from a course, construction project, new employee or just something you are proud of and want to share.

A Woodland Management Education day at Chester-le-Street Golf Club was held on the 7 June and although the attendance numbers were on the low side it was extremely informative and highlighted the need for parkland courses to have a good management plan in order to maintain the continued playability of many courses which were heavily planted in the 80's and 90's. I took note and my log burner is going to be working overdrive this winter!

Just a reminder that the TPC Sawgrass application forms are out. This is an excellent opportunity for any greenkeeper and I don't think the Cleveland section has been represented before. You can enter on the BIGGA website and it's just a few questions and a short video of 2-3 minutes. The prize is well worth a bit of time outside your comfort zone.

Section News

We want to hear what's been going on in your section

Email your news to Karl@bigga.co.uk

Congratulations to Danny Simpson on his appointment as head green keeper at Dinsdale.

It's been a month of anniversaries with Ian Pemberton celebrating his 50th birthday and Phil Hargrave celebrating 10 years at South Shields.

Northern



Rob Gee
 @Rob_Grn
 robgee.03@blueyonder.co.uk

I can't believe I'm sat writing this report in my paddling pool! Last Saturday play on the course was suspended due to water logging, but this Saturday there's a heatwave.

Our next competition is at Howley Hall, so see you all there.

Congratulations to John Waite and Nik Blesic on completing The Heart of Yorkshire 2017 Sportive 100km route, starting and ending at the First Direct Arena in Leeds.



Northern: John Waite and Nik Blesic

North Wales



Can you become the face of BIGGA North Wales? Email karl@bigga.co.uk
 @BIGGANorthWales

We hope you are all enjoying our usual mix of summer weather.

As you can see we are looking for someone to get involved with Around the Green for North Wales each month. This can either be one person or you can share the role. If you are interested, contact Karl Hansell by emailing karl@bigga.co.uk for more details.

These are times when it is good to get together and discuss things that are happening in golf clubs, so if you are lucky enough to get an invitation to a breakfast meeting then why not go along and have a chat to other greenkeepers facing similar challenges.

Our next golf meeting is at Prenton on 23 August. If you would like further details or to book a place please contact Carl Crocher by email at carlcrocher@gmail.com or call 07702 316886.

Around the Green Central England



Chairman

Matthew Nutter

07775 537015 | [@mattnutt](#)
Mattnutter05@aol.com



Regional Administrator

Roger Butler

07525 593359 | [@BIGGACentraleng](#)
roger@bigga.co.uk

BB&O



Craig Earnshaw

[@craigdearnshaw](#)

craig@harleyfordgolf.co.uk

Midland



Dave Collins

greendave2004@hotmail.co.uk



East of England: ATG correspondent Ian Collett shot a hole in one at Rockliffe Hall

We have some great events happening over the next few months, so I have some "save the dates" for you.

The next golf day is on 12 July. It is booking up well, however when this lands on your doorstep there will only be a few days before this event. It's still worth getting hold of Matt Short if you fancy playing, as dropouts do happen.

We have a Rainbird workshop in conjunction with MJ Abbot on 13 July at Caversham Heath. Again this may be booked up but worth an email to Ben Kebby if you would like to attend.

Now, a chance to play another great course in our area. On 26 September Goring and Streetly will be holding the BIGGA National qualifier. 1st and 2nd place will receive free entry to the competition, courtesy of the section.

Congratulations to Billy MacArthur from Temple on passing his NVQ 2.

Congratulations also to Craig Betts on his appointment as course manager of Aldwickbury Park. Well done to Graham Down, who has moved from Aldwickbury Park and is the new the course manager at Harewood Downs. Well done guys.

That's it from me this month. Remember if there is any BB&O news drop me a line or email.

Mid Anglia



Darren Mugford

d.mugford@rigbytaylor.com

First of all an apology for no notes last month. It's been a crazy spring, as it has for everyone. I have felt very stressed out, just like many others, including many reading who think they are going through it alone and that there's no help out there. If you need to talk, call us or call Roger Butler and we will do our best to help.

A massive day is coming up at Patshull Park with a charity day on behalf of the BIGGA Greenkeepers Benevolent Fund. We thank everyone who has donated prizes so far and if anyone would like to offer a 4 ball or any other prize, we would massively appreciate it. If you would like to enter the details are: Wednesday 30 August; £160 per team; closing date 23 August; prize sponsors - the golf industry; team of four Stableford, best two to count.

Spring results from a fabulous day at Broadway, sponsored by Campey Turf Care. A massive thanks to Jamie Blake and his team for putting on a fantastic course in great condition. Results: 1st, Clive Jones, 36 points; 2nd, George Page, 35pts; 3rd, Ed Stant, 35pts; 4th, Jack Groves, 35pts; 5th, Dan Taylor, 34pts; Nearest the pin. 5th hole, Ross Carter, 8th hole, Rhys Thomas, 13th hole, Ray Hayhurst; Nearest pin in 2, 11th hole, Richard Moule.

13 September — JCB course and factory visit, including ICL and Syngenta presentations.

8 November — autumn seminar at The Chase, sponsored by Countrywide

Contact Andrew Laing to book places either at andrew.laing@gaudet-luce.co.uk or on 07870 188619.

Autumn Team Event and AGM at South Staffs. Thursday 5 October, start 12pm, cost £25. Closing date for entries 21 September. Prize sponsor Rigby Taylor and Working Turf.

What's on near you

See our events page for details of what's happening in your region

A massive day is coming up at Patshull Park with a charity day on behalf of the BIGGA Greenkeepers Benevolent Fund. Wednesday 30 August; £160 per team; closing date 23 August; prize sponsors - the golf industry; team of four Stableford, best two to count.

Congratulations also to Craig Betts on his first appointment as course manager of Aldwickbury Park. Well done to Graham Down, who has moved from Aldwickbury Park and is the new course manager at Harewood Downs. Well done guys.

East of England



Ian Collett
i.collett@
rigbytaylor.com

Graham McDonald of Newark has won the Nottingham Seniors County Championship at Worksop.

Also Newark has a new apprentice, Charlie Gilman, starting on the greenstaff. Welcome and good luck.

On a personal note, I scored a hole in one at the 5th Hole 145yd par 3 at Rockcliffe Hall on Thursday 25 May.

Our next golf day is to be held at Belton Park on Thursday 27 July with a 1pm tee. This will be the Summer Cup sponsored by Burdens. Please contact Bruce Hicks on 07931714922 or bthicks@gmail.com if you would like to take part. Please note that the dress code after the golf is smart casual.

Please send any information, news, stories of interest or anything anyone would like to see in GI Magazine via my email or give me a call.

East Midlands



Paul Fowkes
@pazza20001
pazza20001@
gmail.com

My name is Paul Fowkes and I am a greenkeeper at Rothley Park. I will be taking over from Matt Gilks and writing our monthly piece for the section. First off I would like to thank Matt for writing the report and now allowing me to take over. He has done a great job and will still be around as the trade rep on the committee, along with Asa English as chairman, Martin Hickling as secretary and treasurer, Jamie McGrath as education officer, and, of course, Roger from BIGGA.

Over the next few months the section has a lot of events coming up, including footgolf, the par 3 competition on 24 August and hopefully an education day. I know these events are great and no doubt will be well supported. All relevant information will be sent out as soon as it's all arranged.

As this is my first report, if any of the section have anything to add or would like to see do not hesitate to contact myself via email or through the East Midlands Section of Facebook or on Twitter. I am sure we all have stories or achievements that we could share.

One such story is Glyn Buckby who has achieved 35 years' service at Market Harborough. Congratulations Glyn!



New Members

Scotland & Northern Ireland

Alan Dykes	GK — Newmacher
James Peace	GK — Trump It'l Golf Scotland
Martin Bennett	GK — Haggs Castle
Gill Ross	AGK — Newmacher
Gary Jamieson	AGK — Haggs Castle
Mattias Kolborg	AGK — St Andrews Links Trust

Northern

Graeme Francis	Affiliate — Netafim UK
Ian Macknight	Affiliate — Lytham Green Drive
Alistair Bolch	GK — Malton & Norton
Sam Holtby	GK — Malton & Norton
Neil Hullah	HGK — Leeds

Central England

Kevin Atkinson	Affiliate — Eco - Water Management Treatment
Laurence Rogers	GK — Tadmarton
Richard Moule	GK — Gaudet Luce
Richard Hawker	HGK — Newbold Comyn
Giles Armstrong	AGK — Winter Hill
Stephen French	AGK — Beedles Lake

South East

Charlie Lacey	DHGK — Oak Park
Nico Gledenhuys	DHGK — Sandy Lodge
Nicholas Watmore	GK — Oak Park
Ben O'Brien	GK — Warren
Tom Cable	GK — Blackmoor
Calum Henderson	AGK — Sandy Lodge
Lawrence Jones	AGK — Warren
Reece Harvey	AGK — Sandy Lodge
Wayne Pile	AGK — Broome Park

South West and South Wales

Andrew Bowden	GK — Pyle & Kenfig
Lloyd Preece	GK — Pyle & Kenfig
Toby Munday	AGK — Bath

International

Wendy O'Brien	Jurmala
Anthony Cooney	Student — Colaiste Stiofain Naofa
Barry O'Dwyer	Student — Colaiste Stiofain Naofa
Brendan McGrath	Student — Colaiste Stiofain Naofa
Chris Horgan	Student — Colaiste Stiofain Naofa
Cian Haines	Student — Colaiste Stiofain Naofa
Eoghan Carroll	Student — Colaiste Stiofain Naofa
Gerald O'Connell	Student — Colaiste Stiofain Naofa
John Daly	Student — Colaiste Stiofain Naofa
Mark Van Veen	Student — Colaiste Stiofain Naofa
Nigel O'Shea	Student — Colaiste Stiofain Naofa

Around the Green South East



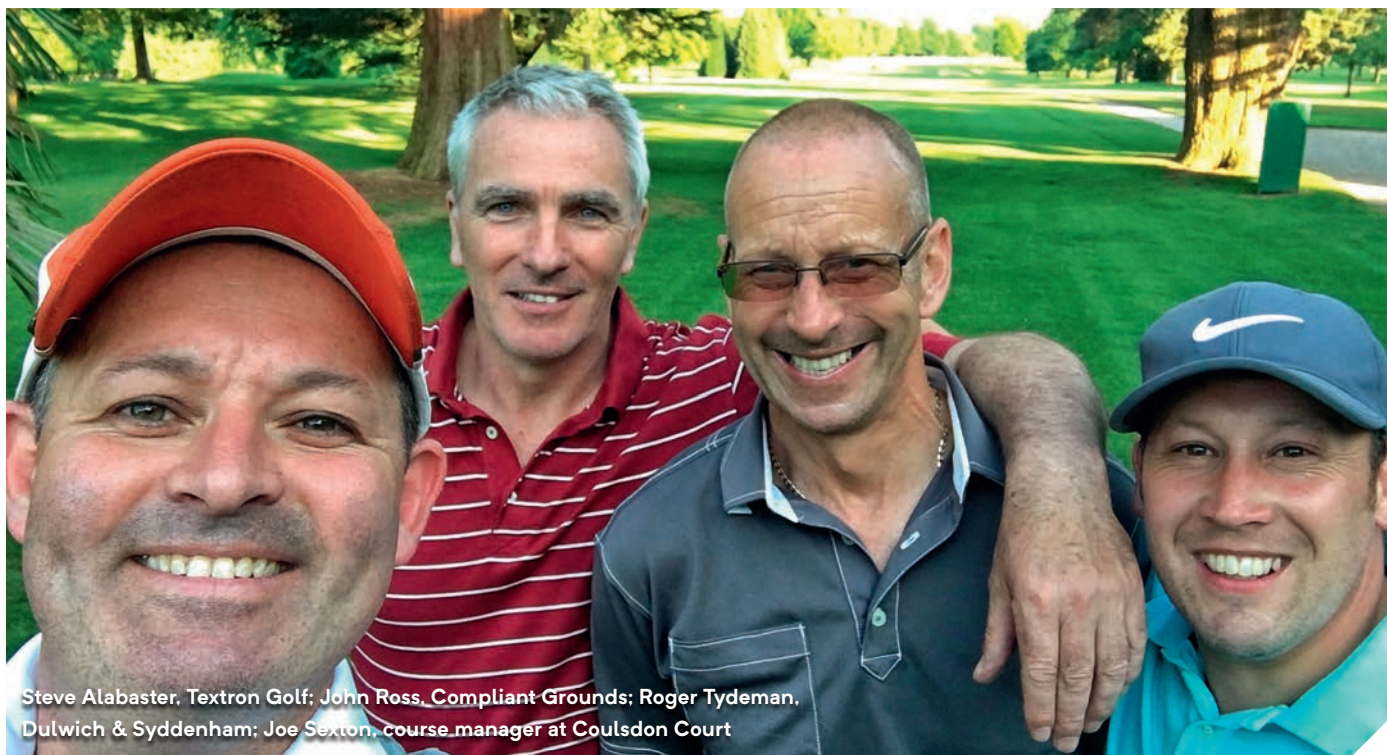
Chairman
Peter Smith
Pds1@btinternet.
com.



Regional Administrator
Clive Osgood
07841 948410
cliveosgood@
yahoo.co.uk



Regional Administrator
Kerry Phillips
07715 672568
@BiggaKerry
kerry@bigga.co.uk



Steve Alabaster, Textron Golf; John Ross, Compliant Grounds; Roger Tydeman, Dulwich & Syddenham; Joe Sexton, course manager at Coulsdon Court

Around the Green

Surrey



Stephen Alabaster
@JacUKEast
salabaster@tip.
textron.com

What a busy month we have had in the Surrey Section. I don't quite know where to start! I think firstly a thank you to all those in the section who volunteered for either the BMW PGA at Wentworth or the US Open Qualifiers which were held at Walton Heath. Both courses looked immaculate and congratulations quite rightly go to the respective course managers and staff. However, these events could not happen with out the generosity of the volunteers that help.

The section held the Cresta Cup at Effingham, which was wonderfully presented after the gales the day before. Thank you to Jon Budd and his team for allowing us to play there this year. The course was very well set up

and the BBQ afterwards was a great change from the norm. Results: Longest drive, Mark Thompson; nearest the pin, Stuart Brown; 3rd place, Ryan Hyder, 2nd, Bradley Warner; 1st, Danny Murray, The Wisley, 35 points.

Surrey Bowl games have been played and in my match against Roger Tydeman and John Ross, we were taken down the 20th Hole at Coulsdon Court, eventually losing. Congratulations gents and good luck in the next round! Please keep the Surrey Bowl games going as they must be played by the dates stated. Please let Roger know the results of any matches as soon as possible. I look forward to seeing you at Sunningdale on 17 July.

Kent



Ben Adams
@BIGGAKent
ben.adams@
talktalk.net

East Anglia



Mick Lathrope
@BIGGAEastAnglia
lil.lathrope@
ntlworld.com

On 21 June the East Anglia greenkeepers headed out on the well prepared course at Heacham Manor, Hunstanton. It was officially the longest day and with the humid temperatures it certainly felt like it. As we drove in to the lovely hotel surroundings we knew we would be in for a treat. Trevor and his team had prepared the course so well. There is a small team there looking after 27 holes, a driving range and the hotel surroundings. The hospitality was also fantastic.

A great day was had by all — well all except one. If the toilet seat was there, Steve would have received it. While trying to fix his garage door he closed it and is now not able to open it again. This would have been fine if his clubs weren't left in there! Well done Steve.

What's on near you

See our events page for details of what's happening in your region

It was great to see several new faces from the trade and greenkeepers. Thanks to all who travelled to one of the corners of our section and we hope the support continues.

The day brought good results from all categories. They are as follows:

0-9 handicap: Ollie Kirk, 40 points; Matthew Strudwick, 38pts.

10-18 handicap: Tony Thacker, 39pts; Doug Jefferson, 37pts.

19-28 handicap: Andy Baker, 40pts (OCB), Terry Carver 40pts

Trade and Guest: John O'Connell, 44pts, Ian Palfrey 40pts.

Nearest the pin, Dale King; Longest drive, Matthew Strudwick.

A big thank you to all the sponsors for their continued support. The main sponsor of the day was Ben Burgess. Other sponsors included: Aitkins, Batrenbrug, Campey Turfcare, Bartram Mowers, Tacit, GKB Machinery.

Essex



Ian Wood

Twitter: @essexbigga

Email: ian.wood@

romfordgolfclub.co.uk

London



Kevin O'Neill

Twitter: @kevodale76

Email: londonsection@bigga.co.uk

The London section gathered at The Centurion Club for our spring tournament, which also doubled as the qualifier for the National Championships. Fresh from hosting the Golf Sixes event, the Centurion was in magnificent condition. Huge credit to



Danny Murray, The Wisley, with John Budd, course manager at Effingham

Section News

We want to hear what's been going on in your section

Email your news to Karl@bigga.co.uk



Andy and his team for the presentation of the course and the 5 star service we received in the clubhouse.

On the course it was a double from Crews Hill with Paul Searles, playing off 5, taking the honors with 37 points and Ross McCarthy, playing off scratch scoring 36 points, coming in second. Both Paul and Ross qualify for the national championships.

Thanks to our sponsor Olivers Landpower for their continued support of this event.

Next up on the golfing schedule is the summer event at The Buckinghamshire on 29 August, entry details to be posted soon.

Sussex



Chris Humphrey

Twitter: @CtcChris

Email: chris@collier-turf-care.co.uk

The Sussex section held another successful Turf Club on 14 June. The event was held at the excellent facilities at West Hove. This time the event was titled Fungicides and Fertilisers and 27 greenkeepers from across Sussex, and some from slightly further away, listened to excellent presentations from Daniel Lightfoot, business manager at Syngenta and James Whitick, sales manager at Greenbest. The section would like to say a big thank you to Dan and James for their informative presentations and also to West Hove for their kind hospitality.

By the time this goes to print the section will have held the summer competition at Haywards Heath and there will be a full report next month.

The autumn competition is all booked in at Seaford Head on 13 September, tee times from 11.30am. Make sure this date is in your diary.

The next Turf Club will be on 10 August. Please keep the date free and there will be more details to follow.

If you have anything of interest, please contact me on 07912 669457 or chris@collier-turf-care.co.uk.



Members of the BIGGA Support Team take a break from the action at Wentworth

Around the Green

South West & S. Wales



Chairman

Steve Lloyd

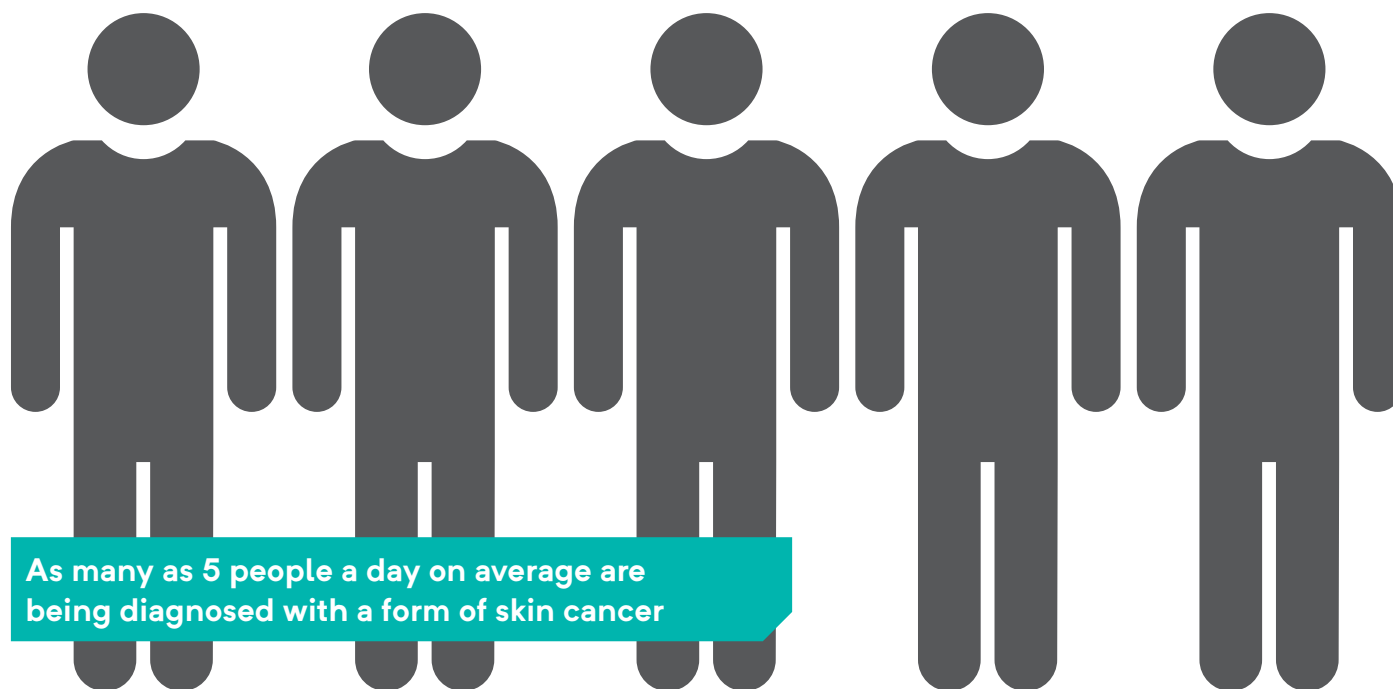
07578 276082 | [@GreensMalvern](#)
coursemanager@theworcestershire
golfclub.co.uk



Regional Administrator

Tracey Walker

07841 948110 | [@biggaswsw](#)
tracey.walker@bigga.co.uk



As many as 5 people a day on average are being diagnosed with a form of skin cancer

Around the Green

South West



Seb Cavilla

[@BiggaSouthwest](#)

sebavilla@
googlemail.com

We now know as many as five people a day on average in the UK are being diagnosed with a form of skin cancer contracted at work. This shocking statistic is even more reason for you to come along to our summer golf day at Minchinhampton on 15 August at 12 noon where, after a light lunch and before the first tee time we will be listening to a presentation from the charity Skcin. With the warm weather we are enjoying, it is more important than ever to know the facts and look after ourselves, as highlighted in last month's magazine.

I regret to inform the members from our section that our chairman James Braithwaite has decided to stand down from his role. I would like to take this opportunity to thank James for his hard work during his tenure and for all



that he has achieved for our section – most notably liaising with Chris Wood who now carries the BIGGA badge on his golf bag.

At the time of writing there are two spaces available on a Bernhard training course at Cumberwell on Tuesday 11 July. If you are interested please contact me on the email above.

Many thanks as always go out to all our patrons: Sportsmetals, BS Mowers, Irritech, Countrywide, Headland, Greensman, SGI and Farmura.



What's on near you

See our events page for details of what's happening in your region

South Coast



Mike Cartwright

[@mikehgc](#)

mikecartwright1
@hotmail.co.uk

It's been a busy month in our neck of the woods. The PGA was held at Wentworth and a lady member commented to me that it 'looked just like Highcliffe!' I didn't notice Kenny sniffing around for inspiration, but if I

had seen him, he'd have been more than welcome.

We had a very successful Turf Club, which you can read all about in the Membership section of this magazine.

The Greenkeepers v Secretaries match was held at a very well presented Stoneham. Matt, Graham and the team did us proud with fast true greens and some of the nicest fairways I've had the pleasure of taking a divot out of. It was the 20th year of playing for the cup, so it was quite a milestone. The score stood at 10 wins to us, eight to the secretaries, with one match halved in 2011. In dramatic fashion this year's match came down to the last pairing. Matt Plested and Tony Gadd were our hope and they delivered the final blow to the secretaries. The GKs won 3-2! Thanks must go to the sponsor of the day, Course Care, and to Stoneham for their wonderful hospitality.

I'd also like to thank Paul Dyter, who you may read have about in last month's issue, who first started the Course Care cup.



South Coast: Mike Cartwright receiving the Course Care Cup from Highspeed Groups Matthew Mears

Coming up soon we have the summer tournament, which will be held at the very well respected Ferndown. As I write this we have received around 50 entries so it should be a great day.

The section seminar is also being planned for and we have already secured some class speakers.

South Wales



Andrew Hatcher
 @BIGGASouthWales
 andrewhatcher1@msn.com

I was sitting in a restaurant about a week ago and I saw a tractor outside being abandoned by two young boys who jumped from it and left it to mount the pavement, hitting a traffic light. I recognised the tractor from the local golf club and immediately ran out of the restaurant and ran to the tractor, jumped in and stopped the engine. What an experience!

It's mid-June with fabulous weather and temperatures around 29 degrees. We at Coed-Y-Mwstwr are having demonstrations from various suppliers.

I've seen some great pictures on social media showing mowing patterns or irrigation usage and good comments on staff commitments.

Paul Johnson is rightly proud of his team's achievements during the British Open Amateurs Ladies competition and grateful for the help of volunteers from local clubs.

The Senior Open Championship will return to Royal Porthcawl after the success in 2014. The 2017 running will be held between 26-30 July. We wish Ian Kinley and his staff and volunteers the best of luck.

There are loads of events happening around the section over the coming months. Head to the Upcoming Events page to see more.

Fixture lists have been emailed to every member. This is your section, please support where possible. If you have any information to share please contact me.

Finally one full member from each region has the chance to help prepare the course for The Players Championship at Sawgrass. It's a great way to network with other and join the maintenance team, the chosen will enjoy travel, accommodation, food and uniform all included. What an opportunity and great for your CV. Tracy Walker, our regional administrator, has sent out a link and there's also one on the BIGGA website..

Section News

We want to hear what's been going on in your section

Email your news to Karl @bigga.co.uk

Devon & Cornwall



Neil Rogers
 @buckaroo14
 nr Rogers@country-widefarmers.co.uk

The section would like to wish Christy Worthington all the best of luck in his new role as head greenkeeper at Royal North Devon after working at Bude and North Cornwall for the past few years.

Tracey Walker has asked for any last minute entries into the Golf Management Trophy, which is to be held at the always immaculate East Devon. Please contact Tracey if you have not done so already.

We would like to thank all of our patrons for their continued support of the section.

There are loads of events happening around the section over the coming months. Head to the Upcoming Events page to see more.



South Coast: Stoneham

Around the Green Scotland & N. Ireland



Chairman

Stuart Ferguson MG
07947 859062
stuferg@btinternet.com



Regional Administrator

John Young
07776 242120
johnyoung@bigga.co.uk

Central



Craig Boath

@CraigBoath
cboath@carnoustie
golfinks.co.uk

By the time you will have read this The Open Regional Qualifying will have taken place at Panmure. I am sure Gary and his team had the place looking great. That takes us to this year's Open, best wishes to Chris Whittle and his team down at Birkdale.

Talking of Opens, it won't be long before the Women's Open at Kingsbarns, which leads me to a course walk we have organised with Innes Knight. Watch out for the email soon.

A lot of unsettled weather doing the rounds just now, going from beautiful warm days to torrential rain. Some places got 100mm in a few days, which isn't not handy when club championships are underway!

The last few remaining games have been played in the pairs and we are now in to the quarter final stages. Results to follow next month.

Blog feature this month, even though it is just outside our catchment by about 1 mile, is Walk On The Wild Side with Les Rae at Montrose Golf Links <http://montrosegolfinksgreenkeepersblog.blogspot.co.uk/2017>. Very interesting reading there.

East



Phil Butler

@BIGGA_ES
phil180.butler@
virgin.net

Again this month, let's start off with a mention of the weather parts of the section have been experiencing. After such low rainfall figures for April and May, June has delivered rainfall of up to 70-80mm in some parts and all



in the space of 24-48 hours! Although this was welcome, it would have been nice if Mother Nature had spread it over a longer period.

Someone who experienced good weather recently is East Section member Craig Hempseed. Craig volunteered at the BMW PGA Championship and by all accounts he enjoyed the professional tournament experience and the chance to learn how detailed the course set up was.

The last piece of news regards a section committee member. Alan Campbell has stepped down from the committee and his role as communications officer. The section committee would like to thank Alan for his contribution to the section during his time on committee and wish him all the best for the future.

Just a quick reminder to members that the Patrons' award nominations are open, so if you know someone that would benefit from the award get nominating! It's a great opportunity.

It's your section so get in touch. If you have any news, photos or stories we can use in this article just let us know.

North



Neil Sadler

gkneil@sky.com

It seems news is in short supply this month as most of you are out cutting and preparing the course for club championships. That's OK, just make sure you let me know how you all get on for the next edition of the magazine!

Did someone say summer was here? In the first 10 days of June we had 110mm of rain here in the north east, which is an awful lot more than April and May put together.

BIGGA has created a Young Greenkeepers Committee in Scotland. This has been done to help young

greenkeepers get their input into how the industry can help recruit and retain greenkeepers in the industry. The North section is represented by Dennis Grant from Newmachar. The group had their first meeting last month at Gleneagles, they are planning to hold a launch event later this year, which will explain all about the newly formed committee and their aims and future plans. Details regarding this will be released shortly.

I also got a chance to catch up with one of our own committee members, Richard Johnstone, about his recent trip to Sawgrass. As BIGGA covered the trip in great detail in the last edition of GI I will not bore you with the details of his fantastic trip and opportunity. What Richard did say was no matter where you are in the country you should apply to go on these trips. If a boy from Nairn in the north of Scotland can get chosen for it anyone can!

Make sure your email address are all up-to-date so we can keep you updated with any upcoming events!

SW Scotland



Amanda Dorans

@amanda_dorans
amanda.dorans@
lochlomond.com

West



Scott Davidson

@BiggaWest
headgreenkeeper
@cathcartcastle.net

What's on near you

See our events page for details of what's happening in your region

Upcoming Events

Contact your section secretary to book a place

Scotland

Central: 6 September, Pitreavie, autumn outing

Northern

North West: 11 July, Northenden, summer tournament

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

North Wales: 23 August, Prenton

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

Sheffield: 6 October, Coxmoor, autumn competition

North East: 13-24 November, Dunstanburgh Castle, Bunker Camp

Central England

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

BB&O: 13 July, Caversham Heath, Rainbird workshop

East of England: 19 July, Newark, BIGGA vs GCMA

East of England: 27 July, Belton Park, summer cup sponsored by Burdens

East Midlands: 24 August, Beedles Lake, par 3 competition, 1pm

Midland: 13 September, JCB course and factory visit, including ICL and Syngenta presentations

Midland: 5 October, South Staffs, autumn team event and AGM, cost £25, closing date for entries 21 September

East of England: 12 October, Pottergate, seminar/AGM/golf sponsored by Amenity Technology

East Midlands: 19 October, Rufford Park, autumn golf day and AGM, 10.40am tee

Midland: 8 November, The Chase, autumn seminar

East of England: 15 December, Lincoln, winter am-am

South East

Surrey: 17 July, Sunningdale, McMillan Tankard

Sussex: 10 August, Seaford Head, South East Section Turf Club

London: 29 August, The Buckinghamshire, summer golf day

Sussex: 13 September, Seaford Head, autumn competition

South West & South Wales

South Wales: 10 August, Ross-on-Wye, Rigby Taylor team challenge

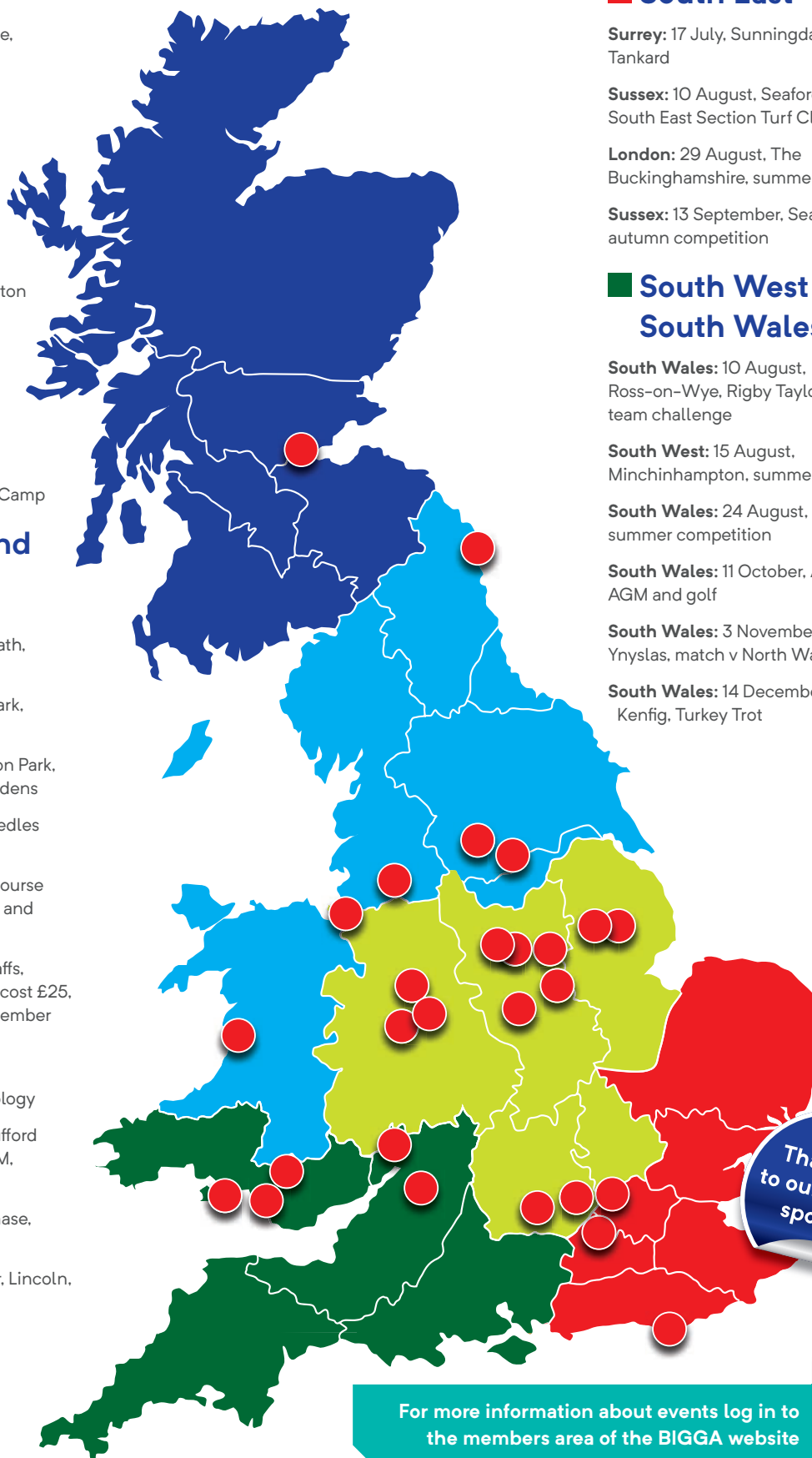
South West: 15 August, Minchinhampton, summer competition

South Wales: 24 August, Pennard, summer competition

South Wales: 11 October, Aberdare, AGM and golf

South Wales: 3 November, Borth & Ynyslas, match v North Wales Section

South Wales: 14 December, Pyle & Kenfig, Turkey Trot



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Lauren Frazer
Business Development Executive
01347 833832
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Buyer's Guide

Revised ryegrass mixture offers improved fineness of leaf

Germinal has updated its Grade A perennial ryegrass seed mixture for golf tees by upping the percentage of Cabrio Ultra Fine Ryegrass to give even greater fineness of leaf.

The revised 'A5 Cricket, Tennis and Tees' mixture has moved from a blend of three perennial ryegrasses (45% Escapade, 35% Cabrio, 20% EuroCordus) to just two varieties (50% Escapade and 50% Cabrio) for 2017.

The increased Cabrio content delivers an improvement in fineness of leaf.

"As the highest rated variety for summer sports in the 2017 BSPB L1 List, Cabrio Ultra Fine Ryegrass offers exceptional levels of performance," explained Richard Brown, amenity sales manager for Germinal.

"Thanks to a fineness of leaf score of 8.8, which is half a point ahead of its nearest rival, Cabrio easily outperforms all other perennial ryegrass cultivars. Cabrio also partners perfectly with Escapade to provide a seed mixture which

is ideal for repairing worn or damaged tees, where rapid root penetration and high root density are essential."

Cabrio Ultra Fine Ryegrass is also the finest leaved variety on the BSPB's G4 List for close mown conditions. When cut to 4-7mm Cabrio has a fineness of leaf score of 8.3, compared to its nearest rival at 8.0.

"With two of the best perennial ryegrass cultivars, A5 provides a dependable, consistent and quick to establish sward," added Richard. "The revised seed mixture enables greenkeepers to produce a harder wearing surface that can not only tolerate a close mowing regime, but which will also be aesthetically attractive all year round."



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



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WENTWORTH CLUB

Following a multi-million pound upgrade of our iconic West Course and Alex Noren's impressive win at our annual European Tour event, Wentworth Club is looking to fill multiple Greenkeeping positions across all levels to continue producing excellent standards and the highest quality of work on one of our three 18-hole golf courses.

Desirable Criteria:

- Minimum 2 years' Greenkeeping experience, less for Apprentice Level
- NVQ Level 2 Sports Turf Management Qualification, NVQ Level 3 desirable

For further information regarding our various Greenkeeping positions please email personnel@wentworthclub.com or visit our website: www.wentworthclub.com/clubs/careers

In return you will receive top of the range uniform, an excellent rate of pay and benefits package, including use of our exclusive facilities.

TECHNICAL SALES REPRESENTATIVE

Richard Aitken (Seedsman) Ltd is looking to recruit a technical sales representative to call on Golf Courses, Sports Clubs and Local Authorities in and around the West of Scotland.

Candidates would require experience in the turfgrass industry, sales experience would be helpful but not necessary. We are looking for someone who can communicate effectively at all levels and have the drive and self-motivation to succeed in a strong marketplace.

If you feel you have the necessary skills, experience and enthusiasm to succeed in this role, please send your CV to:

craig@aitkens.co.uk or post to: Craig Aitken, Richard Aitken (Seedsman) Ltd, 20 Robert Drive, Glasgow G51 3HE. Closing Date 21st July



ABERDOVEY GOLF CLUB COURSE MANAGER

Aberdovey Golf Club is a classic links on the Dyfi estuary, and is one of Wales' premier golfing tests. The club is seeking to recruit a dynamic, ambitious individual to further improve Aberdovey's sustainability, delivering excellent links experience for club members and guests. The successful candidate will be able to demonstrate:

- High levels of management skills
- Communication and leadership
- Practical knowledge to motivate a green keeping team
- Relevant green keeping qualifications to a minimum of NVQ
- Relevant spraying qualifications (PA1, PA2, PA6).
- Working knowledge of machinery, irrigation systems and H&S legislation.

Links experience preferred although not essential. Apply with a full CV and covering letter and salary expectations to: Mr Gareth Pritchard, Manager, Aberdovey Golf Club, Aberdovey, Gwynedd LL35 0RT.

LINGFIELD PARK RESORT GREENKEEPER

We are looking for a Greenkeeper to join our fantastic and dedicated Greenkeeping Team. We have a PGA Championship 18-hole Parkland Marriott Golf Course, of 6700 yards and par 72.

We are a JAMEGA Pro-tour host for the second year running, and host for the first time of the Mizuno Golf Pairs Tour. We are also hosting a Tacit Golf Regional qualifier this summer. We have previously held the Euro-Pro Golf Tour. We also hold many corporate and charity Golf days. Our challenging course is greatly enjoyed by our members, host societies, and Marriott Hotel customers.

How to Apply: Please send a full CV and a covering letter detailing where you saw the position advertised and current salary to Holli Grayshan (HR and Recruitment Coordinator) email: hgrayshan@arenaracingcompany.co.uk

Recruitment

Technical Sales Representatives

South/South East of England



Due to the continued growth of our business, we are looking for two high-calibre individuals to join our expanding turf and landscape team in the South/South East of England, primarily Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, North London, Hertfordshire, Essex and East Anglia, however specific counties are flexible depending on the candidates credentials.

About you

The ideal candidates will relish the opportunity to deliver first-class sales and technical support to end-users and distributors of our range of fertilizers, plant protection products and grass seeds.

You will be a highly-motivated and social character with excellent interpersonal skills, engaging confidently and professionally with people in a range of environments.

With a background in technical product sales within the turf and landscape sectors or a proven track record as a successful and dynamic turf manager, the ideal candidates will demonstrate a knowledge of turf management practices and hold an industry-recognised qualification in a relevant discipline. Full product training will be provided on an ongoing basis.

There will be a requirement for flexible working and spending time away from home on occasion to represent the company at industry events.

Is this you?

About us

You will know our brands, but you might not realise the strength of the business behind them. ICL group employs more than 12,000 people globally. We are world-leaders in the production and distribution of professional horticulture, turf and landscape, and speciality agricultural products.

Our market-leading brands – including Sierrablend, Greenmaster, SierraformGT and Sportsmaster are used and trusted by turf professionals around the world.

Our team is passionate about optimising plant and turf performance. We are a customer-orientated organisation and take great pride in the integrity and precision of our world-class product portfolios, and our commitment to research and development has resulted in the development of unique technologies which have transformed the way turf is managed.

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

We offer a substantial benefits package including:

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- Contributory pension scheme
- Subsidised private medical and dental insurance
- Excellent development and career opportunities that come with being part of a global business

To apply, please send a résumé and application letter to:

Emma Marsay, HR Manager, Everris Ltd, Boulby Mine, Loftus, Saltburn, Cleveland, TS13 4UZ or email the same to emma.marsay@icl-group.com

Closing date: 31st July 2017

QUALIFIED GREENKEEPER

Spend the winter in New Zealand. Takaro Lodge is a remote private estate, and we are looking for a Greenkeeper to maintain our purpose built high-performance training facility & par 3 course. This position is full-time, from October 2017 to April 2018.

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| <p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentorship from world renowned agronomist • Valuable management experience. • Experience in organic greenkeeping methods • Onsite accommodation & board • Support for your travel logistics • Competitive salary | <p>Desirable Criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 years' Greenkeeping experience • NVQ Level 2 Sports Turf Management Qualification • Strong work ethic & attention to detail • Flexible & positive • Highly responsible & able to work independently • Ability to thrive in a remote location |
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Please send your CV to mary603uk@yahoo.co.uk by 10 August 2017.

FARRINGTON PARK ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

Farrington Park requires an Assistant Greenkeeper. Farrington Park, located between Bath and Bristol, is a 27 hole complex with extensive practice facilities, a health club and function venue.

- | | |
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| <p>Reporting to the Head Greenkeeper, the ideal candidate would have the following qualifications and attributes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenkeeping experience (NVQ Level 2) • General Machinery Maintenance • Health and Safety • Team player | <p>Other Desirable attributes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building experience • Excavator licence/experience of construction • Chain Saw licence • Spraying certificate |
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Salary based on skill level and experience. We offer free golf or gym membership as well as 28 days holiday and free uniform. Cover letter and CV to Head Greenkeeper. Andy Grabham: andyg@farringtonpark.co.uk

ROMFORD GOLF CLUB SENIOR HEAD GREEN KEEPER

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| <p>This position requires an experienced and enthusiastic Senior Head Green Keeper who is hard working, reliable and with the desire and ambition to help drive the club forward. The applicant will have a proven track record in man management, golf course innovation and preparation and will possess all the necessary training and qualifications commensurate with such a position.</p> | <p>The salary is negotiable and will be dependent upon the applicant's qualifications and experience.</p> <p>APPLICATIONS WILL CLOSE ON FRIDAY 14TH JULY. Please submit your CV to richard.hall@romfordgolfclub.co.uk or post to: Richard Hall, Romford Golf Club Heath Drive, Romford RM2 5QB.</p> |
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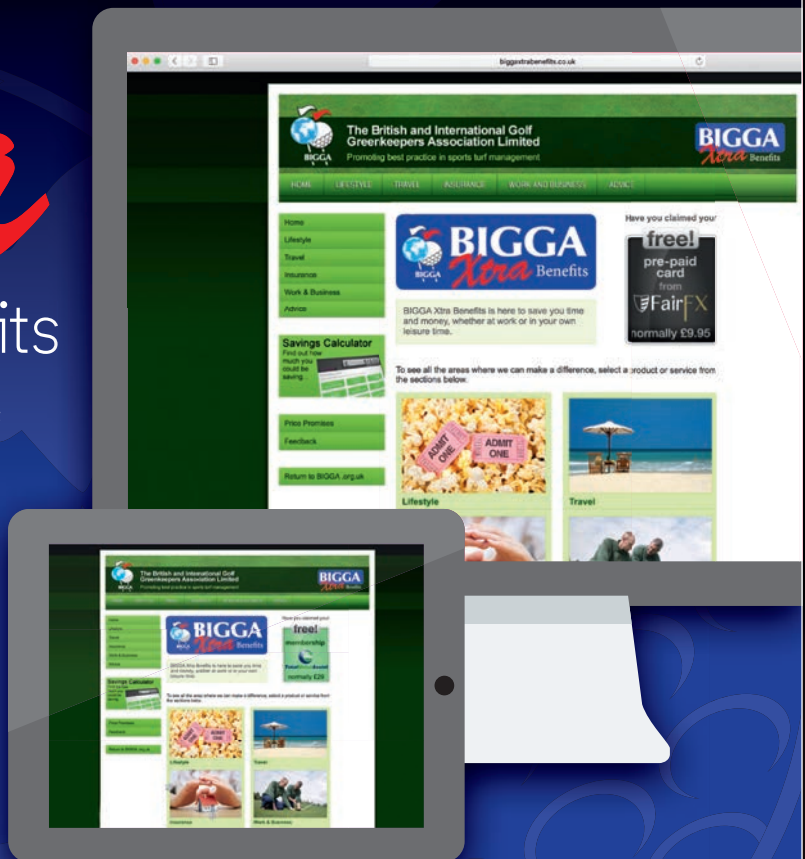
- Punctuality, positive attitude, reliability and other strong work ethics are essential.
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& Finally...

& Finally

Bashing balsam in Lancaster



Lancaster Golf Club is a gem of a golf track, with many types of flora present.

However, not all of this flora is desired.

There is a colourful wildflower stomping its way through the UK at this time and, without stringent control, it will take over our golfing course's wet areas. The wildflower in question is Himalayan balsam, that beautiful looking tall plant with the seed heads that 'pop' open when you brush past them, hurling the seeds many metres onto a new habitat.

The greenkeepers at Lancaster have other ideas about this flower's march along the countryside, though.

The team, led by Karl Hamnett, decided enough was enough and set about bashing the balsam into submission.

During periods of busy golf traffic, Lancaster's greenkeepers used clubs and sticks to bash the stems

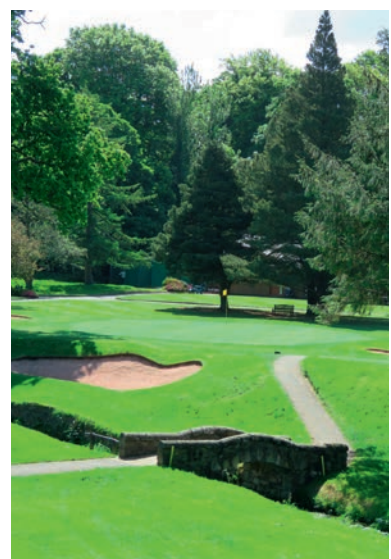
of the larger balsam, whereas the smaller flowers were pulled out and left to decompose.

As balsam is an annual, it will struggle to grow further from a traumatic wound, and so bashing balsam is an effective way to control this rampant wildflower. Strimming is an option, but be aware to do this prior to the seeds developing or you will simply scatter them all over the place. By pulling out the plant, well that's self-explanatory. Whichever you choose to do at your course, try and control the plant as near to the woodland floor as possible to avoid regrowth.

The team at Lancaster are aware of the damage this non-native wildflower can do and are doing all they can to eradicate it from their course. They are under no illusion that it will take more than one season and it will be a few years before significant change can be seen. With this in mind, smashing longevity work gentlemen!



Top: Lancaster GC greenkeeping team
Above: Himalayan balsam



Lancaster GC

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