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Greenkeeper International

A BIT OF BEEF AT CHRISTMAS

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

We speak to Andrew 'Beef' Johnston about life at North Middlesex

Plus: How Ben O'Sullivan and the team have helped change the fortunes of the north London club

Robots and battery power

Is the robotic uprising on the horizon and how could it help with the labour shortage?

Maintenance 101: sprayer equipment

Basic diagnostics and fault finding tips for your pesticide application tools

Creating a culture of positivity

Michael Budd of Richmond Park asks what we can do to build better morale

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BIGGA Board Members
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BIGGA Chief Executive Officer
Jim Croxton | jim.croxton@bigga.co.uk

Head of Finance and Operations
Steve Wragg | steve@bigga.co.uk

Head of Learning & Development
Sami Strutt | sami@bigga.co.uk

Contact us: BIGGA Ltd, Coxwold House, Birch Way, Easingwold Business Park, Easingwold, York YO61 3FB
info@bigga.co.uk | www.bigga.org.uk
Tel — 0134 7833 800

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Marketing and communications

Editor
Karl Hansell
karl@bigga.co.uk

Editorial Assistant
Lorna Taylor
lorna@bigga.co.uk

Marketing & Social Media Executive
Zoë Wright
zoe@bigga.co.uk

Design & Artwork Production
Libbie Waddleton
libbie@bigga.co.uk

Sales

Business Development Manager
Lauren Frazer
lauren@bigga.co.uk

Business Development Executive
Gavin Rees
gavin@bigga.co.uk

Printing

Warners Midlands Plc, The Maltings, Manor Lane, Bourne, Lincolnshire PE10 9PH
Tel — 01778 391 000

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Welcome

During November Jim spoke at the Golf Club Managers Association's annual Conference on behalf of the greenkeeping industry

The last couple of years have caused everyone to self-reflect and focus on what is really important in life.

In my case, the enforced time at home made me analyse my work/life balance in detail and I reached a few key conclusions.

Number one, the extra time at home has been priceless. I've enjoyed having far more time with my children during the lockdowns and work-from-home spells and I will always be thankful for that.

Number two, I have realised that the variety my job provides in terms of travel around the country, different experiences and, most importantly, being with lots of people, are critical to me.

I guess the major challenge is working out how to balance those two!

The last month has been great in terms of variety. I have attended conferences, including three excellent BIGGA Region ones, had external meetings and had the chance to reconnect with members, friends, peers and colleagues in a meaningful way and I feel far better for it.

A key recent event was the excellent GCMA conference, at which BIGGA was invited to play an important role. Sustainability was a key theme of the conference and our very own James Hutchinson was part of a panel discussion. He also had his brains picked endlessly by delegates throughout the couple of days.

Chief Executive Jim Croxton

I was glad to be asked to present on the topic of sustainability and I did my best to outline to the 200-or-so golf club managers in attendence that a sustainable golf course is entirely contingent on a sustainable greenkeeping team. I spoke about how golf clubs need to consider the welfare, remuneration and management of their greenkeepers as a critical part of any sustainability strategy.

I'm delighted to say this struck a chord with many of the managers I spoke to.

Of course, our own major gathering, BTME, is around the corner. I'm thrilled to see that bookings for Continue to Learn, visitor registrations and exhibitor stand sales are all going extremely well. It seems that, pandemic conditions permitting, our industry is really looking forward to reconnecting in Harrogate next month.

2021 has been another strange year and I would like to pay tribute to BIGGA's extraordinary team of staff who have worked hard in difficult conditions throughout the year. We end the year in good shape with membership numbers back at pre-pandemic levels and, in my opinion, an even greater focus on our core role of supporting our members at the coal face.

I would also like to thank the board of management and all the volunteers across our association for their ongoing support and commitment.

May I wish you all a very happy Christmas, a much better 2022 and I look forward to seeing very many of you in Harrogate soon.

WHAT'S INSIDE...

Editor's Notes

Greenkeeper International editor, Karl Hansell

Happy Christmas and welcome to your festive edition of Greenkeeper International.

Christmas always sneaks up on the BIGGA team. We're always so focused on that other brilliant winter celebration, where we put up the trimmings and wear our finest outfits as we welcome members and the sports turf industry to Harrogate and BTME, that it isn't rare to see a particularly flustered member of the BIGGA team rushing around on Christmas Eve having forgotten to buy a family member a present — it's usually Steve!

At this time of year BTME consumes the working days of almost everyone associated with BIGGA. From our education team putting together the final touches to Continue to Learn, to any one of the team – from Membership through to the small group I work with in communications and marketing – we are all working hard to come up with great new ideas to make BTME a brilliant event for our members.

There's so much to do that it will come as no surprise that by the time we close down BIGGA HQ on Christmas Eve, we're ready for a stiff drink and a mince pie.

My one hope for Christmas is that we are all able to enjoy the festivities with family and friends, having been so cruelly denied that in 2020. This year has been difficult for so many people, for so many reasons, and the gift of normality could be the greatest one we receive this year.

As editor of this magazine, may I sign off 2021 by saying I have been hugely proud to produce this magazine for another calendar year and I hope it continues to be a valuable source of insight, entertainment and discussion for you all. My thanks go to the team who help us produce this journal every month and I look forward to doing it all over again in 2022. Merry Christmas!

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Notice of AGM

Join the National Board of Management and other BIGGA members for the Association's Annual General Meeting at 3pm on Thursday 25 January 2022 in the Harrogate Convention Centre's Main Auditorium. All Full BIGGA members may vote. Register for BTME using this QR code.

With thanks to our contributors

Each month Greenkeeper International is put together with the help of our industry contributors. This month we have features from:

Michael Budd

Michael is course manager at Richmond Park in London and would like to build a better culture of positivity.

Ian Sumpter

Ian looks at basic diagnostics and fault finding with regards your pesticide application equipment.

Ben O'Sullivan

Ben is course manager at North Middlesex, where he has been a member since childhood but faced a tough task.

Andrew Johnston

During November we had a chat with 'Beef' to discover his appreciation for greenkeepers and what he looks for in a course.

DON'T FORGET: You can claim CPD credits for reading this edition of Greenkeeper International. Head to the CPD section of the BIGGA website to log your credits.

TALKING POINTS

GOOD ATTITUDE, MAXIMUM EFFORT, NO LIMITS

Can we change the conversation to something a bit more positive?

Michael Budd, Course Manager, Richmond Park

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What do you think? Have your say by emailing karl@bigga.co.uk

> A colleague joked with him that 'skilled' staff aren't the worry, it is hard to find any staff at all!

As the country is slowly returning to normal, having adapted to living with COVID, many changes have come about. Well done on getting this far, but there's still a long way to go.

The journey back to normality has presented some new challenges to the economy, while exposing others that have been brewing away for a while.

Recruitment seems to have taken a turn for the worst. HGV drivers have hit the headlines recently, but they aren't the only ones having recruitment issues. A friend I spoke with recently who works in retail is having trouble hiring skilled staff — a colleague joked with him that 'skilled' staff aren't the worry, it is hard to find any staff at all!

Greenkeeping also appears to be struggling to attract those we require to fill roles. This isn't a new problem and greenkeepers I have spoken to say this has been going on for over 20 years. Regardless, it is

Positivity makes Richmond Park a great place to be

> I called my manager and told him that although I had applied, the tour was so dull that I didn't want the position

Fooling around in the snow is daft, but it's fun.

tough to recruit and this problem isn't going away anytime soon.

Staff retention has also been affected, with employees looking elsewhere for more money or possibly leaving due to cutbacks or seasonal roles ending after helping with this summer's golf boom. Some are searching to improve their lifestyle as bills and the cost of living are on the rise.

We have even looked at hiring agency staff to deal with the demand for higher expectations during the post-lockdown golf boom. Two different recruitment agencies have told us how hard it has been for them to find workers to fill our casual roles.

Agencies say they are struggling to find workers not just for the horticultural sector, but across all industries. We have now added two permanent roles to our team on top of some agency staff and I've taken to the groundsman industry to recruit these. In these hard times we need all the help we can get as the competition is vast.

During August to October, I've never seen so many job posts on the BIGGA website. This has continued on other online recruitment sites as everyone seems to be wanting the same thing. Many new roles are being created, but what can we do to help attract quality candidates to our wonderful industry?

Pay has increased for many staff as golf clubs seek to keep hold of the valuable staff they already have. Promoting internally and offering training to present staff are commonplace as methods of keeping staff from moving on — although often it is too late or in vain.

Greenkeeping is a fantastic industry that can take you »

Anything you can do to lighten the mood while at work is worthwhile

Michael Budd is course manager at Richmond Park

> I believe you get out of any job what you put in.

around the world, into mechanics, there's the chance to work on tournaments, get into science and plant pathology, take a PhD or move into club management. Yet all I read about is how another greenkeeper has taken up his own landscape gardening business and left the industry.

Many argue a reason for the lack of interest is pay compared to other industries, others say committees and unrealistic expectations chew you up and spit you out. But why then have so many of us held this down for so long? Are we really that miserable that we can't get out now and change our situation?

So many of us seem to be in long term roles, moaning about our situations. Everyone is in control of their own future and if you need to change and improve your situation, you can. Save for the future, train for something else, talk to others, but don't sit stagnant and moan, then do nothing about it — how does that help anyone? If you don't like it, why not make way for someone passionate who does want it? But it's not that easy, what with mortgages and the costs of living and other commitments.

Instead, I believe you get out of any job what you put in.

This reminds me of a saying that helped me at a low moment in my life: 'if you're negative, no one will want to be around you'.

If you're asked how you are and your reply is "rubbish, feeling tired and I've got no money", then eventually people will stop asking and begin distancing themselves.

The same can be said for positivity. Positive people attract other positive people. I for one prefer to be around chatty, upbeat guys who always tell jokes and make you feel good, or who put a positive spin on things when a negative is thrown in their way.

"Bloody rain."

"Ah it's not so bad, the course could do with it anyway."

That positivity is infectious, so why don't we do this on social media and when talking to friends about work or recruiting?

Comments like "another course closed due to lack of money" or "another greenkeeper gone, probably better off anyway" really don't help things.

I don't think James Bledge will mind me referencing him in a recent interview, when he spoke about posting positive things about his club on his social media feed, rather than posting all the moans and groans or negativity. Likewise, Steve Chappell, speaking at the Continue to Learn Deputies' Conference, said he dislikes hearing people moaning about clubs closing down. "As one club closes, another one opens," he said, but we only seem to talk about the negative news.

> I was on a very low wage compared to 90% of the clubs around me, but it was a start. I loved every aspect of it and I could see that it was a step to more great things in the long run

If you truly don't believe that positivity attracts other positivity, then fake it to make it. Even if it's only in the name of recruitment, this will benefit yourself as, after all, wouldn't you want more positivity in your team if you could?

I'll give you an example of how we could turn this negativity into something more positive. If you applied for a job and you engaged with the employer about the roles and tasks needed should you be successful and that person spoke with a lot of energy and excitement about a stereotypical boring job, such as working on a conveyor line making sandwiches, but they said how great it is and how the training they receive opens doors, how they are truly valued by their employer and how they have a laugh with their teammates, I'd be thinking 'well good for them'. It certainly wouldn't put anyone off applying and it may even surprise a few applicants about how good it is from their point of view.

I applied for a groundsman role many years ago and when shown around, the head man was very dull in his expressions, enthusiasm and energy, as if he didn't want to be there (maybe he didn't!) I called my current manager and told him that although I had applied, the tour was so dull that I didn't want the position and that's exactly what I'm trying to get across.

I bet we all actively try to prevent our teams from moaning among themselves and creating a negative culture. Moaning about daily tasks or decisions made by management is something we don't like and we try to help colleagues understand why these things happen. Let's try to send out good vibes, to talk about the amazing achievements we have made or projects that have been completed.

I started on turf 26 years ago. The first club I worked at, I was on a very low wage compared to 90% of the clubs around me, but it was a start. I loved every aspect of it and I could see that it was a step to more great things in the long run, if I put the effort in.

I believe in forging your own success, so if you want it, go and get it.

There came a point when I even considered changing career, but after re-evaluating my skill set and experience, I resolved to get all the licences and qualifications that are available and to make the most of the professional opportunities that are available in greenkeeping. My advice would be to go for it and see what comes your way.

There are so many positives that we could and should do, but let's start spreading the word about the positive moments we have gained.

We have BTME, photo competitions for the BIGGA calendar, employee of the month awards in our workplaces. There are section golf days, volunteer work, some clubs run greenkeeper revenge days, Secret Santas, meetings in the pub after work when we all share stories of that time Harry fell into a pile of mud down a bank, we play rounds of golf with friends and I've even been part of a Christmas greenkeepers song on YouTube. There's remote learning, a benevolent fund to help those in need and Jack Percival, who deserves another special mention. You may have heard of Jack over the last few years with his big feeds for the homeless and doing charity work with his club. These are all great things that are so positive and should be shared with those wishing to join the industry.

A few years ago, there were a few of us BIGGA members and staff who went into schools to spread the word and encourage students to consider a career in greenkeeping. We became a walking advert for the industry and this is something I plan on doing again in February 2022 if anyone in Surrey fancies joining me?

I feel like I'm preaching too much about positivity so I'll wrap this up. I'm not Mr Positive and everyone has their moans and groans, but let's all pull together for the future and make greenkeeping an attractive career choice once again. Put out positivity and share the good times. After all, it's Christmas — a time for giving, sharing and positivity.

Continue the conversation

Michael is on Twitter at @MJBgreenkeeper

Michael has previously spoken in colleges about the greenkeeping profession

ACROSS THE BOARD

Iain Macleod | BIGGA Guardian

Next month, finally, we can all meet again for another BTME, when the trade show and lots of great education will be taking place.

It is only two years since we were last able to do this, but it seems a lot longer, what with everything that has taken place in that time!

Last year the staff at BIGGA put on a great few days of education, all online. They did a wonderful job and it was well subscribed, but I'm sure we all missed meeting up, networking and visiting the trade show to see our friends in the business and find out about all the new products.

I'm sure I'm not alone in really looking forward to getting back to Harrogate for a fun-filled week with old friends and new. After two years there should be quite a few things to see on the exhibition floor and I'm sure the trade guys can't wait to show them to us.

Harrogate is a great town and ideal for our needs. BIGGA members have been going there since the late 1980s and last year was the first we missed, but hopefully that won't happen again.

After a very good and successful BTME in January 2020, we all headed home, oblivious to what was going to happen just two months later.

In early March we began to hear more about COVID-19 and wondered what the implications would be going forward. I don't think anyone envisaged what was to come!

Tain closed its course on 23 March 2020 and Iain would be made redundant a few months later

Sporting events began to be put on hold in mid-March and we began to wonder just how bad things would get.

I joined Tain Golf Club in 1976 and spent more than 40 years as head greenkeeper. On Monday 23 March 2020, Tain had a meeting of the Greens Committee to discuss the whys and wherefores of what was happening around us. We talked for a while and put in some contingencies.

Several hours later came the announcement of lockdown and that all golf courses were to close.

The next morning I was alone, putting up the course closed signs and shutting us down. Around lunch I got a call from the captain to tell me that one of the members was on the 2nd green! I rang him and he returned in.

The next morning I was back in at work and took in all the tee markers, pins, rakes and put a bigger 'course closed' sign on the 1st tee!

Then began a long time sitting at home, doing jigsaws and even doing some home baking, wondering when we could return to work.

The course was maintained as per the guidelines that were put in place by BIGGA and others, then agreed by the Government. Two members of the committee had been trained by me in the past and they volunteered to take on basic maintenance.

Ultimately, many people went from furlough to parting company with their employer and I was no exception. This was a sad way for me to end a 44-year spell with the club.

I finished on 31 October 2020 with no real idea of what lay ahead. The support I received from BIGGA was immense and got me through this, as were the friendships from other greenkeepers. My family were also incredibly supportive.

We decided to sell up and move south, to where my daughter and oldest son live with their partners and our four grandchildren. We sold our house in early April and moved down to the Helensburgh area. We bought a nice home and have renovated it over the last six months.

I've started a small consultancy business and it's going well, but I do miss the full-time life of greenkeeping. Being a part of the National Board in my role as a Guardian has helped and I'm proud to have supported the association through this period, while it has also been great to meet with people at events, such as the Festival of Turf in July.

The important thing to remember about this entire experience is that life goes on. Every difficult circumstance is an opportunity to try something new and, while it may sound cliché, there are silver linings to be found.

It is appropriate to be writing this in December, the darkest month when days are shortest, but with the new year comes new hope and new opportunity. Whether that begins at home, in the workplace or even in Harrogate at BTME, we will all come out of this stronger.

I hope to see you in January at BTME, but in the meantime I hope you have a very happy Christmas!

HELPING US TO HELP YOU

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BIGGA's Partner Programme aims to provide an array of career enhancing and defining opportunities for our members. Through their relationship with BIGGA, the leading companies in the industry are able to support our members through education, initiatives and awareness.

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THE BEST SHOT 2021

BIGGA is proud to reveal the winner of our annual photographic competition, with a stunning early-morning image from the Home of Golf clinching the top prize.

We've also selected the three category winners and 12 images that will comprise the BIGGA Photo Calendar 2022.

Following member voting on social media and judging by the BIGGA team that was supported by popular golf course photographer Mike Hyde, the winner of the BIGGA Photographic Competition 2021 was revealed to be:

Jonathan Wood, St Andrews Links, "Morning has broken"

Jonathan's image of sunrise over the Castle Course at St Andrews Links caught the judge's eye with its wonderful range of colours and subtle details including the clubhouse, greenkeepers and imperfections in the turf. Jonathan, 43, is course manager on the Castle Course and has won an Olympus Tough TG-6 camera worth £449.99.

Each of the category winners, revealed here have also won a £150 Love2Shop Gift Card.

Mike, director of Carefree Golf Photography, said: "It was an absolute pleasure to be involved in the BIGGA Photographic Competition 2021. I've always enjoyed the presentation of the calendar entries at BTME, so thank you for the opportunity to be part of the judging process! I always seek out greenkeepers when I visit a club for the first time. You inevitably point out a viewpoint or an angle that I wouldn't have found otherwise, so I was excited to see what had been captured first-hand.

"The quality of imagery was very high and there were a number of photos that I would be happy submitting to my clients. I also recognise that professional quality imagery isn't necessarily the main objective of the competition, as much as capturing the spirit of greenkeeping and the joy of working in such beautiful environments and all the nominees delivered on that admirably. I hope I can be involved again in the future and congratulations to all the winners!"

Thank you to everyone who entered the BIGGA Photographic Competition 2021. We'll be launching the competition once again in the New Year, so get snapping and good luck!

Greenkeeping winner:
Joe Simpson, Ipswich Golf Club, "Bunker raking shift"

Mike Hyde: "I love the composition of this photograph. The shadows on the fairway give a lovely texture to the foreground, drawing you in before you notice the silhouette, which stands out beautifully against the light.

"The timing is perfect too, just as they reach the brow of the hill, and emphasises the solitary nature of the job, yet at the same time I can immediately imagine taking that walk and feeling the sun on my face.

"Lastly, the wonderfully warm tone suggests the optimism that comes with the start of a new day."

Landscape winner:
Jonathan Wood, St Andrews Links, "Morning has broken"

Mike Hyde: When I shoot, I try and create imagery that evokes emotion and this picture absolutely does that for me. It stirs a desire to get out there and play golf (although I would probably rather be taking photographs in that light!)

"Technically, shooting just away from the sun means the highlights aren't too blown out and the colours are just gorgeous — I like that they change across the shot.

"The composition drew my eye across the frame from the beautiful rough via the clubhouse to the slight glimpse of the ocean. The greenkeepers bring some life to the image and convey what beautiful places golf courses are to work.

"I also really like the imperfection of the fairy rings in the foreground, even though the image conveys pretty impeccable conditioning, as it gives an authority to the photograph.

"This photo also demonstrates the value of finding an interesting angle — don't always shoot from head height! Dropping a few feet and shooting upwards means the flag is set against the sky rather than the grass and the sun glistening off the turf adds another dimension, as well as highlighting the conditioning."

Wildlife winner:
Laura Sayer-Hall, Ardfin Golf Club, "New tee markers"

Mike Hyde: "While usually it's best to shot at dawn or dusk, sometimes Mother Nature forces your hand.

"What I love about this photo is that the deer are positioned exactly as you would place them — in the same pose as each other, at the same angle, and looking at the camera. And they really are in the right spot to be tee markers!

"The background is obviously beautiful and provides a great backdrop to the main subjects.

"Ideally it might be cropped in a touch, but Laura has worked admirably within the limitations of a phone camera, where risking getting any closer risked spoiling the scene. It's always a race against time when you're shooting wildlife and often you have to put idealism aside and capture what's in front of you as best you can."

Remember we are here to support you when you need us

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Greenkeepers Legal Assistance
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Human Resources
0845 646 1332
bigga@hrservicesscotland.co.uk

Meet your Membership Administration Team

Elaine Jones
Administration Manager
elaine@bigga.co.uk

Gil Christon
Administrator
gil@bigga.co.uk

Janette Pascall
Administrator
janette@bigga.co.uk

Jo Millar
Administrator
jo@bigga.co.uk

Your Local Membership Services Team

Scotland & Northern Ireland

John Young
07776 242120
johnyoung@bigga.co.uk

Central England

Roger Butler
07525 593359
roger@bigga.co.uk

South West & South Wales

Tracey Walker
07841 948110
tracey.walker@bigga.co.uk

South East

John Pearson
07591 588493
john.pearson@bigga.co.uk

Ecology & Sustainability

James Hutchinson
07767 242863
james.hutchinson@bigga.co.uk

WHAT'S ON

BIGGA Scotland Strategy Day

When: 9 December 2021
Venue: Auchterarder Golf Club, Central Region, BIGGA Scotland

The BIGGA Scotland board of management has organised a strategy day to discuss a range of important subjects that will form part of a wider strategy to help BIGGA and the greenkeeping industry moving forwards.

The subjects to be discussed are:

- **Golf events:** creating a calendar of events for all members throughout Scotland and ensuring there is a balanced approach.
- **Young greenkeepers programme:** how can we help young greenkeepers establish a career in the industry by providing more opportunities?
- **L&D programme:** existing events, including the annual conference, and those that would be welcomedin the future.
- **The Legacy Club:** How can we accommodate the needs of our veteran members and bring those who are no long members back into the fold?
- **Greenkeeping as a profession**: how can we promote greenkeeping to youngsters and those looking to change career path, as well as ways partner organisations can support BIGGA in this ambition? Also, delving into why people leave the industry and how greenkeepers can work better with employers.

If you would like to add your voice to the discussion, contact John Young via johnyoung@bigga.co.uk

GET INVOLVED WITH GREAT EVENTS IN YOUR SECTION

Scotland and Northern Ireland

1 **BIGGA Scotland Strategy Day and Lunch (Invitation Only)**
Date: 9 December
Location: Auchterarder GC

Northern

1 **North Wales Section Christmas Golf Day and AGM**
Date: 6 December
Location: Royal Liverpool GC

2 **Cleveland Section Christmas Bring a Bottle and AGM**
Date: 7 December
Location: Cleveland GC

3 **Yorkshire Section Golf Day & AGM**
Date: 9 December
Location: Ilkley GC

4 **Sheffield Section Golf Day & AGM**
Date: 10 December
Location: Waterfront Golf

5 **North East Section Golf Outing & AGM**
Date: 15 December
Location: Dunstanburgh Castle GC

6 **North West Section Conference**
Date: 2 March 2022
Location: Shaw Hill GC

Central England

1 **Midland Section Christmas Golf Day**
Date: 1 December
Location: The Chase GC

2 **Mid Anglia Christmas Golf Day**
Date: 8 December
Location: John O'Gaunt GC

3 **East Midlands Christmas Golf Day**
Date: 9 December
Location: Kibworth GC

4 **East of England Christmas Golf Day**
Date: 16 December
Location: Belton Park GC

South West and South Wales

1 **Devon & Cornwall Turkey Trot**
Date: 8 December
Location: Royal North Devon GC

2 **South Coast Turkey Trot**
Date: 8 December
Location: Boundary Lakes GC

3 **South Wales Turkey Trot**
Date: 14 December
Location: Royal Porthcawl GC

4 **South West Turkey Trot**
Date: 17 December
Location: Burnham and Berrow GC

South East

1 **East Anglia Section Turkey Trot & AGM**
Date: 8 December
Location: Wensum Valley GC

2 **Sussex Section Turkey Trot**
Date: 9 December
Location: The Dyke GC

3 **London Section Turkey Trot & AGM**
Date: 9 December
Location: Essendon Country Club

4 **London Section Basic Machinery Knowledge Workshop**
Date: 15 December
Location: George Browns Ltd, Chesham

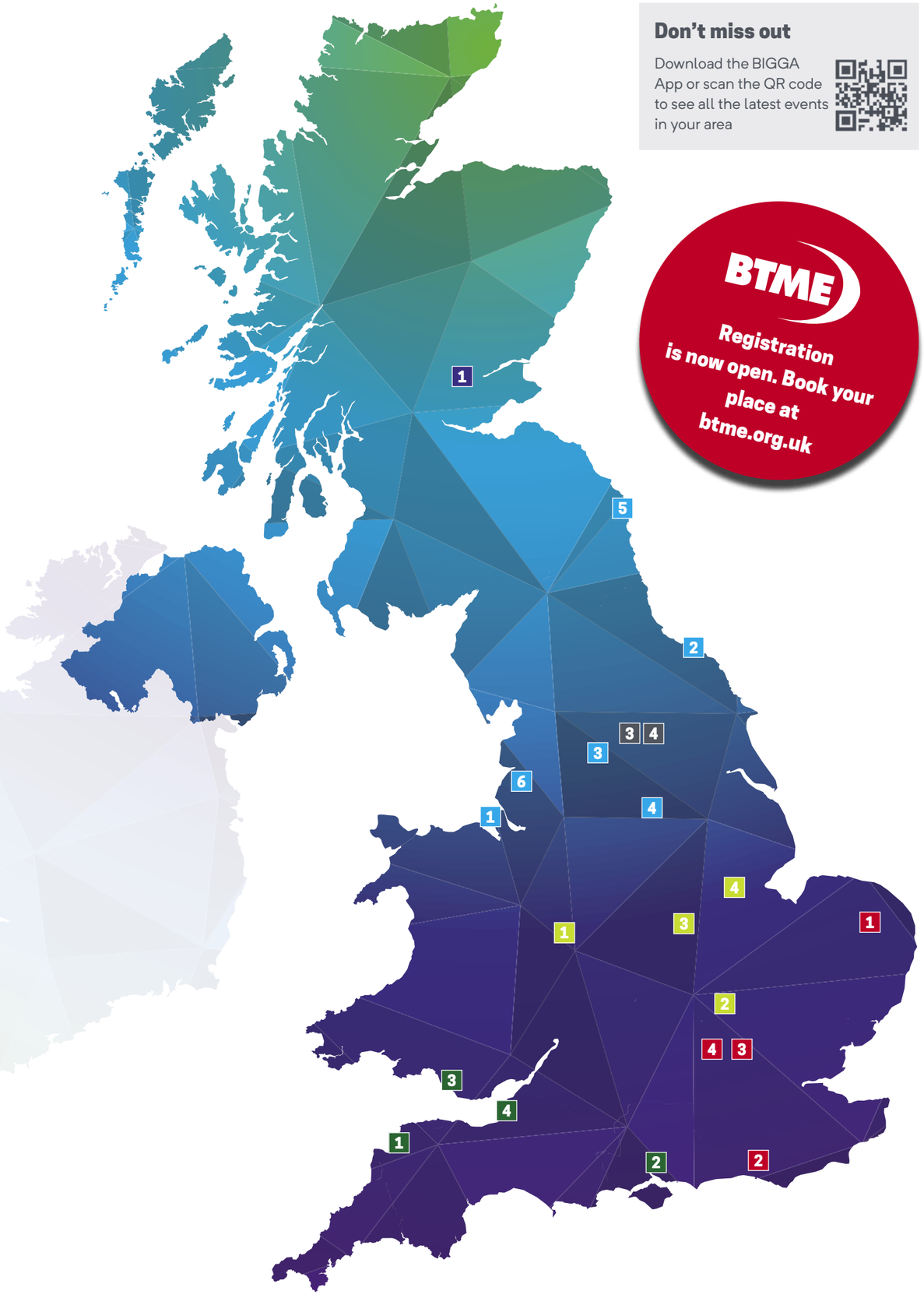
National / Online

1 ONLINE WEBINAR **Building the Talent Pipeline**
Date: 16 December 2021
Location: Head to the BIGGA website

2 ONLINE WEBINAR **Golf Course Ecology 3**
Date: 18 December 2021
Location: Head to the BIGGA website

3 **Continue to Learn 2022**
Date: 23-26 January 2022
Location: Harrogate Convention Centre, Yorkshire

4 **BTME 2022**
Date: 25-27 January 2022
Location: Harrogate Convention Centre, Yorkshire



Don't miss out

Download the BIGGA App or scan the QR code to see all the latest events in your area

AROUND THE GREEN

THE 200 CLUB WITH BERNHARD AND BIGGA

BIGGA and Bernhard & Company are proud to reveal the 10 members who will represent the association in San Diego next February

In February, BIGGA and Bernhard & Company will send 10 BIGGA members to San Diego, California, for the GCSAA Conference & Show.

The delegates will represent the UK greenkeeping industry as they network with peers from around the globe and sample the education on offer at the world's largest golf course management event.

Each of the delegates has been chosen after demonstrating to the selection panel their commitment to professional development and the greenkeeping industry.

For Allan Duncan, the head greenkeeper at Broomieknowe Golf Club, a place on the delegation is reward for nine years of investment in his own professional development. Allan had been a greenkeeper but had never really attempted to progress his career, until he considered the future he could provide for his children.

Allan explained: "I took stock of my career nine years ago. I had two young sons and I realised that in 10 years they would be learning to drive and going to university. The position I was in at the time wouldn't have enabled me to support them so I went to my boss and asked for a pay rise, but the club couldn't afford it. So I decided to go back to college and get myself the qualifications I needed to progress my career and since then I've done so many amazing things. I've now been to Singapore and Germany with The R&A and I've always taken something back from each trip that would go into the blueprint for how I maintain my course. There are so many opportunities that you can take so much from in the short time you are there.

"When Jim Croxton rang me to say I was on the trip, I think I deafened him with a bit of a Scottish roar! To say that I am excited is an understatement. I come from a smallish town in Scotland and I was in the same job for 20 years, just going through the motions. Now, a few years later, everything has changed and I am overwhelmed to have been selected for the delegation. I don't think it's ever too late if you apply yourself. There will be knockbacks on the way, but that all builds experience."

The BIGGA Delegation with Bernhard & Company is one of the leading opportunities available to greenkeepers and can be truly career-defining. However, we hope it isn't and it is instead just the beginning of something fantastic for our delegates who have often gone on to achieve their professional ambitions.

The delegates don't just get the experience of attending the show, but they will also visit some of the leading golf facilities in the region. They'll also join the ranks of other BIGGA members who have taken part in the delegation, being invited to BTME each year and joining the ranks of BIGGA delegates — which now totals an incredible 200 members of the association.

Andrew Wilson is deputy course manager at Whitecraigs and, like Allan, his commitment to a successful greenkeeping profession came relatively later in life. However, his circumstances were different as he actually achieved academic success in an entirely separate industry, having previously worked as a surveyor for a local authority.

"I went off ill with stress and I was diagnosed with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and depression," explained Andrew. "I had to give up that job and it took me 10 years to get back to functioning properly. I was volunteering at my local golf club and eventually they offered me a job as a summer worker, then took me on full time the next year. I found that being on a golf course gave me time to think and I could take pride in what I was doing. In a way, greenkeeping saved me.

"I would say this is the highlight of my career so far, along with taking part in FTMI. I believe this delegation will be really important in my career as it will give me a network of friends that I can bounce ideas off in future. It's a career enhancement opportunity and could be the difference between making the next step up to a course management job or not. This is my third time applying for the trip and I'm delighted to have been selected."

We're looking forward to meeting up with all the delegates at BTME 2022, where they'll be joined by many of the members who have previously participated in this initiative. Keep an eye out in upcoming editions of Greenkeeper International to see how the delegates got on and for your opportunity to get involved.

The 2022 delegates are:

Joe Curtis, head greenkeeper, Diamond Club Ottenstein in Austria

Matthew Houseman, head greenkeeper, Scarcroft GC

Matthew Dobbs, course manager, Ringway GC

Chris Low, head greenkeeper, Walsall GC

Allan Duncan, head greenkeeper, Broomieknowe GC

Darren McLaughlan, course manager, North Berwick GC

Craig Haldane, golf courses manager, The Gleneagles Hotel

Scott McTaggart, course manager, Sandyhills GC

Colin Hopper, head greenkeeper, Elsham GC

Andrew Wilson, deputy course manager, Whitecraigs GC.

Your Regional Representatives

Scotland & Northern Ireland

Region Director Stuart Ferguson MG

Chairperson Gordon McKie

Northern

Region Director Anthony McGeough

Chairperson Jack Hetherington

Central England

Region Director Andrew Laing

Chairperson Andrew Smith

South West & South Wales

Region Director Steven Lloyd

Chairperson Lucy Sellick

South East

Region Director Anthony Kirwan

Chairperson Andy Harding

Conference learning returns to the Regions

National - Member Opportunity

BIGGA members all over the country participated in learning opportunities during November as our annual regional conference programmes returned for the first time since 2019.

Regional conferences were hosted in Scotland, Central England, South East and the South West & South Wales and all were well-supported by BIGGA members eager to catch up after such a prolonged separation caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

In Scotland, television presenter Alison Walker returned as the host of the annual BIGGA Scotland conference, having hosted the previous event 623 days before. The event was well-supported, with over 160 BIGGA members attending.

Gordon McKie, BIGGA Scotland Chairperson, said: "It is great to have the conference back again and having such an excellent turnout. The board of Scotland recognised the need to re-set this year and look forward to a full calendar of events in 2022."

BIGGA's Jim Croxton speaking at the South East Region Conference, courtesy of Agrovista Amenity

A wide range of presentations were provided to the audience, including an introduction to The R&A's Lethamhill project, the impact of COVID-19 on West Linton and Craig Haldane from Gleneagles provided a passionate defence of the greenkeeping profession.

Craig was a popular figure on the Regional conference calendar this year, speaking at other BIGGA conferences around the country.

At the BIGGA Scotland conference, Douglas Park Golf Club, Bearsden Golf Club and Garmouth & Kingston Golf Club won support packages donated by the GEO Foundation.

The GEO's John Kemp was on hand to present the prizes and said: "I'm enormously grateful to have attended another successful BIGGA Scotland Conference, it's a brilliant event and much-needed."

Syngenta's Glenn Kirby at the Central England Region Conference

The South West and South Wales Conference was well attended. Image courtesy of Campey's Ben Taylor

The West Linton team discussed their experience of coping with COVID-19

Alison Walker returned to host the Scottish Region conference

Steuart Fotheringham speaking at the Scottish Region conference

Archie Dunn heads to groGreen

Scotland - Central

Archie Dunn

Former Auchterarder course manager Archie Dunn has joined groGreen as an area sales manager.

Archie has 45 years' experience in greenkeeping and has been course manager at Auchterarder for 30 years. He has been an active member of BIGGA throughout his career, serving on various committees and is a past Scottish president.

Kenny Liddell, director of groGreen, said: "Archie brings with him a wealth of knowledge and experience. Our aim is to add value to our customers and Archie will certainly do this."

Naismith wedding

Northern - North West

Andy Naismith

Congratulations to Andrew Naismith who was married to his wife Gabriella during November.

Andy is head greenkeeper at Heyrose in Cheshire, having previously been deputy course manager at Mottram Hall.

Seacroft wins award at GCMA Awards

Central England – East of England

The Seacroft team including head greenkeeper Tim Harris (far right) won a GCMA Award

Seacroft Golf Club in Lincolnshire won the Team of the Year prize at a gala dinner during the GCMA 2021 Conference.

The team consists of Head Greenkeeper Tim Harris, Director of Golf Robin Lawie, Office Manager and Company Secretary Susan Turner and Club Franchisee Amelia Johnson.

Nominated by a club president and former captain, sustainability is at the heart of the team's vision for the club and a five-year course development plan is in place.

Robin said: "This has obviously been a very difficult few years and we're very proud just to be nominated, let alone win it.

"This was won not just by us but by a lot of people in the background and we're very proud. We just can't wait to have the next board meeting at Seacroft Golf Club!"

The other finalists for the award were Ganton in North Yorkshire and Long Ashton in Bristol.

South Coast visit

SW&SW - South Coast

South Coast members visited Celtic Manor

Members of the South Coast Section participated in a residential trip to Celtic Manor in conjunction with the South West & South Wales' Regional Conference.

Having spoken at the conference, Celtic Manor's Jim McKenzie MBE invited members to visit the venue.

The South Coast Sections Jim Fancey said: "It was brilliant just to meet up again and talk all things greenkeeping. Special thanks to Jim McKenzie for a thorough and interesting tour of this quite amazing site."

David Creaser

Northern - Yorkshire

Cave Castle head greenkeeper David Creaser has made the switch to the retail side of the industry.

David has been in the greenkeeping industry for 31 years, with eight as a head greenkeeper.

He will now join Russell's Groundcare as a sales representative.

Writing on Facebook, David said: "It's been a blast and I've met some people along the way who will remain friends for life. Thanks to those who have helped me along the road."

Russell's is a Kubota dealership located across Yorkshire and the north.

Rotherham golf event

Northern - Sheffield

The winning team with the Section's Andy Unwin

The Sheffield Section hosted a successful golf day at Rotherham.

The winning team comprised of: Mike Brear, Rigby Taylor; Lee Williams, Rotherham; Paul Bracey, Lindrick; and Bob Needham, retired. Lee Williams also won nearest the pin.

In second place was the team of: Rob Acheson, Thonock Park; Neil Bishop, Worksop; Mark Hudson, Crow Nest Park; and David Wright, Hallamshire.

The runners-up accept their prizes

Jacobsen scholarship

South East - Surrey

John Hockley, course manager at Gatton Manor in Surrey, is the latest BIGGA member to receive a Jacobsen Higher Education scholarship from the association.

John, 36, will utilise the scholarship as he studies towards the HNC in Golf Course Management with SRUC Elmwood

Welcome new members

Scotland & Northern Ireland

Dean Addison, Craibstone, DHGK; **Ben Matthews**, SRUC (Elmwood), S; **Leo McCulloch**, Goswick Links, AGK; **Harry Pagan**, Goswick Links, AGK; **Colin Smith**, Prestwick, M; **Gary Smith**, STRI, A; **Lee Walker**, Prestwick, GK; **Stephen Watson** Royal Aberdeen, AGK; **Martin Zitek**, SRUC (Elmwood), S

Northern

Craig Barnes, Kirkbymoorside, GK; **Sam Baxter**, Wigan, HGK; **Jamie Beards**, Oulton Hall, AGK; **Martin. Booth**, Wath, AGK; **Darren Crowther**, Houldsworth, HGK; **Ross Harrison**, Hallowes, AGK; **Brett Heaford**, Hallowes, GK; **Alex Holland Starling**, Hesketh (The), AGK; **Jack Lynch**, Hallowes, AGK; **Thomas Stanley**, Wath, AGK; **Liam Studholme**, Pike Hills, AGK; **Benjamin Testa**, Hale, GK; **Adrian Wood**, Kirkbymoorside, GK

Central England

Sam Banner, Walsall, GK; **Jamie Caswell**, Frilford Heath, AGK; **David Chruszczewski**, Bromsgrove, AGK; **Andrew Cooper**, Kibworth, A; **Taylar Foley**, Frilford Heath, GK; **Ryan Harris**, Chesfield Downs, AGK; **David Howells**, Barenbrug UK, ED; **Alexander Millar**, Stoke Park, GK; **Will Osgood**, New Zealand, GK; **Guy Sheppard**, Chesfield Downs, AGK; **Joshua Ward**, Belfry (The), AGK; **Michael White**, Chesfield Downs, GK; **Jordan Whitehouse**, Walsall, GK

South East

Michael Collins, Brett Vale, GK; **Thomas Day**, Hillingdon, AGK; **Luke Hazell**, Winter Hill, GK; **Jake Judd**, Wisley (The), AGK; **Tyler Morris**, Hadley Wood, GK

South West & South Wales

Jack Austin, Boundary Lakes, AGK; **Paul Cooper**, Bath, DCM; **Joshua Cubley**, Bristol & Clifton, GK; **Ian Flux**, Test Valley, AGK; **Oliver Ham**, Worlebury, AGK; **Fergus Hill**, South Cerney, AGK; **John Lawlor**, Worlebury, GK; **Justin Llewellyn**, Boundary Lakes, GK; **Christopher Locke**, Honiton, GK; **George Mann**, Ferndown, GK; **Robin Mcleod**, Bath, GK; **Derek Reeves** Bowood Hotel, GK; **Tom Savage**, Newquay, AGK; **Ben Walker**, Rushmore, AGK; **Mason Woodford**, South Winchester, FA

International

Kenneth Adams, Lakes (The), I; **Austin Browne**, Muskerry, SUP; **Pétur leó Hrannarsson**, Mossfellsbaer, I; **Einar Gestur Jónasson**, Brautarholt, I; **Darren Leith**, BurgGolf Zoetermeer, I; **Ulrik Leth**, Randers, DHGK; **Barry Lotgerink**, Bruinenberg, BurgGolf Zoetermeer, I; **Stuart Mitchinson**, Mossfellsbaer, I; **Felix Frederik Starke**, Mossfellsbaer, I

A	Affiliate Member	**FA**	First Assistant
AGK	Assistant Greenkeeper	**GK**	Greenkeeper
AHG	Assistant Head Groundsperson	**G**	Groundsperson
APP	Apprentice	**HGK**	Head Greenkeeper
ATP	Approved Training Providers	**HG**	Head Groundsperson
CA	College Assessor	**I**	International Member
CM	Course Manager	**L**	Life Member
DCM	Deputy Course Manager	**M**	Mechanic
DHGK	Deputy Head Greenkeeper	**S**	Student Member
ED	Partner & Education Supporters	**SUP**	Superintendent
		R	Retired Member

Promotions at The Grove

South East - London

Part of The Grove's greenkeeping team (left to right): Stephen Haire, Callum Herbst, Phil Chiverton, Sam Reid and Neil Corley.

A pair of greenkeepers are celebrating after achieving key promotions at The Grove.

Sam Reid, 27, has been appointed head greenkeeper and Callum Herbst, also 27, has become deputy head greenkeeper.

Golf Course and Estate Manager Phil Chiverton said: "In Sam and Callum we have two certain agronomy leaders of tomorrow. The Grove has always invested in young talent and we have a rich history of coaching greenkeepers through the early stages of their careers."

Sam's rise to head greenkeeper status has seen him help prepare the championship course for The British Masters in 2016, achieve an R&A Greenkeeping Scholarship in 2018 and work with the course's architect, Kyle, Phillips, during an extensive bunker redesign and rebuild project in 2020.

Callum is a former finalist in the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards.

Phil added: "While our day-to-day objectives always remain keeping The Grove in pristine condition, it is also important we offer the next generation of greenkeeping stars a platform from which to succeed and prosper."

DOGS ON COURSE

Name: Holly

Breed: Cross Jack Russell Shih-Tzu

Owner: Simon Crawford

Course: Ardfin

Favourite treat: Steven the mechanic has a soft spot for her and always has a stash of treats. So what ever he has!

My dog's naughtiest moment is... We were attempting to chase some deer out the course and Holly chased an otter!

If you'd like your course mascot to be featured in GI, email Lorna Taylor on lorna@bigga.co.uk

Bruntsfield gets sustainability award

Scotland - West

Bruntsfield Links has achieved GEO Certification

The team at Bruntsfield Links Golfing Society are celebrating after achieving GEO Certification at the world's fourth-oldest club.

Led by head greenkeeper Neil Hogg, the course management team has worked alongside clubhouse staff to offer a sustainable golf course operation.

Bruntsfield Links' CEO, Dougie Cleeton, welcomed the recognition, noting it was the symbol of a great golf environment.

He added: "This award is terrific recognition for a team effort over a number of years from all involved in course management, clubhouse operations and the support of the forward-thinking board of directors at the society.

"It was an enjoyable experience presenting the case, knowing that everyone involved was 100% behind achieving our goals."

GEO Certification is assured by the GEO Foundation, a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to delivering programmes that help people evaluate, improve and share news about their sustainability work across various agendas.

MEMBER BENEFIT

BIGGA Xtra Benefits

THE SAVINGS SOON ADD UP

Our gift to you: BIGGA Xtra Benefits

BIGGA members can access to a range of offers designed to support you and your family.

Great savings on a wide range of Apple products

BIGGA members can enjoy preferential rates on great tech from Apple*, including iPad, Apple Watch SE & much more.

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Beer52 scour the globe on a quest to bring the best and most-interesting beers anywhere on the planet to their lucky members. No surprise then that they are now the world's largest craft beer discovery club. Each month they send a case with a different theme. Also included is an issue of Ferment magazine, which features exclusive interviews and insightful articles. You'll also find a tasty snack for you to enjoy with your drink and your mag. To receive your free first box, you'll just have to pay £5.95 postage!*

Save, enjoy, spend today with Blackhawk Network retail offers

BIGGA members can save £100s on their Christmas shopping with big brand retailers through Blackhawk Network. From experience days to stocking fillers, create an account with our new shopping platform and start saving today.

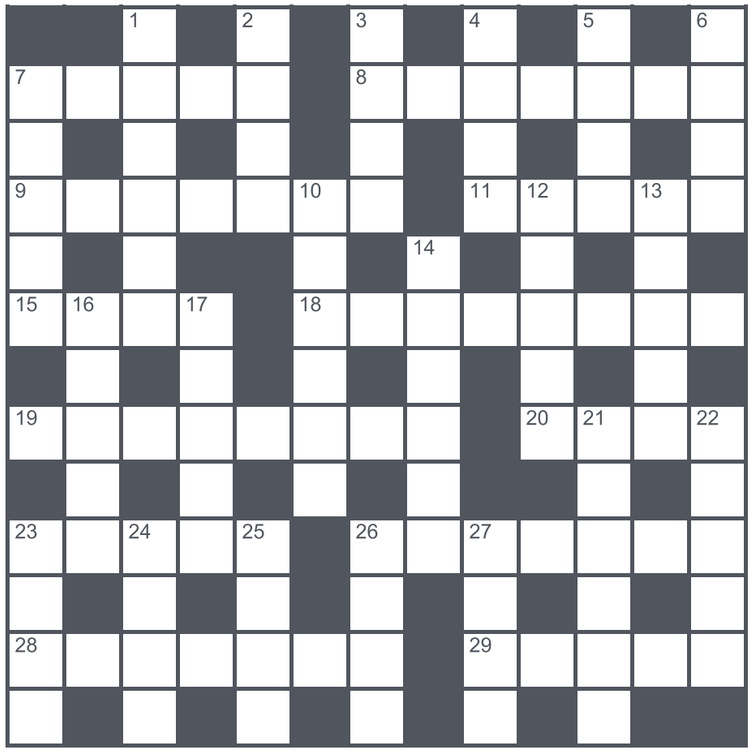
Your one-stop shop for the best festive gifts

Find the perfect Christmas gift for everyone on your list and save with our Gifting Guide. Browse gifts for him, her, the kids and for the person who has everything! Take a look at the gift guide via BIGGA Xtra Benefits.

*Terms and conditions apply to all benefits. See website for details. Offers subject to change without notice and correct at time of print. Apple – Annual purchase limits apply. Discounts are subject to availability. For the latest offers visit the Apple EPP store. For current exclusions, please visit the website. Beer52 – Full terms at www.beer52.com/terms. Charles Tyrwhitt – Offer ends at midnight 13 November 2021 GMT. SAA Membership – Only available to UK customers. Terms and conditions apply, see saa.co.uk/join for full details. BIGGA Xtra Benefits is managed and run on behalf of BIGGA by Parliament Hill Ltd.

TEE BREAK

TEST YOUR MENTAL ABILITY IN THE TURFCARE FACILITY



CROSSWORD

Can you solve the clues for this crossword? Enter your answers on the grid to the left.

Across

7 Addition (5)
8 Maintenance (7)
9 Pertaining to sight (7)
11 Move rhythmically (5)
15 Finely powdered earth (4)
18 Princess Anne to the Queen (8)
19 Erasure (8)
20 Completed (4)
23 Aits (5)
26 Found tea cold after stirring it (7)
28 Soldier (7)
29 Pipe type (5)

Down

1 Combines (6)
2 Corporate big shot (4)
3 Knight wear? (4)
4 Bound (4)
5 Wind instrument (4)
6 Unit of computer memory (4)
7 Shun (5)
10 Second man on the moon (6)
12 Plant louse (5)
13 Unsoiled (5)
14 Quasi-autonomous government organization (6)
16 Consumers (5)
17 After messing around, he met subject (5)
21 Surpass in cunning (6)
22 Senior (5)
23 John Wayne's home state (4)
24 Wait in concealment (4)
25 Cut (4)
26 Small harp-like musical instrument (4)
27 Young bears (4)

FIND THE ANSWERS ON P78

SUDOKU

Fill in each row, column and set of squares with all the digits from one to nine

(Easy)

4		9	7		2		6	
	2		4					
	8	2	3					
6								1
		4			5	6	2	
		6		5		2		9
	4	5		1		7		
				3				

(Hard)

							7	
			9		1			6
		9			5			8
4							1	3
7	1		4		6			
	2							
	3						2	
	9	8	7		2		4	
	6			9				

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We want to hear from you! Send your thoughts on what's been going on around the greenkeeping industry to info@bigga.co.uk

Thank you Sandra

Hi Sandra, I wanted to send you a quick message thanking you for everything you have done for me since I started greenkeeping back in 2017.

The countless course walks that you organised were the start of me really getting the bug for interacting and networking with other greenkeepers within the industry. This not only gave me more of an insight into how other clubs perform tasks and set up the golf course, but it also gave me the confidence to start putting ideas forward at Rudding Park, grow as a greenkeeper and trust in my own ability.

Your help in getting me a place volunteering at Alwoodley for the Brabazon Trophy in 2019 was a stepping-stone in wanting to really push myself further. It was an incredible week to be part of a team striving for perfection and gave me experience of working at a top 100 golf course, where I made several friends within the industry.

Encouraging me to write articles for Greenkeeper International and take part in a podcast is another thing I never thought I would do. This again helped me gain more confidence and also helped get my name and face recognised more within the greenkeeping industry.

While attending BTME you introduced me to people, helped get my son a BIGGA badge when he visited the show and made the experience memorable for him.

When you asked for my opinions on what I would love to be covered in future education days, it really made me feel that a greenkeeper with so little experience and knowledge could impact what was on offer at such great events.

All the help you have given me over the years has without doubt helped get me to the position I'm in now at Reay Golf Club.

I really wish you well in your retirement and once you get your motorbike licence, the North Coast 500 is on the doorstep of Reay.

One again Sandra, thank you so much for everything over the last five years, your help has been invaluable to me.

Jason Norwood, Head Greenkeeper, Reay Golf Club

Greenkeeping memories

I was looking through the archives of BGA, BGGA and BIGGA and I saw so many names I remembered from the past.

I became a member of BGGA in 1969 and over the years served on the North West Greenkeepers Committee. I was also part of the formation of the NVQs for greenkeeping, until I became one of the first British greenkeepers to be lured to the warmer climes of Bahrain.

I later went on to help build golf courses in Britain again, including Slaley Hall in Northumbria and Westerwood in Scotland, then Penina in Portugal and San Roque in Spain, until I returned once again to Mottram Hall near Manchester.

I am still greenkeeping here in sunny Saudi Arabia at 71 years of age — a total of 52 years and still going — and I was wondering whether that makes me the oldest greenkeeper still working and with the most active years in the profession? And I still love doing it!

It is great to see the strength of BIGGA and also the memories of some of the great greenkeepers from the past who I was honoured to be involved with.

Barrie Gregson
Landscape Manager, Nofa Resorts — Project of H H Prince Sultan bin Mohammed bin Saud Al Kabeer

Kenyan aeration practices

Kenyan golf professional John Kiondo sent us these images of the greenkeepers at Machakos Golf Club undertaking some aeration on one of the club's greens recently.

That's certainly one way to do it...

Greenkeeper International is your magazine, so why not get in touch with us and get involved?
We're always looking for new story ideas and perspectives on latest topics for discussion, so don't hesitate to contact us.

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Background photo credit: Mark Hollingsworth, Deputy Head Greenkeeper at Whitley Bay Golf Course.

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TM

Apprentice Corner

Brought to you by the Greenkeepers Training Committee

Off-the-job training

Why time away from work is vital for your development

Dean Jones, Institute for Apprenticeships & Technical Education

As an apprentice, are you getting the required 20% off-the-job training that is required for you to achieve your qualifications?

Off-the-job training is learning that is undertaken outside of day-to-day work duties and leads towards the achievement of the apprenticeship. However, this training takes place within the apprentice's normal working hours.

Off the-job training can take place at many locations including the workplace, off-site (such as in a classroom) or from home via distance learning.

The off-the-job training activities can often take place at any location as part of a mixed training approach. Remember, it is the activity, rather than the location, that determines whether the training counts towards the 20% off-the-job training.

> The 20% off-the-job training provides the time to focus and develop the required skills, knowledge and behaviours to achieve the apprenticeship.

What counts towards off-the job training?

The 20% off-the-job training provides the time to focus and develop the required skills, knowledge and behaviours to achieve the apprenticeship. There are lots of activities that can contribute to off-the-job training and the key thing to remember is it must be relevant to the apprenticeship.

Off-the-job time can be spent:

Learning the theory or professional knowledge through:

- Classes and workshops
- Lectures
- Online learning and webinars
- Masterclasses
- Relevant reading
- Lunch and learn sessions
- Role playing and simulation exercises
- Research

Practical training through:

- Job shadowing
- Mentoring
- Attending meetings
- Project work
- Professional networks
- Events and competitions
- Visits to wider parts of the department
- Visits to industry and government departments

Learning support time spent on:

- Writing self-assessments
- Writing assignments
- Reflective journals
- Revision
- Peer discussions
- Preparation for assessments and exams
- One-to-one tutorials (with apprenticeship coach, line manager or colleagues) that contain guided learning or support for the apprenticeship.

How to schedule the 20% off-the-job training

There should be a three-way discussion between the line manager, training provider and apprentice to decide at what point during the apprenticeship the training is best delivered.

To give an example, this could be a proportion of every day, one day a week throughout, one week out of every five or a proportion at the beginning, middle and end. Planning the time will depend on what is best for the business and the apprentice and on the technical and theoretical requirements of the apprenticeship.

It's important to note that time spent on the following will not count as off-the-job training:

- Level 2 English or Maths learning
- Apprenticeship progress reviews or on-programme assessments
- Training time that takes place outside the apprentice's working hours and is not given back to the apprentice as time off in lieu.

BIGGA GTC

Meet your Learning and Development Team

Sami Strutt
Head of Learning and Development
sami@bigga.co.uk

Deb Burnett
L&D Executive (BIGGA)
deb@bigga.co.uk

Fiona Lyttle
L&D Executive (GTC)
fiona@the-gtc.co.uk

Congratulations to the following BIGGA members who have achieved their Level 2 Certificate in Golf Greenkeeping:

Jack Beadle, Brough; **Oliver Beecham**, Erlestoke; **Samuel Biggs**, Stoneleigh Deer Park; **James Day**, Woburn; **Ben Haymes**, Bletchingley; **Fintan Hearty**, South Bedfordshire; **Callum Holdway**, The London; **Jamie Merrick**, Mendip Spring; **Dominic Minnis**, The London; **Dylan Offwood**, Shirley Park; **Jordan Skinner**, St Ives.

www.the-gtc.co.uk

/greenkeepers trainingcommittee

@TheOfficialGTC

GREENKEEPER TRAINING

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

Employers should ensure staff are trained to the highest standards. There is a clear link between education and training and economic success and all clubs should invest in the professional development of their staff.

GTC BIGGA
Approved
Training Provider
2021-2022

Askham Bryan College

Askham Bryan, York YO23 3FR
Contact name: Apprenticeships Department
T: 01904 772 277 | E: apprenticeships@askham-bryan.ac.uk
W: www.askham-bryan.ac.uk

Askham Bryan College is a specialist land-based college and university centre, offering a large range of courses from Foundation to Degree level and beyond, which will set you up for a career doing what you feel passionate about.

In addition to Level 2 Golf Greenkeeper, Level 2 Sports Turf Operative, Level 3 Advanced Golf Greenkeeper and Level 5 Golf Course Manager Apprenticeship Standards, we can offer specialist short course training and bespoke CPD events based on your business need. Askham Bryan College is a great place to study and is graded as 'good' for teaching and 'outstanding' by Ofsted for its care provision and accommodation. The college prides itself on making all students feel welcome and providing a great learning experience.

ASKHAM BRYAN COLLEGE
Learning is in our Nature.

Capel Manor College

Bullsmoor Lane, Waltham Cross, Enfield EN1 4RQ
Contact Name: Derek Mason
T: 07774 113 894 | E: derek.mason@capel.ac.uk
W: www.capel.ac.uk

Capel Manor College is delighted to announce that it is offering all three of the greenkeeping apprenticeships including Level 2, Advanced Level 3 and the recently-approved Level 5 Course Manager Apprenticeship. Heading up the delivery of the courses, Capel has successfully recruited the services of two very experienced and qualified former golf course managers in Derek Mason and James Camfield.

If you're thinking about a career in greenkeeping or wishing to train further and obtain higher qualifications, then Capel is here to help you achieve your aims.

For further details of any of the courses on offer, including related short courses such as the use of chainsaws, pesticide application and first aid, please see the website, www.capel.ac.uk

For further information or advice please contact derek.mason@capel.ac.uk , james.camfield@capel.ac.uk or employerservices@capel.ac.uk

Capel Manor College

Berkshire College of Agriculture (BCA)

Hall Place, Burchetts Green, SL6 6QR
Contact Name: Rob Phillips | T: 01628 824 444
E: rphillips@bca.ac.uk | W: www.bca.ac.uk

BCA offers both Level 2, Level 3 and Level 5 Golf Greenkeeping, Sports Turf, Landscaping, Arboriculture and Horticulture Apprenticeships or work-based diplomas. Delivery is either class based or distance/online, all through industry experienced assessors.

BCA also offers short courses through BCA Landbased Training, including PA1, PA2 and PA6, chainsaw courses, brushcutters, strimmers, tractor driving, first aid and more.

The 400-acre site has an 18th Century country house situated at its heart, with landscaped gardens surrounded by woodland and conservation areas.

Please email for more details using landbasedtraining@bca.ac.uk or visit www.bca.ac.uk

BCA

Hadlow College

Hadlow, Tonbridge, Kent TN11 0AL
Contact Name: Anthony Stockwell
T: 01732 850 551 | E: anthonystockwell@northkent.ac.uk
W: www.hadlow.ac.uk

Hadlow College is delighted to be offering the new Level 5 Golf Course Manager Apprenticeship standard. This eagerly-anticipated qualification will expand your management knowledge, expertise and maximise your career potential. If you would like to find out more about this new and exciting qualification, Hadlow would love to hear from you.

Hadlow College also successfully runs the new apprenticeship standards for Level 2 and Level 3.

For a full list of courses please visit www.hadlow.ac.uk.

For further information and advice please contact: anthonystockwell@northkent.ac.uk, waynesyres@northkent.ac.uk or stuartfranks@northkent.ac.uk

HADLOW COLLEGE

Bridgwater & Taunton College

Bath Road, Bridgwater, TA6 4PZ
Contact Name: Neil Morgan | T: 01278 655 111
E: business@btc.ac.uk | W: www.btc.ac.uk

Bridgwater & Taunton College has strategically placed itself as the region's leading provider for technical and professional training, with its recent Ofsted inspection awarding the college 'outstanding' in apprenticeships.

The college works in collaboration with a large number of local and national employers to train the next generation of professionals, combining leading edge practice with a wealth of opportunity and development.

We offer Level 2 Golf Greenkeeper, Level 3 Golf Greenkeeper and L2 Sports Turf. At BTC we deliver 24 apprenticeship standards across our land based provision in agriculture, food, drink, manufacturing, countryside and environment and animals.

Please visit www.btc.ac.uk for more information.

BRIDGWATER & TAUNTON COLLEGE

Myerscough College and University Centre

St Michaels Road, Bilsborrow, Preston, Lancashire PR3 0RY
Contact Name: Course Enquiries Team | T: 0800 652 5592
E: enquiries@myerscough.ac.uk | www.myerscough.ac.uk

Myerscough College and University Centre is the pioneering centre for sports turf and golf course management education in Europe. Courses are available at all levels, from introductory practical skills training to the postgraduate Masters Degree in Sustainable Golf Course Management.

There are options for full-time or part-time online study.

The foundation degree, honours degree and MA programmes are available online and have students enrolled from across the globe. Work-based apprenticeships delivery is across England and includes Golf Greenkeeper Level 2, Advanced Golf Greenkeeper Level 3 and the new Golf Course Manager Level 5 Apprenticeship standard with flexible start dates across the year.

Myerscough College

Oaklands College

Hatfield Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL4 0JA
Contact Name: Andy Wight
T: 01727 737 735 | 01727 737 000
E: andy.wight@oaklands.ac.uk | W: www.oaklands.ac.uk

Rated as a top 50 apprenticeship provider, Oaklands College has over 35 years of experience in delivering sports turf and greenkeeping training.

The college offers Level 2 and 3 apprenticeships and work based qualifications in South East England as well as Level 4 Institute of Leadership and Management via distance learning.

Assessors are industry competent in their area of delivery so you can be assured they will understand the skills and knowledge required for your apprentice to progress in their industry.

The team includes expertise in End Point Assessment to help ensure your apprentice is correctly prepared for their EPA

OAKLANDS COLLEGE

Reaseheath College

GTC BIGGA
Approved
Training Provider
2021-2022

Nantwich, Cheshire CW5 6DF
Contact name: Apprenticeship Enquire Team
T: 01270 613 242 | E: apprenticeships@reaseheath.ac.uk
W: www.reaseheath.ac.uk

Reaseheath College is a leading specialist land-based college based in Nantwich, Cheshire. The college has an established reputation, having delivered industry focused education since 1921. Our experienced staff understand the skills, knowledge and behaviours that industry want and need.

We offer a wide range of courses including diplomas, apprenticeships, degrees and professional training. Our horticulture apprenticeships combine on the job training with study at the Reaseheath campus and include golf greenkeeping, crop, horticulture and landscaping, offered at both levels 2 and 3.

We also offer a range of commercial courses including NPTC in pesticides and in a wide range of machinery. For further information please, visit www.reaseheath.ac.uk or email apprenticeships@reaseheath.ac.uk

Reaseheath College

Oldham College

GTC BIGGA
Approved
Training Provider
2021-2022

Rochdale Road, Oldham, OL9 6AA
Contact name: Phil Lomas
T: 07912 485 436 | E: phil.lomas@oldham.ac.uk
W: www.oldham.ac.uk

Oldham College is the first choice college for work-based greenkeeping apprenticeships in Greater Manchester and the surrounding areas, developing strong links with employers across the region.

The college offers the Golf Greenkeeping Apprenticeship Level 2 Standard and the new Advanced Golf Greenkeeper Level 3 Apprenticeship Standard. Short course provision, such as a pesticide application course, is included in the portfolio to meet the needs of your business.

Teaching and assessment professionals have vast experience in the greenkeeping sector, keeping up-to-date with current practices and technologies to ensure high quality provision is delivered.

The team also has first-hand experience of the End Point Assessment process, so can guarantee your apprentices will have the best possible experience.

Oldham College

Sparsholt College

GTC BIGGA
Approved
Training Provider
2021-2022

Westley Lane, Sparsholt, SO21 2NF
Contact name: Danielle Fancourt
T: 01962 797 322 | E: danielle.Fancourt@sparsholt.ac.uk
W: www.sparsholt.ac.uk

Sparsholt College, a campus of the Sparsholt College Group, has been established for over 120 years, but the college never stands still, continually developing its facilities to ensure the best land and environment education for students. The stunning 450-acre campus boasts all the facilities students need to hone their practical skills under the guidance of industry expert teaching teams. The college cares about the environment and is well on its journey towards carbon neutrality with exciting plans to develop this through the Green Agenda. Sparsholt College has a team of industry experts to deliver and assess the Level 2 Golf Greenkeeping Standard as well as the Level 2 Horticulture and Landscape Operative Standard. Our assessing and teaching team have experience that enables them to support with the End Point Assessment. In addition to this the college offers short courses in horticulture, landscaping and arboriculture, such as pesticide application, safe use of brushcutters and strimmers, first aid and more.

SPARSHOLT COLLEGE HAMPSHIRE

Pershore College

GTC BIGGA
Approved
Training Provider
2021-2022

Avonbank, Pershore, Worcestershire WR10 3JP
Contact name: Nicky Yare
T: 0330 135 7180 | E: nyare@wcg.ac.uk
W: www.wcg.ac.uk/apprenticeships

A national centre for horticulture situated on a 60-hectare site near Evesham, Pershore College (part of WCG) offers the very best in land-based learning.

Land-based apprenticeship standards, available at Pershore College include:

- Arborist (Level 2)
- Crop Technician (Soil/Container Based) (Level 3)
- Golf Greenkeeping (Level 2)
- Golf Greenkeeping (Level 3)
- Horticultural and Landscape Supervisor (Level 3)
- Horticulture Operative (Level 2)
- Land-based Service Engineering (Level 2 Engineer / Level 3 Technician)
- Landscape Operative (Level 2)
- Sports Turf Operative (Level 2)

Pershore College also offers short courses for employers in landscaping, arboriculture, and horticulture as well as pesticides training: PA1, PA2, PA6 and more. Please contact Nicky Yare on the details provided.

PERSHORE COLLEGE WCG

SRUC Elmwood

GTC BIGGA
Approved
Training Provider
2021-2022

Carslogie Road, Cupar, Fife KY155YT
Contact Name: Paul Miller
T: 01334 658 954 | E: paul.miller@sruc.ac.uk
www.sruc.ac.uk

SRUC Elmwood is based in Cupar, Fife, just 10 miles from St Andrews. The colllege offers a range of full and part-time courses in greenkeeping and golf course management.

For those coming into the industry, the college has a full-time National Certificate in Greenkeeping, or SVQ2 for those in employment.

For those looking to develop their knowledge and understanding, the college offers SVQ Level 3 Sportsturf and Higher National Certificate/Diploma in Golf Course Management.

Approachable, supportive, and experienced staff enthusiastically share their wide knowledge of golf and greenkeeping with all learners.

SRUC

Plumpton College

GTC BIGGA
Approved
Training Provider
2021-2022

Ditchling Road, Plumpton, East Sussex BN7 3AE
Contact Name: Plumpton Business Services
T: 01273 892 127 | E: business@plumpton.ac.uk
www.plumpton.ac.uk

Plumpton College is a leading land-based focused further and higher education provider of apprenticeships and specialist training and assessments, supporting golf clubs and greenkeeping professionals across the South of England. The college delivers Golf Greenkeeper Level 2 and Advanced Golf Greenkeeper Level 3 alongside a suite of LANTRA and NPTC-approved industry courses and assessments, delivered either at the main college near Brighton or onsite with the employer.

Training is delivered by expert tutors and assessors with extensive experience of working in a commercial industry setting with excellent results in ensuring a successful outcome for apprentices and learners. Plumpton prides itself in its partnership with employers to design and develop the most appropriate learning programme to meet their business needs.

PLUMPTON COLLEGE

Suffolk New College

GTC BIGGA
Approved
Training Provider
2021-2022

Rope Walk, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP4 1LT
Contact Name: Kate Rupp
T: 01473 382 895 | E: katerupp@suffolk.ac.uk
www.suffolk.ac.uk

The Suffolk Rural campus is located in the heart of the countryside and benefits from a range of specialist vocational workshops and outdoor facilities, as well as general college building. The college offers a range of established apprenticeship standards, most recently adding Golf Greenkeeper Level 3.

Delivery is classroom based or workplace and supported by our industry specialists.

Suffolk New College
SUFFOLK RURAL

CONTINUE TO LEARN: A CLOSER LOOK AT THE CONFERENCE

Continue to learn

A full schedule with times can be found on the BTME website

The Continue to Learn Conference will take place across three days during BTME week, running from Monday 24 to Wednesday 26 January.

In the past you may have been familiar with events such as the Turf Managers' Conference and the Deputies' Conference and for 2022 we've brought all those together into one great programme.

There are multiple sessions taking place each day in the Harrogate Convention Centre's Main Auditorium and Queen's Suite Auditorium. Conference ticket holders will be able to dip between sessions to maximise their learning experience.

Over the following pages we'll take a closer look at what's taking place on the timetable.

Last month we told you more about the Classes section of Continue to Learn and next month we'll give you an insight into the fantastic Seminars that are taking place during BTME.

Meanwhile, head to the BTME website now to find out more and to reserve your seat.

How do I book?

There's a booking form on the BTME website, while another was included within the Continue to Learn 2022 brochure, which you will have received with your October 2021 edition of Greenkeeper International.

The deadline for Continue to Learn bookings is 14 January 2022.

MONDAY 24 JANUARY

Reimagining Princes
Sean McLean, course manager at Princes Golf Club

The evolution of Princes Golf Club in Kent, from hosting The 1932 Open to the planning and four phases of construction that have led Princes to become the course golfers enjoy today.

Organic matter management – what's new?
Paul Jacobs, agronomist with the USGA

Facilities are turning to alternative organic matter management that is less disruptive yet still manages organic matter to produce desirable surfaces.

Turfgrass diseases – attack and defend!
Dr John Dempsey, turfgrass pathologist with Independent Turfgrass Research

Discover how turf managers can prime their turfgrasses and enhance their defences, leading to reduced levels of disease.

How big should your course budget be? Using industry data to help your planning
John Kemp, consultant at Contemporary Club Leadership

An insight into how hundreds of golf courses allocate their resources, providing a perspective of what clubs spend money on.

Managing greens with reduced fertiliser and irrigation
Dr Hui 'Eric' Chen, research scientist at STRI Group

The principles of organic matter management and how to improve the sustainability and quality of putting surfaces.

Creating a culture of trust
Craig Haldane, The Gleneagles Hotel

This session will share the trust equation and delve into each sector to create a better understanding and appreciation for creating trust through effective communication.
Craig is an innovative thinker who enjoys sharing his passion for turf and people. He is a respected mentor who to this day puts his hand up when he needs help!

How you can help nature on your golf course
Dr Marie Athorn, business conservation manager to The R&A, RSPB

A look at different areas of a golf course and how these areas could be managed to better support wildlife, wildflowers and other species.

What they didn't teach you at college
Steve Chappell, superintendent at Royal Bled Golf Club, and Lee Strutt MG CGCS MS

Steve and Lee will discuss their personal views on the topics of the day and invite guests to throw in their thoughts too.

TUESDAY 25 JANUARY

Phosphite for turfgrass management
Dr John Dempsey, turfgrass pathologist, Independent Turfgrass Research

What is phosphite, how is it best used and what are the results of field trials looking at its ability to suppress disease and relieve abiotic stresses?

The 'All one' greenkeeping management philosophy
John McLoughlin, course manager at Wallasey Golf Club

An insight into a greenkeeping-specific management philosophy that can help create a dynamic team. Learn how to become a team player, an effective communicator and improve your team's performance.

Putting green surface management
Paul Jacobs, agronomist at USGA

Putting green surface management, discussing clipping yield, MLSN vs SLAN, brushing and grooming setup, equipment selection and mower setup.

That didn't quite go to plan!
Lee Strutt MG CGCS MS

The trials and tribulations of undertaking a grow in, in a foreign country, in unprecedented times.

A very muddy situation: managing problematic earthworms on golf courses without chemicals
Dr Ben McGraw, associate professor of turfgrass science at Penn State University

The current research being conducted at Penn State to find solutions to discourage earthworm casting in fine turf through cultural practices.

Measuring sustainability, carbon balances and taking climate action at your golf course
John Kemp, engagement manager at GEO Foundation

Exploring the most important measurements of sustainability and how golf courses can prove their enormous value to the environment and their communities.

Drone technology to assess plant health
Dr John Kaminski, Penn State University

Drone technology, the constraints and limitations to collecting data and the overwhelming hindrance of interpreting and making decisions based on this data.

John has been associated with the discovery of four new turfgrass diseases on golf courses.

His research focuses on the cultural and chemical management.

WEDNESDAY 26 JANUARY

What got me here, might not get me there…
Kevin Fish, Contemporary Club Leadership

This session will discuss developing beyond 'Level 3 Leadership' skills, breaking the glass ceiling and understanding what the next level of leadership requires.

Commissioning, building or designing – running a safe project
John Ross, safety consultant and trainer at Compliant Grounds

Providing an understanding of exactly what your role is in running a safe project, with a focus on the CDM15 relegations.

Less is more when you talk about clip rate
Tom Stidder, TCS Turf Equip

An understanding of cutting unit aggression, clip rate and 'actual' height of cut, which can have a dramatic improvement in the trueness of surfaces. Simple procedures to improve definition will be discussed.

Taking on the business of golf – the Stanedge Golf Club story
Fame Tate, director and owner, Stanedge Golf Club

After suffering a shoulder injury and retiring from the Ladies European Tour, Fame Tate bought a golf course, with the aim of creating a venue at the heart of her community.

An entrepreneur, Fame has a strong vision to break away from the traditional golf club model and change people's perception of what a typical golf club is like.

This session will take you on a journey into the unknown, with eveything at stake.

WEDNESDAY 26 JANUARY CONTINUED

Leatherjacket management for the United Kingdom: what works and what is rubbish?
Dr Ben McGraw, associate professor of turfgrass science at Penn State University

The trials and research being conducted at Penn State into cultural, biological and chemical control of the leatherjackets currently plaguing golf courses.

Creating Ingrebourne Links Country Club
Ben Adams, course manager at Ingrebourne Links and golf course architect Alan Walker

The story of converting 370 acres of land overlooking Canary Wharf in London to a links-style golf course and country club. Taking over 10 years to construct and shaped using spoil from the Crossrail tunneling project, the creators of Ingrebourne Links had a bold vision.

Pythium patch: a newly discovered disease of Poa annua putting greens
Dr John Kaminski, professor at Penn State University

In 2005 a new disease of annual meadowgrass putting greens was identified in the United States. This session will introduce the signs and symptoms and discuss the available management options for its control.

Conservation on the golf course
Stephen Thompson, John O'Gaunt Golf Club

Discussing conservation projects at John O'Gaunt, showcasing some of the equipment used to record wildlife and looking at the important role of water features.

Life in the transition zone
Mark Hunt, Headland Amenity

A synopsis of the challenges we will face with our changing climate, the agronomic consequences of those challenges and strategies we will need to implement.

Championship agronomy 2021 – our learnings
Alistair Beggs, Richard Windows and Adam Newton, agronomists at The R&A, with Paul Larsen, course manager at Royal St George's Golf Club

The Continue to Learn Conference will conclude with a relaxed and interesting chat show-style session discussing The Open, held at Royal St George's in 2021. Hosted by The R&A Agronomy team and joined by Course Manager Paul Larsen, this session promises to give you an inside look at one of the world's greatest golf tournaments. It will offer an insight into the challenges presented by COVID-19 and the modern emphasis on sustainable greenkeeping. The R&A Agronomy team will reveal how they work, the preparation and data collection processes involved with championship preparation, the interactions with the host greenkeeping team and an idea of modern requirements for the delivery of golf's greatest championship.

GOLF COURSE 2030

Throughout the Conference representatives and partners of The R&A will be delivering updates on the Golf Course 2030 project.

- **Annual review,** Wendy Cole and Alistair Beggs, The R&A
- **Green standards,** Dr Christian Spring, research operations manager at STRI Group
- **Grass selection,** Dr Christian Spring, research operations manager at STRI Group
- **Coastal management for a sustainable long-term future,** Christine Adnitt, Victoria Clipsham and Jaap Flikweert, Royal Haskoning DHV
- **Greenkeeper profile and education,** Dr Paul Miller, programme leader at SRUC
- **ITM for parkland greens,** Paul Woodham, STRI Group
- **Water management,** Dr Tom Young, STRI Group

BIGGA CPD Continuing Professional Development

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

- Christopher Sharp, Wycombe-Heights
- Tom Jasper, East Sussex National
- Kimberley Yeldham, Flempton
- Tim Brown, Hockley
- Jonathan Peacock, Luffenham Heath
- Lee Strutt MG CGCS MS PGDip
- Steven Stringer, High Legh Park
- Richard Shields, Allerton Manor
- John Milne, Garmouth & Kingston
- Michael Budd, Richmond Park

Congratulations to the following members who achieved their CPD Milestone this month:

- Christopher Sharp, Wycombe-Heights

Keep your CPD record up to date: www.bigga.org.uk/member-homepage/continuing-professional-development

FUNDING YOUR FUTURE

BIGGA's Learning & Development Fund supports a vast array of educational opportunities for BIGGA members. From subsidies, scholarships and refunds of fees to seminars, workshops and conferences, the funds generated by BIGGA Education Supporters improve education in the greenkeeping industry every single day. We ask BIGGA members to continue to support those companies that are committed to supporting you on your career journey.

Individual Contributors: Steven Tierney MG | Andrew Campbell MG CGCS | Richard McGlynn | Jaey Goodchild Frank Newberry | Greg Evans MG | Jon Kiger

ECOLOGY ROUNDUP

James Hutchinson | Membership Services Manager (Ecology & Sustainability)

As with all ecology blogs and features, it's usually best to be topical to the time of year the publication goes out.

An example was last month's leaf collection and composting blog, so let's carry on being relevant!

Now the leaves have fallen, you will have plenty of bare trees. Is there something you can do that will exploit this annual occurrence?

What you can do is take the time to survey your trees for cracks, water pocket damage, fungal decomposition and a wide range of other things.

Something else you can consider doing is working out whether your trees require managing and thinning out.

As we know, trees need controlling on a golf course — I visit so many courses where trees were planted in the 1970s and '80s and then not managed and these now cause countless problems for the greenkeeping team.

Take a look at these snaps to see what I mean. The first shows a copse of trees where no management has been undertaken, whereas the second shows excellent management (for a golf course, that is). I always suggest woods are left to their own devices as nature will decide the best way forward,

This copse was in need of tree management to prevent further problems

but golf woodland management is a little different as we need free flowing air movement and sunlight on our playing surfaces. That being said, we can thin out our newly planted trees so nature and golf can live together with minimal disruption.

The golf course above was advised that at least a third of the weaker trees should be removed as this would provide the more dominant types with the room to flourish. If they were all left much longer, they would all reach upwards for sunlight. This is never a good scenario as the trees then have no lower or middle canopies to stabilise them. Opportunities for wildlife habitation are also reduced.

Let me know if you need any assistance and I'll see what I can do to help!

A good example of golf course tree management

Ecology Roundup is kindly sponsored by

rigby taylor

Experience the Difference.

Don't forget You can read more from James on the BIGGA website. Visit www.bigga.org.uk/about/green/ecology-bulletin.html or scan the QR code

BTME

GROWTH NEVER STOPS

Continue your professional journey this January

BIGGA's Continue to Learn is the world-leading education programme for sports turf professionals and returns to the Harrogate Convention Centre this January as part of BTME 2022. Head to btme.org.uk to find out more

LEARN WITH US:
SUN 23 - WED 26 JAN

EXPLORE WITH US:
TUE 25 - THU 27 JAN

BIGGA

Continue to learn

2022

STOP IGNORING YOUR BACK

Perennial launches free physiotherapy service for greenkeepers

Perennial, the charity for people working in or retired from the horticultural industry, has launched a free physiotherapy service that BIGGA members can access.

Following a trial period, the service will be delivered in partnership with leading community services healthcare provider Connect Health, to help build better futures for people in horticulture and their families.

According to the Perennial Health & Wellbeing Survey 2021, the biggest issue facing people in horticulture is back and joint pain. In fact, 78% experienced aches and pains in the six weeks prior to completing the survey and 38% of people said they don't seek help when something isn't right with their body. This issue is compounded further as 27% of people have worked while physically or mentally unfit in the last 12 months.

The charity is encouraging anyone in the sector who is experiencing aches and pains to contact the Perennial helpline, where a referral to the free physiotherapy service can be arranged subject to qualifying criteria. By encouraging people to get help early, Perennial hopes to improve the physical wellbeing of those in the industry, which can also impact other areas of life including the ability to work and ultimately personal finances.

Once referred, the individual will receive a 30-minute initial consultation with a qualified physiotherapist via Connect Health's PhysioLine service. The physio will then create a treatment plan for that individual, which could be carried out via the PhysioLine service or through face-to-face appointments.

Perennial can also assist with financial support, benefits and debt advice, training and career support, mental health and wellbeing support, a legal helpline and support for families.

As well as its range of frontline support services, Perennial provides services and information to help prevent people getting into deeper difficulty. If anyone working directly with plants, trees, flowers or grass has a problem — however large or small — they can pick up the phone to Perennial and know the charity will make sure they receive the support they need, for themselves and their family.

The Perennial team understands the devastating impact of bereavement, ill health, homelessness, redundancy and family breakdown and appreciates that anyone can experience financial, mental and physical health difficulties. Life's challenges can be overwhelming, but Perennial is always on hand to provide guidance and support.

Don't delay — call the helpline.

Get physio support early — please call the Perennial helpline in confidence today on 0800 093 8543 or complete the contact form available on the website. Eligibility criteria apply.

Continue the conversation:

Contact Perennial on Twitter at @PerennialGRBS

WHAT IS A MUSCULOSKELETAL DISORDER?

Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) are the second biggest cause of sickness days recorded after coughs and colds, according to the charity Versus Arthritis. As many as 1 in 4 people experience a muscular skeletal condition. Perennial estimates 75,000 people in horticulture have or will develop a condition.

Musculoskeletal conditions impact:

- Joints, such as osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, psoriatic arthritic, gout, ankylosing spondylitis;
- Muscles, such as sarcopenia;
- Bones, such as osteoporosis, osteopenia and associated fragility fractures, traumatic fractures.

What are the symptoms of MSDs?

- Recurrent pain — commonly in joints or muscles and associated with movement;
- Stiff joints — commonly in the morning or after prolonged rest;
- Swelling — commonly following long periods of repetitive use;
- Dull aches — this can cover large areas like your back and can occur even at rest.

Which areas are affected?

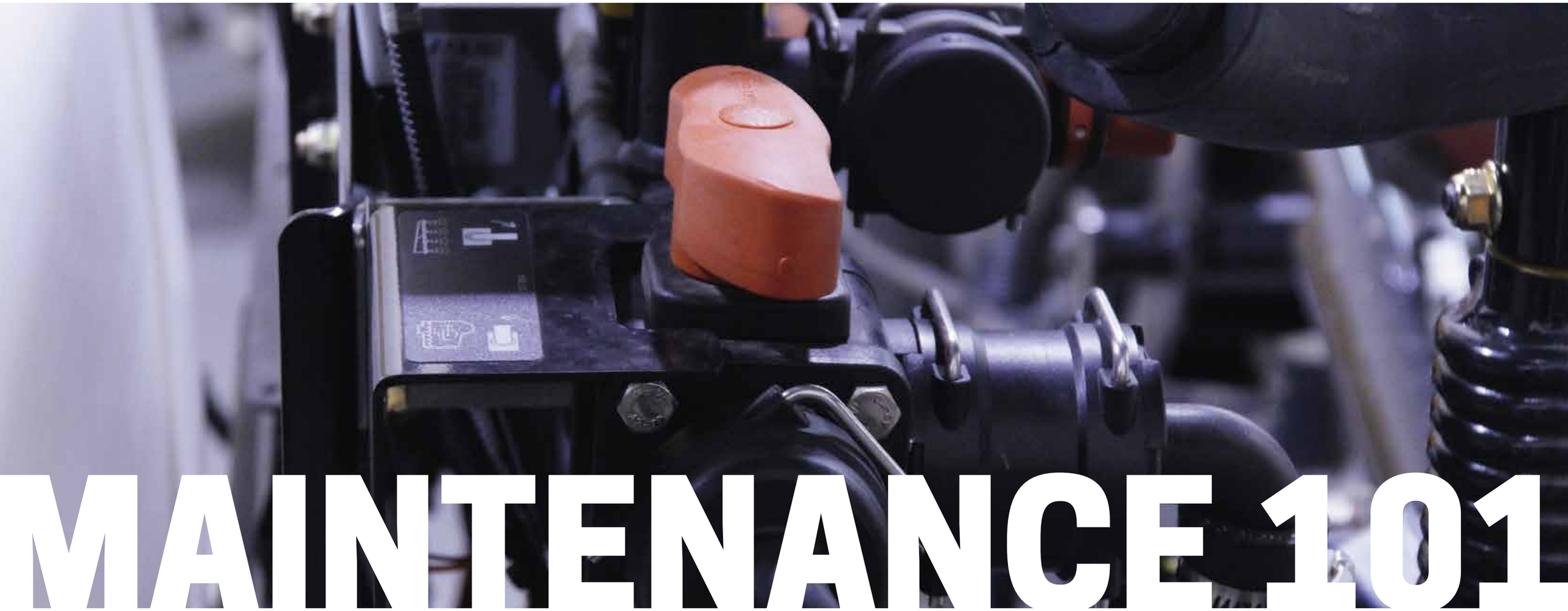
They can affect any major area of your musculoskeletal system, including:

- Neck;
- Shoulder;
- Knees;
- Back;
- Feet.

What is the cause of MSDs?

Most often there is not one single cause of an MSD, but a number of different factors that contribute to them occurring:

- Age — as we get older the natural changes in our bodies mean we can be more susceptible;
- Occupation — studies have shown an increased prevalence in those who work in heavy or repetitive jobs;
- Activity level — those who are less active outside of work are more likely to experience MSDs;
- Lifestyle — mental health, sleep, diet and wellbeing all play a big part in the cause of MSDs.



MAINTENANCE 101

PESTICIDE APPLICATION EQUIPMENT

Basic diagnostics and fault finding

Ian Sumpter, Mow-Sure

We have additional requirements under the Plant Protection (Sustainable Use Directive) regulations to make sure our self-propelled sprayers are NSTS compliant.

For self-propelled sprayers this is mandatory on the fifth anniversary of the machine and every three years thereafter. As a test engineer, it is not uncommon for me to find issues when carrying out these inspections. Most issues can be resolved on the day of the inspection and the test is passed, avoiding any down time. It's important to know the basics as the maintenance of sprayers remains the same and so the principles reviewed in previous Maintenance 101 articles can be used to trouble shoot and fix issues.

Step One - Understand the functionality of application equipment

Being a qualified sprayer, trainer/assessor and an NSTS test engineer is an advantage when fault finding pesticide application equipment. I always start with the principles of spraying to begin the troubleshooting process. I have lost track of the number of times I have dealt with issues that have just been due to a lack of understanding of these three principles.

1. **SPEED**
2. **PRESSURE**
3. **RESTRICTION (Nozzle)**

All sprayers have the same basic principles, whether they are small knapsacks or large self-propelled sprayers. If any of the three principles change it will have a direct effect on the application rate. We need to be able to achieve the right pressure for the desired speed and fit the correct nozzles, all of which will achieve the correct application rate.

Step Two – Understand application equipment troubleshooting

A good starting point for simple diagnostics of pesticide application equipment would be pressure.

Too little pressure in the system: a sprayer relies on the correct pressure, correct speed and correct nozzles to achieve the correct application rate. I have dealt with customers that have an issue with their machine not building pressure. When I investigated, the issue was the application rate trying to be achieved was too low for the nozzles that were fitted. To rectify this issue, change one of the principles, speed or restriction (nozzle) to achieve the desired application rate. In most of these instances, working to the nozzle selection chart we fitted the correct nozzles to resolve the issue.

Smithco Turf Sprayer

Too high pressure in the system: again, using the nozzle selection chart, we found in some of these cases the output (application rate) is too high for the nozzles being used. Put another way, the nozzle caused too much restriction, increasing pressure.

When the issue is not as simple as the wrong nozzles, a tip is to feel the pipe to see if there is a blockage, in these instances the pipe can vibrate or knock and will point you to the blockage.

It's worth remembering that a leak on the suction side of the system can also show similar symptoms. If the leak is on the suction pipe, which goes into the top of the tank down to the bottom, the issue will not show until the contents drop below the point of the leak. »

Controllers: if a machine controls application rate via a controller, it is important to know how it functions to achieve the correct application rate. The same principles apply, but the controller adjusts pressure to match the speed the vehicle is going. To function correctly, the sprayer controller needs to know the speed and flow to adjust pressure to maintain correct application rate. It's important to still select the right nozzles for the desired speed.

1. **SPEED** — managed by a speed sensor or GPS system.
2. **FLOW** — managed by a flow meter measuring flow to the booms
3. **RESTRICTION (Nozzle)** — fixed by the operator using a nozzle selection chart

The controller working to the variable speed of the vehicle and amount of flow through the flow meter adjusts pressure via a solenoid valve, either on a tap valve or through the pump to achieve application rate. With controllers in manual mode, we can manually set the pressure and carry out a catchment (jug test) for one minute. We should achieve the desired amount into the jug, this information is found on all nozzle selection charts. If that is correct, yet in auto mode we are experiencing issues, we can assume it is something to do with the controller, sensor or flow meter and investigate the route cause.

Step Three – Application equipment issue diagnostics.

Manual sprayer issues: many issues come down to incorrect application rate. Firstly, check you have the three principles correct for the desired application rate, using the nozzle selection chart.

John Deere HD200 sprayer

1. **SPEED** — know your desired speed and how to set on the vehicle.
2. **PRESSURE** — verify the pressure gauge is correct by doing a catchment (jug) test.
3. **RESTRICTION (Nozzle)** — Correct nozzles are fitted, as per nozzle selection chart.

Thoroughly check the machine and make sure there are no blockages, then check filters and nozzles. Verify pump is OK and serviced to the manufacturer's recommended intervals.

Pumps have check valves to control flow one way. Water is pumped through the pump chamber via spring-loaded, one-way valves. The valve then seals to stop water returning back to the chamber. Each diaphragm in a pump has two check valves and if these valves have debris in them, it will stop them sealing correctly.

Pumps can have a dampener in them to reduce any pulsating at the nozzles. These require some pressure in them and have a valve to add pressure. You can tell if the diaphragm inside is faulty by checking to see if air and water comes out. This indicates the diaphragm is split and requires replacement. Suction diaphragms will normally suck in when there is an issue and point to a check valve that is faulty or not sealing correctly. These are all common issues and the main reason the manufacturer's service intervals should be adhered to.

Tractor mounted boom sprayer showing PTO from pump

Computer controlled issues: remember, the principles remain the same, we have a speed sensor or GPS and flow meter relaying information back to the controller. When our SPEED changes the controller adjusts PRESSURE up or down to maintain the desired application rate. As long as our speed remains approximately what we want, the pressure will be within the desired 2-3bar range.

If we set the sprayer controller in manual mode, select the desired self-test speed and carry out a catchment (jug test), we should achieve the desired amount into the jug. If that is correct, yet in auto mode we are still experiencing issues, we can assume it is something to do with the controller, a sensor or the flow meter. We can still use the machine as a manual sprayer using the principles we learn on our PA2 training/assessment. We can also do some basic elimination tests to confirm if it's a sensor or flow meter issue. This type of diagnostics can be learnt and developed with good quality training.

This is a brief look at sprayer maintenance. To improve understanding you can access brand specific courses, as well as pesticide application machinery courses that I deliver through my training company, Mow-Sure Training.

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NOT SHY BUT **DEFINITELY RETIRING**

Sandra Raper reflects on her time with the association

Karl Hansell, BIGGA

BIGGA representative for the Northern Region, Sandra Raper, has retired after 12 years with the association across two stints.

Sandra was an incredibly popular member of the BIGGA team and devoted all her energy to supporting members in the region.

Before she left, we sat down with Sandra to hear her side of the story and to learn about her hopes for the future of the association.

Sandra joined BIGGA for the first time in 2007 as personal assistant to then-chief executive John Pemberton. Sandra would organise the BIGGA National Championship, charity golf day, board meetings and other events until in 2010 she departed the association for the first time when she returned to her previous employment as secretary for a financial company.

"I didn't really want to leave BIGGA when I did, but it was a wise choice because there were going to be some redundancies and I had the offer of a job on the table, so I went," Sandra explained.

Just two years later and with a change in leadership at BIGGA, a regional administrator job arose due to the retirement of Peter Larter in the Central England and Northern regions.

Sandra said: "I contacted Tracey [Maddison] and asked if I should apply for it and she said yes, I put in a half-hearted CV, because I'd been told that Jim [Croxton, BIGGA CEO] would never take someone back once they had left. I got the interview, which was down at Cold Ashby, and myself and Roger [Butler] were selected for a second interview at Aldwark Manor."

Sandra won the role ahead of Roger, but he would join the association just two years later when the business had developed the financial capacity to broaden the team and have at least one member of staff per region.

"Peter Larter and Peter Boyd retired at the same time — Peter Boyd was in Scotland. They were two great guys but they were difficult to follow because they had real identities in their regions. Peter Larter was in the Air Force but he was also a top level rugby player who had played for England and the British Lions. I still get phone calls on his old number asking for tickets!"

John Young was recruited to replace Peter Boyd in Scotland and he remains in that role to this day. Sandra added: "John and I started at the same time and Jim said to us, 'just go out there and do what needs to be done. Keep reporting back and become the eyes and ears of the association', so that's what we did. We went out, connected with our representatives who were working in the local areas and by travelling around and going to events, you start to identify the influencers in different areas. My tag has always been to listen and learn, because quite often when there's something going on, if you just listen the answer will come out. The one thing about greenkeepers is they are real problem solvers on the course and so you listen, chat things over and feed that information back to the team."

Sandra Raper alongside Kerry Phillips, Rachael Duffy and Tracey Maddison at The Open in 2017

As she settled into the role a structure and better understanding of her responsibilities began to emerge. This has been developed further over the past decade by the entire team, which now also includes Tracey Walker and John Pearson, to provide consistent support for members no matter where in the country they live and work.

"I think the BIGGA I knew in 2007 was so different to how it is now, when a member can get involved and make a big change in the association," said Sandra. "The only reason we have been able to achieve anything with BIGGA is through the members. It is their association and we have attempted to empower them to take control of it. We tell members, 'BIGGA is yours and will go in the direction you would like, all you have to do is say something and get involved'."

Sandra said she was particularly proud of what she has been able to achieve with the younger generation of greenkeepers. She played a key role in the formation of the Young Greenkeepers Committee and that enjoyed a degree of success, with one of the founding members, Jack Hethington, now set to join the BIGGA National Board. »

Sandra was a popular member of the BIGGA team among those in her region

Sandra added: "My thing has been to work with the younger greenkeepers and encourage them. They have got a voice, so I say to them, don't sit in the corner of the shed and not make eye contact. We all believe there's no bad question in the world and to see them progress and take something out of their association has been amazing, because that's what it's there for.

"Over the last 10 years my proudest achievement has definitely been seeing the young greenkeepers who have come through and are now head greenkeepers. There is no reason to, because it's nothing to do with you, but you do feel proud of them. All we've done is answered a question they had or pointed them in the right direction. The fact they appreciate that and to watch them grow and become the person they should be and achieve everything they're capable of achieving, is really special."

As a membership services manager for BIGGA, Sandra spent much of the past decade in her car driving between golf clubs. It has the potential to be a solitary existence, but just as she supported members, they often returned the favour.

"You can get very emotionally involved and that is difficult to switch off sometimes," Sandra explained. "Golf clubs are often run by volunteers and while I understand they are very well-intentioned, sometimes situations develop in a business that can create a not-so-nice environment and if that happens you will see people who really are broken, so you must always carry a box of tissues with you.

"There is a good side and a not-so-good-side to the role and you have to develop a bit of a tough skin because members don't want to see you break as you are there to support them through this and make sure they get the help they're entitled to so they can get to a better place.

> "If you care about people, which I think I do, then you can't help but become a bit too emotionally involved sometimes

"If you care about people, which I think I do, then you can't help but become a bit too emotionally involved sometimes and you have to really step back and give yourself a moment.

"Because you're not in an office to share all this and instead you're in a car on your own, it can get tough. I've a great network of members and they supported me, they were absolutely fantastic; they know who they are and they just have an open phoneline for you. I have a group of members who have sorted me out more than once.

"Jim, too, has been amazing. In one instance I pulled over to the side of the road because it wasn't a nice case and I was very emotionally involved. I said 'Jim, you've got to talk me through this, because it's really not good today'. He just stops everything and he talks to you, which is great."

Sandra said she has been blown away by the messages of support she received since announcing her retirement, but wants to reaffirm that the entire team deserved a share of the acclaim.

"It's not all about me," said Sandra. "The recognition that comes in is for all the BIGGA team. If people are pleased with what we have achieved and I happen to be the face of that, then we should remember that it's a team effort that gets us there. It's not about one person, rather the whole team has moved this forward and has a part to play. Sometimes I'm not sure the team — both the BIGGA staff and the volunteers among our members — realise how much that is appreciated. All the recognition is for everybody and it has never been about just one person.

"What a wonderful industry this has been to work in. There are no bad people in our staff, there just aren't. I've spent 10 years in this job and greenkeepers are hard working, good, problem-solving people. It's not a horrible, cutthroat industry and I feel so lucky to have been a little cog in this community."

BIGGA's Roger Butler has been tasked with eventually filling Sandra's shoes in the Northern Region, while recruitment is currently underway to find a replacement for Roger in the Central England Region.

Sandra with her colleagues Kerry Phillips and Tracey Walker at BTME 2020

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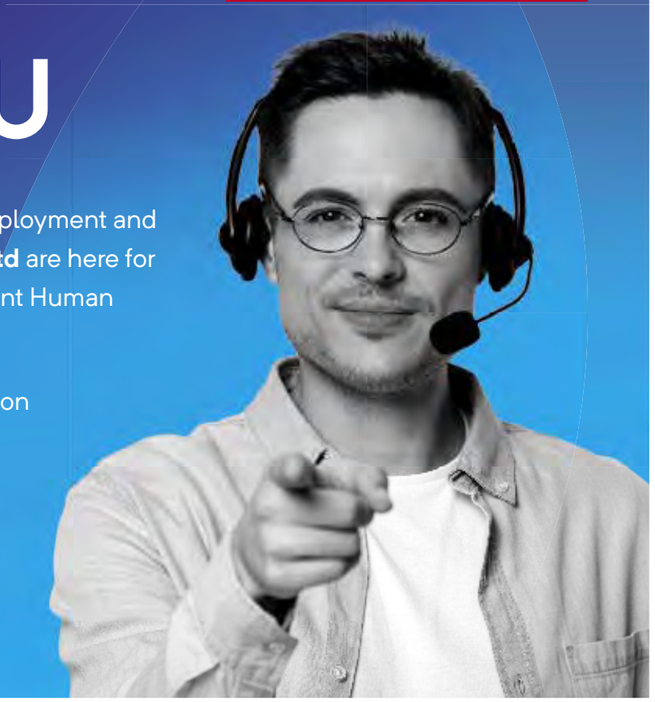

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‘For the first three weeks I thought I had made the biggest mistake ever’

How Ben O’Sullivan brought North Middlesex back from the brink

Karl Hansell, BIGGA

Location: London

We all know that the right greenkeeping team can quite literally save a golf club, but in the last four years the management and members at North Middlesex have also come to that realisation.

The club, on the outskirts of London, has a famous member — Andrew ‘Beef’ Johnston of bearded European Tour fame — but by 2017 there were just 170 other playing members and the club was close to shutting its doors for good.

The course had suffered from a lack of investment and the previous head greenkeeper had resigned some time before, in part due to the strain on his mental health. The fractured team that remained was without leadership and completely unengaged.

An old friend of Beef’s was working as deputy head greenkeeper at Finchley, just three miles away. He was Ben O’Sullivan and he just happened to also be a long-term member at North Middlesex. It’s not often that a deputy has to think twice about making the step up to a fully-fledged course manager role, but Ben was well aware of the troubles at North Middlesex. Caught between heart and head, he went along to meet the team and have a look around.

“It was a nightmare and there was no work being done on the course,” said Ben, 32. “I had a look in the shed and I was stunned by how bad it was. There was dew left on the greens every morning, none of the machinery worked and »

North Middlesex is a parkland course just five miles outside London

Read this for:

/ Morale
/ Inspiration
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Ben O’Sullivan

GREENKEEPERS' TOOLBOX

The Team

- Ben O'Sullivan, head greenkeeper
- Kevin Taylor, greenkeeper
- Luke Richardson, greenkeeper
- Liam Hyland, greenkeeper
- Jack Foster, greenkeeper

The North Middlesex greenkeeping team

although they had four staff, one was on long-term sick due to a work-related issue. It was all just crazy stuff."

Despite the club's poor financial state, following that visit Ben had the confidence to tell them honestly that substantial investment was required if they were to turn things around. Perhaps the club was more inclined to listen due to his years of membership, but they took on board what he said and went one step further, by offering him the head greenkeeper role.

New mowing patterns made an instant impression with members

"I started on 22 January 2018 and for the first three weeks I thought I had made the biggest mistake ever, things were that bad," said Ben. "The attitude of the team was disastrous. I'll never forget the first job I gave to one of them was handcutting the tees. For me that's completely normal as it means during winter you aren't driving a heavy machine onto wet ground. He gave me such a bad look that I asked, 'Is there an issue with you handcutting tees?' and he replied, 'No, I just think it's ridiculous'. Imagine that attitude — I'm your new boss and you're telling me the task I've given you is ridiculous!

"Then towards the end of the week, one of them rang in sick. I found out he had over 20 days sick the previous year, which set alarm bells ringing.

"Two of them kept phoning in sick, then when they did come in, they didn't seem to want to do any work, so in the end it was agreed that they would leave."

Within just a few weeks of his first tenure as a head greenkeeper, Ben was forced into making difficult decisions — hardly the ideal scenario when you finally achieve your life's ambition. Fortunately, the club committed to investing £200,000 in machinery over five years, which would help make up for time lost fixing broken equipment and go some way towards offsetting the loss of staff.

The course had suffered from years of poor management, with different voices and opinions regarding how it should be maintained, leading to contrasting approaches and practices.

The greens suffered from thick layers of black thatch as no fine turf maintenance had been done in the absence of a head greenkeeper and the rest of the course was in a similar sorry state. With plenty of competition in the surrounding area, the club was bleeding golfers.

Ben prioritised the putting surfaces and brought in AGS agronomist Jamie Bennett, who completed a soil analysis. Thatch layers were about 2 inches and incredibly unhealthy so, despite it being May and the start of the playing season, heavy coring had to take place. The topdressing was changed to pure sand to aid drainage and throughout 2018 the team focussed on getting the greens in better condition.

"At first the golfers weren't happy that we were aerating throughout spring and summer, but towards the back of 2018, I started to see a slight improvement in consistency and drainage," »

North Middlesex was losing members due to the quality of its playing surfaces

> ‘When I say this place was in turmoil, you just wouldn’t believe it’

The Par-3 9th hole as it was when Ben inherited the course

said Ben, who also had to apply a significant range of products in the first few months in the job. “Although I told them it was a five-year project, I could show the club the improvements and told them that if they wanted that to continue and expand to other parts of the course, we would need more staff.

“Kevin Taylor had worked at North Middlesex previously but left due to the poor morale among the team. I asked him to come back and he has been amazing since he returned.”

With the greens improving, next on Ben’s ticklist was the aged irrigation system. The dry summer of 2018 had highlighted how obsolete the system was and Ben would frequently arrive at the club at 2am to do a manual cycle, with it taking nine hours to do all 18 greens, before they could even think about irrigating tees and approaches.

“I said look, you need to get a new system and it’s going to cost £25,000,” explained Ben. “I’m asking so much of the committee and to be fair they said ‘all right, we’ll take a punt’. They began to trust what we were saying because they could see the process and how things were improving.

“Now we’ve got our machines, a good irrigation system, our greens programme and I said in 2019 let me start to work on our tees. We put our greens programme straight onto the tees and they slowly started to improve. But the club was on a really big high and you could see that things were getting better.”

A further £32,000 was invested in improving some of the 116-year-old club’s bunkers and, as word got around about the restoration of the course, membership and visitor numbers began to steadily climb.

Ben said: “In 2017 we were nearly going bust, which is one of the reasons why I didn’t want to take the job. We only had 170 members and then the Beast from the East hit us hard. Most clubs do well in summer and save money for a rainy day but we didn’t even have that and the club was even thinking of asking the members to lend us some money. But we made it through and membership has been steadily improving to the point that we now have 440 members and are asking for a joining fee.

“We’ve even got to the point where we have a fairway programme for the first time ever, where we do drainage work twice a year and apply wetting agents every month, which is around £12,000 alone, in addition to putting granular feeds on all our fairways. Before I arrived, the club committee hadn’t heard about any of these things.”

The greenkeeping team has benefitted from the club’s change in fortunes and morale is much higher, especially as it is due to be expanded to six full-time staff in the near future.

Ben and Kevin Taylor fixing an issue with the aeration equipment

“For the first time, all my team have an interest and really like the job,” said Ben. “Now everyone comes up with ideas and shows an interest in what we’re doing around the course, which tells me they care.

“I got the club to provide them lunch every day and we eat it in the clubhouse, which is great because when the members see them they give compliments about their hard work. I’ve also lobbied to get them bonuses at Christmas because it inspires them to push on to try and get another next year.

“They’re getting praise, they’re getting bonuses, people are thankful to them and then they take an interest and want to progress, which benefits the club. Those words, ‘thank you’ go a long way, but they never got it before, whereas now the morale of the club is through the roof. We had our end of season do recently and whereas in the past you wouldn’t get three people at it because no one liked each other, we had 22 people there last Monday from across all the departments. It was such a good laugh and they never had that before. People now enjoy coming to work.

Playing surfaces were in a poor condition

“When I say this place was in turmoil, you just wouldn’t believe it. The greens were shockingly bad, the machinery was neglected, it was crazy. Looking back on it from where we are now, I never thought this would happen in a million years. But it shows what you can do when you invest in the course and in the staff themselves. I’ve got such a great bunch of lads, I’m very lucky.”

Membership numbers are up to capacity and the additional revenue that brings has been reinvested in the course as Ben has opened effective lines of dialogue with management that means when he asks for investment they understand not only why he is requesting it, but the team has also earned their respect and so are more likely to be listened to. But what about North Middlesex’s most famous member? How has he perceived the changes taking place at the club?

“Beef loves North Middlesex because he’s been here as long as I have and it was his dad’s club before him,” said Ben. “We had him down for our captain’s weekend and he shot a 64 around here.

“He said to me that it’s amazing what we’ve done to the greens and how we’ve really turned the place around. He said it’s the first time he’s ever seen definition like it on the course.

“I know he’s my friend but I could see that he really meant it, which was fantastic.”

Continue the conversation

Ben O’Sullivan is on Twitter at @BIGBENTRIUMPH

Beef on greenkeeping

GI meets North Middlesex's most famous member

Karl Hansell, BIGGA

Andrew Johnston is one of the most recognisable figures on the European Tour. With his bushy beard and unmistakeable physique, 'Beef' is among the most popular players around.

Despite relocating to Portugal, where the weather is more favourable towards winter practice, Beef has retained his membership at North Middlesex and is close friends with head greenkeeper Ben O'Sullivan.

Greenkeeper International recently spoke to him on the phone about his appreciation for the work of greenkeepers everywhere, and how he's fascinated by what it takes to maintain a course — even if he'd rather stick to playing.

Who doesn't love a bit of Beef at Christmas?

GI: You spend your life out on the golf course, so what's your awareness of the work of greenkeepers?

Beef: It's a brutal job, man. I've seen it over the last four or five years at North Mids and it is brutal. What Ben and the team have done with the funds they have has been really good and they're working really hard.

GI: So would you say you're pretty switched on about what it takes to maintain a course?

Beef: Before Ben joined North Mids we were looking at the course and I said to the club that it wasn't good enough, we needed to sort it out. Only when you start asking questions and digging around do you realise how much goes into it.

Ben was at Finchley at the time and we wanted him to come over because he's been [at North Middlesex] since he was a kid and I feel like if he has a love for the place, it was going to work out really good.

The greenkeepers work really long hours and it's hard. I speak to him a lot and he's always out on the golf course, especially in the summer when they've got golf days and competitions and things like that. You see him up at four o'clock in the morning when sprinklers break and he's got to go out and fix them or things like at. It's like he's on call 24/7.

GI: Coming up through the England Golf system you will have played a lot of courses around the UK, but what is the understanding of elite level players regarding the work of greenkeepers? Is there an awareness of what it takes to prepare a course for you guys?

Beef: I don't think so, no. I'm only finding things out by asking questions. I had no idea how much the teams work for months before tournaments or shut courses weeks before and then how they have greenkeepers sent from all over the country to work on »

Andrew Johnston

POP QUIZ

To test his knowledge, we asked Beef for the meaning of some everyday greenkeeping terms.

1. What is aeration?

Beef: It's hollowtining to remove thatch

2. What is topdressing?

Beef: After you've aerated you dress them so sand goes in, which makes them firmer, makes water go through them and makes them less spongy. I find every time I go to a golf course, you can tell who has been hollowtining a lot because they feel firmer underfoot and less bouncy, almost.

3. How do you change a golf hole?

Beef: With a machine. I don't know what the machine is called, but I've seen it loads of times with the pad around it and then they smash the hole down, twist it and then pull it up. I'm not sure what it's called, but I've seen it a few times. And then they replace it with the hole that's been cut out of the old hole.

4. What is fusarium?

Beef: It's the disease on the greens with the patchy rings.

5. What would you do with a grinder?

Beef: It's an app isn't it? I have no idea!

Ben O'Sullivan with Andrew Johnston

> I don't think greenkeepers get enough appreciation from the members sometimes

that tournament for that week. Ben was telling me how he was going to one of the tournaments to work and I asked what he meant. He told me you can apply to volunteer for events and I had no idea about that, that's crazy.

GI: The fact you have a greenkeeper for a mate, do you have their side more than the average player?

Beef: 100%. I've seen what Ben does at North Mids and how some members will complain if, say, the course is shut for a week for maintenance or they've hollowtined and sanded the greens again. They say, 'why does he keep doing that?', that's the one I hear a lot. 'Oh, they're hollowtining again,' things like that. They've got no idea how to maintain good greens for us to play on.

Members have got to understand and give a little bit, especially the last couple of years where it's been such a long, cold winter for six, seven months with no growth and it was freezing in April and people are coming up to him and saying the course is crap. I'm saying to Ben, I've played good courses and they're equally as bad, so it's not just North Mids. Other golf courses all struggle if it's not hot enough for the grass to grow. That must be really frustrating for Ben and I really take his side because there's nothing you can really do.

The 18th hole at North Middlesex

GI: In recent years, the withdrawal of chemicals and other products alongside increasing costs and a desire to do what's morally right, has led to greenkeepers pursuing a more sustainable approach, to the benefit of wildlife and the wider environment. Would you be comfortable accepting a course that wasn't pristine but that was doing its bit for the environment?

Beef: Yeah, 100%. That doesn't define a golf course.

People compare our UK courses to others in America, where they've got 300 days of sunshine. But I think people need to come to reality and get away from thinking that bad chemicals are a good thing for us and for nature. We've all got to accept that.

GI: What makes a golf course stand out to you?

Beef: Definition. When it looks nice as you walk up to a hole and it stands out, I think that's because they've got nice definition on them. Whether that's just the way the rough is shaped or the fairway is shaped or even the way a fairway is cut, just things like that.

I think sometimes it's good to be a little different. I know a couple of years ago when Ben first came over, he cut the fairways in a diamond pattern that we'd never seen — they'd been striped since I was a kid — and we were all buzzing about it, saying it was wicked because it completely changed the definition of the golf course. Little things like that are brilliant.

GI: Is speed important to you on a golf green, or what are you looking for?

Beef: First, if they're going to be quick then they'd better be a good surface. I think golf is about having a consistent surface, not necessarily getting them to 12 or 13, but if they run at 10 consistently, that's better. It becomes a bit crazy at golf courses where all of a sudden they go from slow to really fast and then slow again.

Also, you can get them quick, but I don't think it's possible to maintain it. We played Valderrama the other week and I stayed around there for a couple of days. On the Tuesday [after the event] I hit a few practice putts and straight away they were so much slower than from when we played it on the Sunday or during the week. You can't maintain those kind of speeds so they hadn't touched them for two days afterwards. It's about being realistic and consistency is key.

GI: When you are playing a tournament, do you actively speak to the greenkeepers to shake their hand or speak to them for a little bit of behind-the-scenes information?

Beef: Sometimes if we're practicing, we'll see them out on the golf course, especially if I'm teeing off late, and we'll have a quick chat and say hi, stuff like that. But then I just let them get on with what they've got to do. They're busy and they've been there a long time, so I just try and stay away and let them do their thing and crack on.

GI: Do you ever fancy having a go at greenkeeping?

Beef: You know what, I think it's one of those things that from a distance looks great because you get to sit on a mower and cut greens or whatever. But after being friends with Ben for so long and speaking to him all the time about it, it puts me off to be honest. I know the hard work he does and although it's one of those jobs where it looks great, it's hard work, it really is. And I don't think greenkeepers get enough appreciation from the members sometimes.

Continue the conversation

Beef is on Twitter at @BeefGolf

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BTME
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MEMBERSHIP

Whether you're stopping by to join up, renew your membership or update your personal details, greenkeeper members who speak to Elaine and the BIGGA Membership team on the stand will be automatically entered into our daily draw to win a package of three items of Glenmuir golf gear.

BIGGA staff are also on hand to talk to you about some of the services available to BIGGA members including the HR helpline, confidential counselling, legal & tax advice, personal accident insurance and health & safety.

We'll also show you how you can save an average of £426 per year by using the BIGGA Xtra Benefits service, helping you save money on things such as utilities, home and car insurance, groceries and much more. For example, did you know that one BIGGA member saved over £3,000 off the cost of buying a Fiat car?

> "I think it's amazing, the amount of people who don't know anything about the benefits they can get as BIGGA members. At BTME 2022 you'll be able to meet what is quite a new team of BIGGA staff, so please come and say hello. We're looking forward to seeing you and talking about all things membership
>
> Elaine Jones, BIGGA

EDUCATION

Fiona, who is the lead member of our team on the Greenkeepers Training Committee, will be joined at BTME by the leading education providers in the industry. At the Education Hub, just beside the BIGGA stand, this is the place to be to find out about qualifications that will help you progress your career and the providers who can help you achieve those ambitions.

Joining us in the Education Hub will be Askham Bryan College, Berkshire College of Agriculture, Bridgewater & Taunton College, Capel Manor College, Oldham College and SRUC (Elmwood).

Myerscough College is also exhibiting at BTME on stand 167.

YOUR HEALTH MATTERS HUB

Returning once again to the BIGGA stand at BTME will be our health and wellbeing partners, who we work with throughout the year to offer help and advice to BIGGA members.

Joining us on the stand will be:

Perennial

The UK's charity for horticulture professionals — including golf greenkeepers — Perennial has been offering advice, support and financial assistance for over 180 years.

This year the charity has launched a free physiotherapy service, but the friendly and experienced team can also help you and your family with the things we all face from time to time.

Things like bereavement, money worries, ill health, homelessness, redundancy and family breakdown can impact people's lives, while anyone can experience financial difficulties, so head to the BIGGA Stand and speak to the team.

Andy's Man Club

These are the guys who say #ItsOKToTalk. The men's mental health charity runs talking groups for men who have either been through a storm, are currently going through a storm or have one brewing in their life.

They are a network of nationwide mental health support talking groups and host regular meetings that any BIGGA member who is experiencing a tough time is welcome to attend.

Skcin

The Karen Clifford Skin Cancer Charity works to raise awareness of skin cancer, promoting prevention and early detection and campaigning for cultural change. Working outdoors in the height of summer, greenkeepers are particularly susceptible to damage from the sun's UV rays so if you have any concerns about your skin safety or would like to find out more, speak to the team.

Royal National Institute for the Deaf

Due to the nature of the role and some of the equipment that is used, greenkeepers are particularly susceptible to hearing loss if the correct safety procedures are not followed.

On the BIGGA Stand the team from the Royal National Institute for the Deaf will offer help and advice to prevent you from sustaining long-term damage to your hearing during work hours, while they'll also be offering hearing tests and offering advice as to what to do next.

ECOLOGY AND SUSTAINABILITY

James will be on hand to offer advice to members about ways they can improve the sustainability of their golf course, while discussing ways to promote wild flora and fauna and improve the environmental habitat of the site.

He'll be joined by the RSPB's Dr Marie Athorn and together they have a spectacular wealth of knowledge that can help you achieve your course sustainability ambitions. Speak to James to organise ecology visits and other services on offer.

JOB SHOP

The ever-popular Job Shop will be returning to the BIGGA Stand, where you can check out the latest available vacancies and plan your next career move. If you're looking on longingly at opportunities that you believe are out of your reach, the BIGGA Stand is certainly the place to be as staff will be on hand to talk to you about how membership can help you achieve your career ambitions.

MERCHANDISE

If you're in the market for some stylish new golf gear, Roger will be on the stand showcasing the latest BIGGA merchandise from Glenmuir and our retail partners. With exclusive show discounts, it's a great opportunity to show your support for the association by purchasing some of the great clothing or accessories that are on offer.

AFTER VISITING THE BIGGA STAND, HERE ARE SOME OTHERS TO CHECK OUT

Advance Grass Solutions	121	Ecobunker	416	Polar Products Europe	175
AFT Trenchers	286	EIGCA	174	Price Turfcare	450
Agrovista Amenity	164	Foley / True-Surface	246	Profusion Environmental	322
Aitkens Sportsturf	334	GBR Technology	312	Rain Bird	132
Aquarille Consultancy Services	161	Germinal Amenity	262	Redexim	432
Aquatrols	162	GKB Machines	406	Redlynch Leisure	336
Askham Bryan College	Education Hub	GreenBest	144	Reesink UK	420
Barenbrug UK	315	GreenTek	200	Scotland's Rural College (SRUC)	Education Hub
Baroness (UK) & Kubota (UK)	230	Grillo Agrigarden	236	SGI Industries	268
BASF	139A	Groundsman Industries	240	Shelton Sportsturf Drainage	284
Bayer CropScience	338	Grundfos Pumps	345	Soil Scout	306
Belchim Crop Protection	122	Henton & Chattell	271	Sports and Turf	238
Berkshire College of Agriculture	Education Hub	Huck Nets UK	291	Sports Metals	310
Border Sports Services	258	Husqvarna	108	Stevens Water Monitoring Systems / POGO	113
Bridgwater & Taunton College	Education Hub	Huxley Golf	346	Sustane Natural Fertilisers	304
British & International Golf Greenkeepers Association (BIGGA)	147	ICL	426	Syngenta	428
Campey Turf Care Systems	276	Idverde	250	T.G.S. srl	210
Capel Manor College	Education Hub	Indigrow	412	Tacit Golf LLP	170A
Capillary Bunkers	258a	Infinicut	272	Talbot Sports Turf	214
Cleveland Alliances	434	Inturf	430	Team Sprayers	280
Club Car	224	ISEKI UK	145	Terralift UK	319
Compo Expert	143	John Deere	274	The Greenkeepers Training Commitee (GTC)	Education Hub
Consolidate Turf (Growing Solutions)	308	John Deere	278	Tillers Turf	332
County Sports Surfaces	318	KAR UK / Hunter	228	Trimax Mowing Systems	252
County Turf	314	Kioti UK	251	TurfCare	324
Delta-T Devices	320	Lantra	168	Turfco	255
Dennis & SISIS	244	Lindum Turf	410	Turfkeeper	404
DLF Seeds / Johnsons Sports Seed	270	Lister Wilder Limited	202	TurfSolv	159
Double A / Tru Turf	264	LS Systems	304	TWL Irrigation	344
Dryspell Irrigation Solutions	288	Mansfield Sand Company	326	Ultra Soil Solutions	241
Durabunker	266	Martin Lishman	260	Valagro UK	277
Eagle	170	MH Goals	109	Vanmac	269
		Milwaukee	110 & 111	Verde Sports	300
		MJ Abbott	302	VGR Groundscare Ltd	165
		Mumby Machinery	242	Waste2Water Europe	436
		Myerscough College	167	Wessex International	407
		Oldham College	Education Hub		
		Penn State Turfgrass	296		
		PMP Europe	292		

TURFCO | First time exhibiting as an independent brand

This is our first time exhibiting at BTME since the amicable end of our distribution agreement with Ransomes Jacobsen.

Turfco, based in in Minneapolis, Minnesota has been manufacturing turf maintenance equipment for the golf, sports and lawn care industries since 1919. Family owned, the company is now run by the third generation Kinkead executives, George and Scott.

Turfco built the first mechanised topdresser in 1961 and continues as the first choice of professional turf managers worldwide. Turfco listens closely to turf professionals, then designs and manufactures products that help do jobs more efficiently and effectively in topdressing, seeding, debris blowing, application and renovation. With years of first-hand experience, we know how to make your business more productive and profitable. We work with you and deliver the equipment and services you need to be successful.

We're driven by a passion for improving the health and playability of your turf and this unwavering commitment has yielded a continuous series of breakthroughs; quality innovations rewarded by 16 patents.

In the UK we are primarily known for our high-quality range of trailed and truck-mounted 1550 series topdressers, powerful Torrent 2 debris blowers and our TriWave overseeders. However, we also manufacture the CR-15, a combined material handler and top dresser for fairway maintenance, the Mete-R-Matic range of drop-style top dressers and pedestrian edgers and turf cutters.

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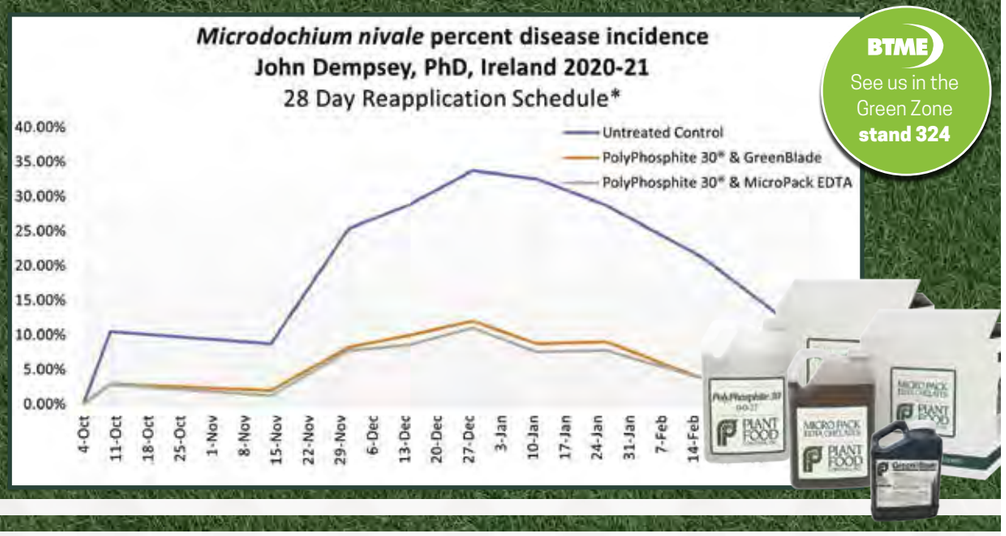
stand 255

Article brought to you by TURFCO

Unique Non-Pesticidal Disease Management



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Soil sampling is easy with either the compact fast and handy Soil Sampler, for small core sampling, or a deep inspection with the soil probe.

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Gulp Pro premium water removal hand pumps range from handy syringe to large Gulp with hose attached. They remove water effectively, from valve boxes, for pipe repair, toilets and much more.

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Article brought to you by TWL Irrigation & Underhill

It's BTME 2022 - we're so glad to be back!

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DARK DAYS FOR TURF HEALTH

New STRI research has demonstrated significant improved turf quality resilience under low light conditions from pigment application

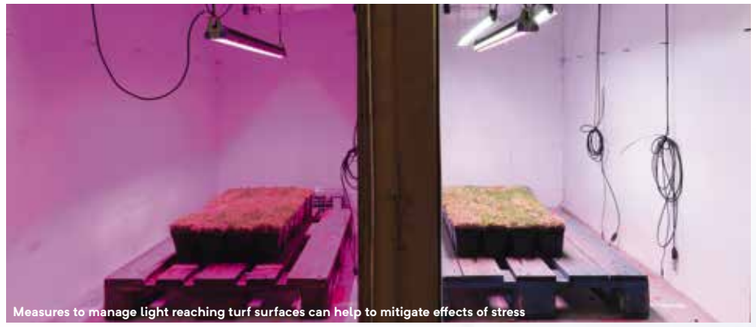
Glenn Kirby, Syngenta UK Technical Manager

As we head into the depths of winter and the shortest days, the availability of light to power plant biochemical functions and maintain health can become an increasing challenge.

The scale of the impact is highlighted by tracking the Daily Light Integral (DLI), which, for example, fell to just 3.33 on the shortest day in the Midlands last year — some 90% less than the measurement of 30 the same site received in early spring (see 'Light measurement explained' box).

Short days, lower light intensity and low sun angle offer limited opportunity for turf, particularly for greens shaded by tall trees or landscape features.

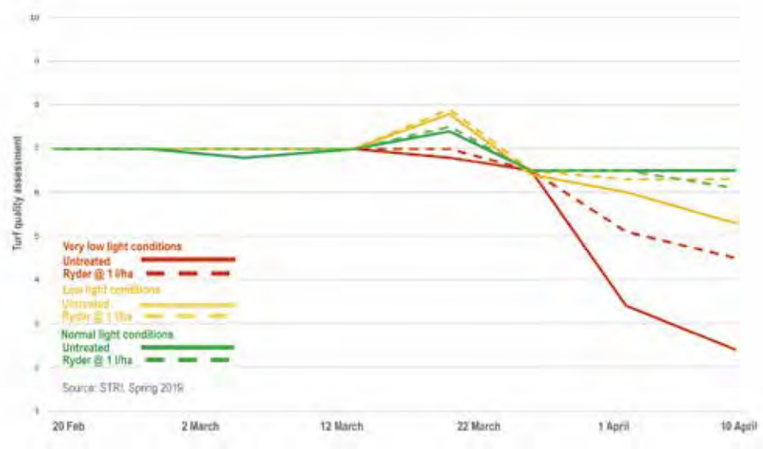
The effects on turf could now be further exacerbated by increasingly frequent periods of warmer temperatures through winter months that can trigger plant growth, but without the photosynthetic productivity to provide necessary energy to support it.



Measures to manage light reaching turf surfaces can help to mitigate effects of stress

As a result, plants may resort to drawing on energy reserves, by breaking down carbohydrate root mass or diverting energy from other functions. That would increase stress and could leave turf more susceptible to damage or disease infection, as well as adversely affecting turf colour and appearance.

Figure 1: Light chamber studies of bent grass greens revealed risks of rapid loss of quality under low light conditions - alleviated by pigment application



One of the techniques now employed to mask the winter effects has been the use of Ryder turf pigment to enhance turf colour. While the beneficial effect is primarily visual, there is new research from the STRI that has demonstrated significant improved turf quality resilience of poa bent turf grass under low light conditions from the pigment application.

The specialist controlled light chamber studies clearly showed that under very low light conditions, previously healthy turf could only go on for so long, before falling into an extremely rapid decline in quality — losing 50% quality in six days and a further 30% in the following week.

> Any measures to increase the availability of sun to reach the surface will help plants to prepare for the dark days of winter ahead

When treated with Ryder, the quality was held at 22% and 10% loss over the same period (Figure 1).

Under less intense low light pressure conditions a similar pattern was identified, with the Ryder treatment holding quality at virtually the same level as untreated turf under full light conditions.

The trial used Ryder applied at an equivalent to a 1 litre/ha per month application rate. In practice, that could be split to tank mix with any number of spray treatments being made over the period.

Especially good colour results have being noted when it is applied in conjunction with a dew dispersant, for example, along with trials by ISTI in Ireland reporting better turf quality results with fungicide treatments when Ryder was included in the tank mix.

That's good news for greenkeepers maintaining their winter pigment programme. A survey by ICL last year revealed 39% of respondents specifically saw its key use period through the autumn and winter months, along with 30% using it all year round (69% total), compared to just under 50% seeing it as a tool targeted for the main playing season.

With light now the key limiting factor in any turf recovery, even when temperatures are warm enough for growth, any measures to increase the availability of sun to reach the surface will help plants to prepare for the dark days of winter ahead.

Continue the Conversation

You can continue the conversation with Syngenta at @syngentaturfUK

Light measures explained

Using a light meter provides an insight into how much solar power is reaching the turf surface at any given time — typically expressed as µmol m–2s–1. This snapshot is a dynamic figure that shifts constantly as the light changes.

The Daily Light Integral (DLI) is an accumulated total of all the light reaching the surface over the course of the day.

The final key measurement for turf health is to track the 7-day accumulated light — which aggregates the DLI over a rolling seven day period. Using the seven day rolling results better visualises how much light is available, how much of that light can be utilised by the turf plant and, crucially, how much is surplus to the plant's needs that is having a potentially damaging effect on leaf structures.

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Turf Science IN ACTION

THE UPRISING

Is the robotic revolution still on the horizon?

Howard Richman, associate editor, Golf Course Management

Owen Coulson needed to be convinced.

The GCSAA Class A superintendent at Vestavia Country in Club in Alabama had autonomous greens mowers on the brain when he arrived at the Golf Industry Show in January 2020, even though he still had plenty of questions to be answered about the emerging technology.

"I can't say I was ready to pull the trigger," Owen said.

It took less than an hour for Coulson to be convinced. He intently listened to GCSAA Class A superintendent Justin Daigle from Perry Park Country Club in Colorado, whose presentation at GIS on the impact of the Cub Cadet RG3 autonomous greens mowers at his course transformed Owen from sceptic to believer.

"What he said pretty much answered every question I had about the mower and relieved the anxiety and fear of putting it on my greens," said Owen, a 21-year GCSAA member.

Owen joined a group of others in his position who saw the promise of autonomous greens mowing and how it could be an industry game changer. John Shaw CGCS, of Valley Brook Country Club in Pennsylvania, said it sounded as if superintendents' lives would never be the same because of it.

"No drop marks. No gouges on the collar. At my golf course, they cut straight lines. The end product was perfection," John said. "We may never see greens like that again."

The exploration of autonomous products began several decades ago. The ongoing effort to provide autonomous equipment should inspire those who crave the possibilities — even after Cub Cadet scuttled its autonomous mower programme in February 2020.

The company's decision to suspend work on its RGX autonomous greens mower — the updated version of the RG3, which was expected to be made available later this year and was on display at GIS in Orlando — blindsided many in the industry and makes one think that John might have been right about ever seeing something like it in the future.

Tony Whelan, Cub Cadet's director of sales and marketing, cited technical issues as the reason why the RGX was shelved. But that doesn't mean progress in autonomous equipment in golf has ground to a halt. Heavyweights Toro and John Deere are both deep into development of autonomous offerings. Husqvarna and Turflynx have released autonomous fairway mowers that are being used in Canada and Europe. The hope for all of them is to boost course managers and facilities that face labour challenges and budget constraints.

"In a tight labour market, it makes all the sense in the world to automate as much as possible," said Brian Netz CGCS, of the Presidio Golf Club in San Francisco. "It adds efficiencies and you really can't explain until you adapt to an automated system."

Yet more than a decade after the first autonomous greens mower was rolled out, there is nothing like it right now for greenkeepers. Justin said he can't envision a futre without the technology: "Autonomous [mowers] in our industry is not dead. It's our future, it just is."

Opening act

How did we get here? Twelve years ago, the future of autonomous technology appeared to be on the cusp of a breakthrough in golf course management.

The autonomous greens mower surfaced in 2009 at GIS in New Orleans. It featured a local positioning system that could operate any time of the day and move precisely across greens, maintaining height of cut and traveling in straight lines across curved perimeters without the need for a human operator. After he first saw it, John was among those who recommended that Precise Path, which produced the first autonomous greens mowers, make some tweaks, which — by the 2010 GIS in San Diego — it did.

John said: "They were using the back roller of the cutting unit as the main roller that supported the frame for RG3. So, the back roller stayed on the ground and put all its weight on a 2-inch diameter roller, which would make the cutting head scalp and cause mowing issues.

In 2011, Precise Path and its RG3 units took another step forward. Hawks Landing in Orlando became the first demonstration facility in the world to maintain its greens with autonomous greens mowers.

Sean O'Brien CGCS, who at the time was director of grounds at Hawks Landing, said: "Once we got dialled in, the greens were slick and looked great."

In 2015, Precise Path was acquired by MTD Products, the parent company of Cub Cadet. That year, the first commercially-available RG3s rolled off the line. Fast-forward to 2020 and when he attended GIS, John said he got no indication from Cub Cadet that a decision to halt its autonomous greens mower programme was on the horizon. In fact, he expected to get his hands on the RGX in May when he would purchase six units for a total cost of $400,000.

"For them to walk away from it, that's hard to take after watching [the RG3s] work really well at our club," John said.

Investing in autonomy

Although Cub Cadet is out of autonomous greens mower development, at least for now, that isn't stopping others from pursuing autonomous products in a big way. John Deere and Toro are both hard at work in this area.

John Deere's working prototype for this autonomous fairway unit was on display at an event last July

John Deere established itself in autonomous technology in the agricultural market many years ago. The, in 2019, John Deere announced it was in the developmental stages of an autonomous fairway mower and revealed a working prototype during a customer event last July at its primary testing and demonstration site in Illinois. The mower was also on display in the company's booth at GIS in Orlando.

Deere's prototype is outfitted with GPS technology that guides the mower based on fairway mapping and routing set in advance by the superintendent. Sensors on the back and front of the mower detect obstacles that may be encountered while mowing and allow the machine to steer clear.

"The golf industry needs more sustainable operating models to maintain precision turf, so expanding the use of technology will be critical to the future success of the industry," said Brooks Hastings, product manager for John Deere.

Toro also revealed autonomous possibilities at GIS in Orlando and work on those products and others continues. In fact, the technology has been on the mind of the company for a long time.

Tony Ferguson, senior product marketing manager of technologies at Toro, said: "Dana Lonn, who had been director for Toro's Center of Turf Technologies for many years, initiated multiple research and development projects over the years for different types of autonomy on turf products. His team tried to find the right recipe to make autonomous products a reality. Today, building off that legacy, we're seeing a confluence of technologies, market acceptance and price point to make autonomous operations a reality for our market."

In 2020, Toro showcased what it is developing to deliver autonomous capabilities. In addition to a flashy prototype of a fairway mower without a seat or steering wheel, the company showed off its GeoLink Solutions initiative, a suite of products designed to offer golf course operators a one-stop shop to manage their autonomous products, which it says leads to dependable and repeatable course operations that result in consistent playing conditions.

Toro also introduced both Reelmaster- and Greensmaster-enabled concept mower units. According to Tony, the Greensmaster was configured to be autonomous with a number of technologies for guidance, navigation, path-planning and obstacle detection. The Reelmaster has additional cameras, sensors and capabilities for »

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At WINSTONGolf in the German town of Gneven, head greenkeeper Erwan Le Cocq relies on a host of autonomous fairway mowers, including Belroobotics' Bigmow. Photo courtesy of Erwan Le Cocq

autonomous operation. Both products are in the company's Level 4 category, which means an attendant is required in the vicinity during operation, but that attendant can be performing other tasks, thereby increasing productivity and saving labour costs.

Tony said: "We've heard from many superintendents that have said, 'I'm ready for the technology. I'm ready to incorporate autonomous products into our operations now'. Others remain sceptical.

"As you might anticipate, manufacturers need to prove that autonomous products are effective, economical and reliable before some customers will decide to make the investment."

Another industry manufacturer, Jacobsen, says some of its mowers can be matched to third-party autonomous solutions currently available in Europe and Japan.

Industry veteran Melvin B Lucas CGCS Retired and GCSAA president in 1980, said it's vital for those companies and others to keep their foot on the pedal in the name of autonomous technology.

Melvin added: "No matter what decade, there always has been a cry for good, quality help, to make things work at a golf course. I think these types of autonomous products can have a major impact on the survival of golf courses today. I wish I had them 40 years ago."

A step ahead in Europe and Canada

Erwan Le Cocq apologised for his late email reply. There was a good reason for his tardiness. A new fleet of autonomous fairway mowers has kept him occupied at the facility in Germany he manages as a head greenkeeper.

Autonomous machinery has made in-roads in Europe and in Canada. Erwan is among those who have bought in to the technology. He has 23 Husqvarna autonomous fairway mowers in his arsenal at WINSTONGolf in the town of Gneven, in addition to a Belrobotics Bigmow, which the company says is recommended for driving ranges, sports pitches, public spaces and private estates, and a Turflynx fully electric autonomous fairway mower.

"[The Turflynx mower] is very important. It relieves us from the stress of having a hydraulic leak, it saves a lot on fuel cost and it's extremely quiet," said Erwan. "I would never have imagined something like this 10 years ago and, now, I would never imagine having to do without it."

Erwan said he had planned to order a full fleet of Cub Cadet's autonomous

The one that started it all — Precise Path's RG3 autonomous greens mower

greens mowers. Even without them, he foresees autonomous mowers as a force. He added: "I think they'll be the norm quicker than people think. Labour shortages, budget reductions and technology advancements will force superintendents to make the move."

So far, mostly so good, for Jason Haines at Sunshine Coast Golf & Country Club in Canada, who likes his lone Husqvarna Automower, a small autonomous robotic fairway mower. He likes it so much that he hopes to grow his fleet by 60 — but not until the next wave of technology is available.

He also weighed in on which autonomous product he believes should have come first and convinced that a swarm of small machines such as the one he has is the way to go.

Jason said: "Maybe greens should be the last place to put a robot. Greens need to be cut with a lot of precision. You've got to have a person there and it has to be done quickly. Economically, [an autonomous greens mower] was a non-starter for me. [Cub Cadet's RG3] is really good technology, it just didn't make financial sense. If it doesn't make financial sense, hardly anyone will invest."

The main issue Jason has encountered with his autonomous fairway mower? Perhaps being so reliant on it. He explained: "Something may break and you may not notice it for a few days. It went three or four days after a blade fell off. It's so hands-off, you don't even notice. It was like, 'what the heck?'"

What's next?

Cub Cadet remains in never-say-never mode about potentially reviving its autonomous greens mower programme. "We're committed to autonomous innovation," said Tony Whelan.

Until then, Cub Cadet informed those who had the RG3s that the company would help them with a transition plan, including retrieval of the RG3 units. Meanwhile, there are other ways to mow greens. Justin Daigle, for instance, says he'll "never go back to walk-mowing greens" while still trying to overcome the disappointment of losing the RG3. He had three years remaining on a five-year lease of his fleet.

"Superintendents are thrown curveballs all the time in our industry," added Justin. "This is no different than a significant weather event or a budget or labour situation. We keep our chin up, stay optimistic and continue to produce the best product we can with the means given."

John Shaw recently purchased three riding triplex greens mowers. He said: "I called many superintendents in Pittsburgh and asked if they hand-cut or ride. To my surprise, most clubs already switched to riding mowers."

John has advice for any companies that plan to design an autonomous greens mower to fill the void left by what Cub Cadet offered: "Make it affordable."

Precise Path's entry into the autonomous arena has made this entire conversation possible. Jason Zielke, vice president of product development for MTD Products, was one of the first members of the Precise Path team when it formed in 2006. He is happy that the industry seems to be willing to pursue the technology Precise Path jumpstarted way back.

He said: "I did find it exciting to see at GIS [in 2020] the efforts by Toro and John Deere to show off their autonomous technology. I believe the RG3 has driven a long-term shift in the industry towards more advanced technology."

At his course in Alabama, Owen Coulson imagines he will get another chance at an autonomous greens mower, whether Cub Cadet revives it or somebody else comes along with its version.

"I think that's where our world is going," Owen said.

Our thanks go to the GCSAA for permission to print this article, the original version of which appeared in the April 2020 edition of Golf Course Management.

STIHL

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"The BGA 200 is a really flexible blower - I use it hand-held in the tighter spaces and on the carrying system for the larger areas. It's pleasantly quiet in use and is always powerful enough, even for wet leaves."
- Christoph Jötten, horticulturist and landscaper

LONG WORKING TIMES

2 IN 1
HANDHELD OR MOUNTED

HIGH BLOWING FORCE

INFINICUT | Advancements in battery technology

Global warming is very much a prominent topic once again and is a key focus on the agendas for many of those maintaining sporting venues worldwide. Manufacturers have been working closely with turf managers to provide tools that keep pace with the demand for ever-cleaner practices, driving advancements in battery powered equipment. John Coleman, inventor of the electrically driven INFINICUT range of pedestrian mowers, explores the developments in useable energy sources.

Fossil fuels have long served as a cheap and readily available energy source. The high energy-to-weight ratio in terms of net calorific value (NCV) make it an effective fuel for most applications.

When considering turf maintenance, with a surface area to cover that requires a certain length of run time, most equipment in this sector has traditionally been powered by hydrocarbon fuel.

However, the negative impacts of fossil fuel are well documented. Alongside the obvious issue of harmful emissions, there are other factors to consider such as the health & safety implications of using and storing the fuel and the vibration and noise emitted from traditional combustion engines.

Within the last 10 years, developments in battery technology have come on a long way. The quiet and smooth operation a battery can provide is not only better for the immediate environment, but it also makes for a more pleasant overall user experience. The reduction in moving parts should also translate into more reliable equipment. While battery powered equipment may come with a higher initial price tag, it should be considered as purchasing the fuel upfront, with lower ongoing costs another benefit.

John Coleman

Developments in battery power are emerging all the time, however some limitations in its application currently remain. Its NCV is lower than that of fossil fuel and operators must consider both run and charging time. It is also, currently, limited by its scalability — it'll be a while before we see a Boeing 747 run solely on battery power!

One emerging alternative to lithium battery power is hydrogen, which promises to be an excellent power source for golf and sports turf equipment. Hydrogen uses a chemical reaction to generate power, producing only water and heat as by-products.

When utilising co-generation, hydrogen fuel cells can attain over 80% energy efficiency, backed up with reliability that doesn't degrade over time. The fuel cells are significantly lighter and more compact and deliver a smooth and quiet alternative to conventional forms of energy production. The main drawback to hydrogen power, currently, is cost. The high cost of catalysts (platinum) makes manufacture of fuel cells expensive, together with a lack of infrastructure around distribution, restricting its availability.

With our industry aware of its role in preserving and promoting an environmentally responsible status, lithium will likely continue to prevail as the preferred fuel choice for many items of equipment. Utilising an electric drive for the INFINICUT was the natural option to offer the configurability that forms the very essence of the machine. The knowledge and expertise we have gained over the years has meant that over the last 12 months we have completely overhauled the electrical architecture of the INFINICUT – moving over to CANbus and wireless Bluetooth connectivity. We have also recently launched the MK6 model of INFINICUT 22" mower — further details of which can be found on stand 272 at BTME 2022.

Article brought to you by

Infinicut 22

HUSQVARNA

Over the last few years, the golf industry has come face to face with a number of challenges.

The game has seen a significant increase in popularity, especially during the pandemic, meaning golf clubs across the country are welcoming more members to the sport. This is great for the game but has put added pressure on facilities and their greenkeepers to maintain impeccable playing surfaces while working around extremely busy courses.

John Clarke, courses manager at Woburn Golf Club in Buckinghamshire, agreed that having the opportunity to undertake mowing works over the last few years has been difficult.

He said: "Over the last few years, one of our biggest challenges is the opportunity to undertake mowing works around the pressure of very busy golf courses. Areas such as fairways require regular mowing with a high quality of cut and presentation."

One solution that has made maintaining the courses, particularly the fairways, a lot easier is robotic mowing technology and one brand pioneering this technology in the UK is Husqvarna.

John has been working with Husqvarna's robotic mowers, Automower, which he praised for helping to "lighten his workload". John added: "In the future, having Automower installed across the course would mean being able to undertake regular mowing with an intelligent solution, during unsociable hours such as overnight. This would lower the disruption to play, lighten the intensity of workload ahead of play each morning and provide the many agronomic benefits that light, regular mowing brings."

Husqvarna Automower is currently the market-leading robotic mower preferred by professionals and has been adopted by John and the team at Woburn Golf Club. John said: "Automower has an intuitive interface with lots of control regarding mowing schedule, heights of cut and varied working areas. The quality of cut has been excellent and the frequency has helped with surface density and the overall presentation"

The future is looking bright for robotic mowers and John believes that it will become a popular solution for the golf industry. He added: "Automation will certainly play a big part in the future of our industry, with areas such as mapping, spraying and fertiliser applications already benefiting from GPS, auto-steer and controlled rate applications. Automation of mowing will enable our teams to focus on the tasks where feel, knowledge and experience are required to improve the playing conditions and the experience for our customers."

Husqvarna is already looking to the future and this year launched its revolutionary concept CEORA to market. CEORA has been hailed as "the future of commercial turf care" and is expected to revolutionise an industry dominated by heavy diesel mowers that require manual operation.

CEORA will be able to independently mow an area of up to 75,000m², significantly reducing costs and allowing greenkeepers to focus on other value-adding tasks.

To find out more information visit: www.husqvarna.com/uk/

Article brought to you by

Wet sand is no issue at Reay Golf Club

As the most northern links golf course on the United Kingdom mainland, having a topdresser that can spread wet is a must for Reay Golf Club.

The James Braid-designed course is positioned on the edge of Sandside Bay with views of the Pentland Firth and the North Atlantic from every hole. The course and its stunning views have been under the control of Head Greenkeeper Jason Norwood since March 2021, with the new man aiming to put his stamp on the course, starting with the greens.

As the sole full-time member of staff for the main 18-hole course and junior three-hole, Jason's priority is the greens, with volunteers giving up two days a week to assist with the fairways and roughs. The limited time available to Jason needs to be spent working and with the Dakota 412 from Campey Turf Care Systems, he's able to topdress when he needs to, regardless of the sand moisture.

In some cases working with wet sand can be problematic, with machines unable to process damp material, causing clogging and an uneven spread. Brushing can also be needed to work the sand into the surface, adding additional labour time into the process.

> Being able to confidently work with wet material means it doesn't need to be stored inside and can be spread straight from delivery.

Using a Dakota avoids these issues through its considered design. Half-moon grips on the belt initially break up sand and the adjustable guillotine rear door shears the material off the load cleanly. The wide throat on the chute allows easy passage to the discs to avoid clogging and a high number of blades on each disc gives a clump-free distribution to eliminate the need to brush.

Being able to confidently work with wet material means it doesn't need to be stored inside and can be spread straight from delivery. Additionally, clubs can purchase non-dried sand, which is considerably less expensive than alternatives and perfect for the wet weather Jason faces in the north of Scotland.

"I've tried to put my own stamp on things here with different types of machinery and different ways of working and the club has really been on board with that," Jason explained. "One of those things has been buying the new Dakota topdresser. The equipment we originally had couldn't cope well with wet sand and it was more of a large-scale fertiliser spreader.

"As you can imagine, at the top of Scotland there's a lot of rain about, so any sand that we do have is normally quite wet. That was one of the main attractions of the Dakota for us because it can deal with that quite easily and we still get a good even spread with it.

"We really want to push forward and make use of the North Coast 500 tourist route, which is literally on our doorstep; it passes directly in front of us, so we get a lot of passing visitors now.

"All-year-round performing greens are the main thing golfers are after on a golf course so it's about making sure we can provide that for them.

"We've had the machine since the middle of April, but because of the weather chances to get it out have been limited. I've trialled different settings on our junior course greens to get what we want for the main course and it's been good so far.

"With it having four wheels the weight is distributed incredibly well, so it doesn't leave a mark on the greens, and the first time I used it you'd have no idea that anything had been done or any heavy equipment had been over the greens it because the footprint was minimal."

Continue the Conversation

Connect with Campey Turf Care Systems on Twitter @CampeyTurfCare, Instagram – @campeyturfcare, Facebook – /campeys and YouTube – /CampeyMachinery

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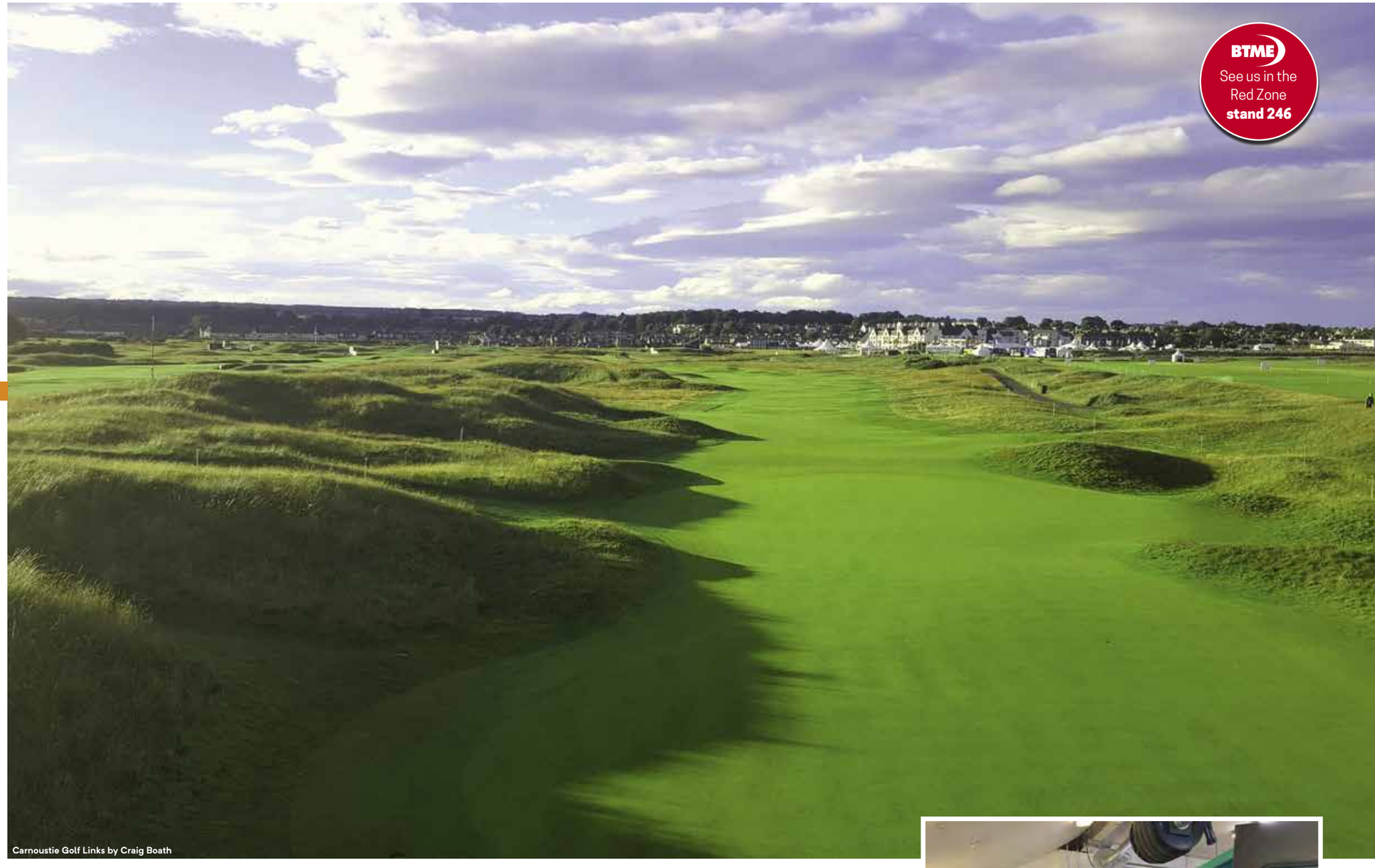
Campey TURF CARE SYSTEMS QUALITY GROUNDCARE EQUIPMENT

Automatic championship quality for Carnoustie Golf Links



Carnoustie Golf Links by Craig Boath

One of golf's greatest venues, Carnoustie Golf Links, has invested in automatic quality with grinding machines from Foley.

In-house grinding has been an integral part of machinery maintenance at The Open venue for 40 years and has played a pivotal role in providing a world-class course for the greats of golf.

Away from The Championship Course, which has hosted The Senior Open and Women's British Open in the last decade, Head of Maintenance and Estates Sandy McCubbin and his team also prepare machines for the Burnside Course, Buddon Links course and The Nestie — a short, free to play, five-hole course.

Ensuring the fleet of John Deere mowers and their 112 units are sharp and ready for action is about more than just presentation for Sandy, with disease prevention and the quick turnaround of reels also high on the list of reasons he went for Foley.

"Grinding is actually one of the most important things that we do in the workshop because if you don't have a good quality of cut on your unit, it can lead to disease on the green." Sandy said. "A properly sharpened cylinder and a bottom blade will give you a better finish to look at and also a healthier plant on the green itself.

"We've been grinding in-house here for about 40 years and it is a really established part of what we do. When it came to getting a new cylinder grinder, we were looking for something that we could use for all our grinding throughout the year. During our winter maintenance, we take the blades out of the cutting units, but in the summer we leave them in, so we were looking for a grinder that would give us a good quality finish on the blade, whether it was in the unit or out of the unit, and the Foley gave us that, and it was the far better option by a long way.

"Having the Foley 653 speeds up the whole process, especially for tournament preparation. This is because mounting the units in the Foley grinder is much easier and far less time-consuming than our previous grinder and the set-up and operation is now fully automated.

"In the week up to big tournaments, we tend to do a lot more sharpening, so they are ready for that week, and that is where the Foley comes into its own.

"I would say per set of units, and they usually come in threes, we're probably saving three hours from getting the units from the machine, sharpened and back on. That's a considerable amount of time that we're able to save and the finish on the blades is phenomenal.

"Another thing we considered when getting this machine was noise. Our machine has a soundproof cabinet and you can work around it without wearing ear defenders, which really appealed to us. Obviously, the lower the sound level, the easier it is for the operator and the mechanics and engineers working around it, so it makes for a much better working environment."

For more information on the Foley 653 ACCU-Master featuring ACCU-Touch 3 Control visit www.prosportukltd.com

Continue the Conversation

Connect with Foley on Twitter at @Foley_Company and on Facebook at /FoleyCompany

Sandy McCubbin, head of maintenance (far right) and tthe eam with the new Foley Grinders

Working in partnership with FOLEY COMPANY

INDUSTRY NEWS

Primo Maxx II recall and replace scheme

Syngenta has announced that stocks of Primo Maxx II currently on the market are out of specification from the approved manufacturing label formulation.

Therefore, the company has issued a full product recall and replace notification, to be operated by ICL.

Anyone with existing stocks of Primo Maxx II must cease any further use or transportation of the product with immediate effect. Bottles must be relabelled as 'flammable material' and stored accordingly, to await collection and removal by the scheme's registered waste contractor.

A dedicated ICL website has been created to register all unused Primo Maxx II into the recall and replace scheme, including any full or part-used bottles.

All products reported into the scheme will be replaced with new compliant stocks of Primo Maxx II.

- Five and 10-litre packs: all returned stock will be replaced with full bottles, whether the returns were opened or not.
- Twenty-litre packs: if there is less than 10 litres left in the returned container the replacement will be a full 10-litre pack. If there is over 10 litres left in the returned container the replacement will be a full 20-litre pack.

Syngenta and ICL will endeavour to replace all product that has been registered for replacement by the end of 2021, with new stock delivered by 1 March 2022, ready for the spring PGR application season.

Register Primo Maxx II for recall and replacement at www.ocl-sf.com/uk-en/primo-maxx-ii-recall

Dundonald Links unveils facelift

The new clubhouse at Dundonald Links

Dundonald Links has announced its transformation into a premium golf resort.

The links previously hosted the Women's Scottish Open between 2015-17 and in 2022 the world's elite female golfers will return to discover the fresh face of Dundonald Links following a £25m investment. The announcement that the venue will be hosting the Trust Golf Women's Scottish Open was made to a packed gathering of leading figures from the golf industry on 11 November. The special event also unveiled Dundonald's state-of-the-art clubhouse.

The Kyle Phillips-designed championship course has received a £1m upgrade, as well as the addition of a new halfway house and is owned by Darwin Escapes.

Mansfield Sand scoops awards

Mansfield Sand has rounded off a successful year by winning three awards.

The first came at the Nottinghamshire Live Business Awards 2021, where the company picked up the prestigious Company of the Year Award.

Mansfield Sand also won two further awards at the 2021 MPA & British Precast Health & Safety Awards.

Managing Director Richard Abraham said: "I wish to congratulate each and every one of our team as I realise how much hard work and effort goes into making our sites a healthier and safer environment.

"We genuinely are the best version of Mansfield Sand that we've every been. Without our team, we aren't who we are today."

Blackmoor begins heathland restoration and bunker project

Blackmoor Golf Club in Hampshire has begun work on a healthland restoration and bunker project as it attempts to reintroduce many of the design features originally laid out in 1913.

The club has been working with Lobb & Partners since 2017 to develop a plan to enhance the Harry Colt-designed course.

"As with virtually every course of this vintage, the bunker shapes have lost their artistry and the vegetation has changed," said architect Tim Lobb. "We have been advising the club for several years and spent a lot of time going through the club's archive to understand the landscape and nature of the course. We have now jointly decided it is time to put spades in the ground, so to speak."

Agrovista in Jubilee Partner deal

Agrovista Amenity has partnered with The Tree Council

Agrovista Amenity has revealed it has joined The Tree Council as a Jubilee Partner.

Since 1973, The Tree Council has been working towards bringing everyone together with a shared mission to care for trees and our planet's future.

By becoming one of the Jubilee Partners, Agrovista Amenity will be playing an integral role in planting trees and hedgerows in honour of Her Majesty's service to the nation, creating a lasting legacy that will benefit future generations for years to come.

Ed Smith, landscape team manager for Agrovista Amenity, said: "It is such a wonderful initiative. We see tree planting as a real benefit to the environment and with everything that is going on in terms of COP26, we have a real opportunity to make a change. The direction we are heading in terms of our bio-degradable tree guards, best practice and our commitment to sustainability, reflects this."

The Tree Council is an official delivery partner of The Queen's Green Canopy, a tree planting initiative created to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee in 2022, which invites people from across the United Kingdom to 'Plant a Tree for the Jubilee'. The aim is to achieve 70 Jubilee Partners, whose impact will see the planting of 35,000 trees.

Planning the pathway to net zero

On Thursday 11 November, representatives from golf and beyond came together at Glasgow's Climate Ambition Zone to discuss several important issues around the sport and climate action.

The GEO Foundation for Sustainable Golf hosted the virtual event to explore how golf can collectively drive for more climate action.

Jonathan Smith, executive director of the GEO Foundation, said: "Our team was pleased to be able to pull this important conversation together, to enable such a large audience to hear the perspectives from within and outside golf.

"We'd like to thank the Scottish Government, all speakers and the audience, plus those who have helped promote and share the event. Now we look at the post-COP26 landscape to see what we can do best with partners and programme participants to help accelerate climate action in and through golf."

Organisations taking part in the event included Visit Scotland, the European Tour, the International Olympic Committee and others. The event was hosted by Sky Sports' David Garrido and Solheim Cup player Suzann Petterson also participated.

Suzann said: "I feel I've got such an important role here. Sport is such a great arena to raise awareness. We inspire and influence so many millions of people every day."

The event also featured a discussion on climate action by grassroots facilities at GEO Certified clubs including Woburn, as well as clubs in Finland and New Zealand.

You can watch the entire Driving for Net Zero event online by heading to the GEO Foundation for Sustainable Golf's YouTube channel.

Ex-Man City staffer joins KAR UK

Lee Williams has joined KAR UK

Irrigation equipment wholesaler KAR UK has appointed former Manchester City groundsman Lee Williams as area sales manager.

Lee will be covering Scotland and northern England and Wales, having enjoyed a successful career in golf and football.

Lee said: "Having been in the industry a long time, KAR UK is a company I know very well. I have heard a lot about the products, particularly Hunter irrigation, and everyone who has used the equipment is always full of praise. The company also has a market leading reputation and that really drew me towards accepting the job.

"I'm looking forward to getting back out there and meeting new people and customers. It is a new challenge and, in a way, it will be like going back to school for me as there will be a lot to learn, but I'm looking forward to the future and hopefully playing my part in growing the business."

Lee studied for a Diploma in Horticulture at Myerscough College and began his career as an apprentice greenkeeper. He then joined Manchester City, becoming head groundsman of the training facility after a year.

He later had spells at Oldham Athletic and was a technical sports turf journalist with Pitchcare.

Rain Bird's new solenoid valves

Golf courses in lightning-prone regions, those that use reclaimed water and those who need water pressure regulation, now have a new valve solution in the form of Rain Bird Golf's GSV Series plastic and brass valves.

Rain Bird has launched the GSV Series

GSV Series Valves feature the protection to withstand up to 25kV of surge. A pre-installed PRS-DIAL regulates and maintains outlet pressure between 15 and 100 psi while reducing the effects of water hammer, A waterproof dial cartridge eliminates fogging and binding.

Altan Toltan, product manager for Rain Bird Golf, said: "Valves are at the heart of any irrigation system. On a golf course, valve failure can have significant repercussions and require additional money and labour to repair. That's why we built our new GSV Series Valves with a collection of upgrades that optimise reliability, performance and peace of mind."

The GSV Series includes three plastic models with NPT or BSP thread options and one brass model with BSP threads only. All GSV models feature a chlorine-resistant diaphragm that protects the valves against harsh chemicals and reclaimed water.

"Irrigation system valves aren't often thought of as innovative," said Altan. "With the new GSV Series, we're changing that by incorporating features that will enhance irrigation system performance and reliability, year after year."

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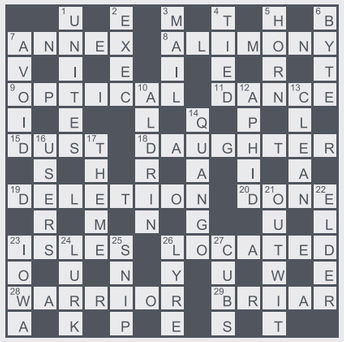

Across: **7** Annex, **8** Alimony, **9** Optical, **11** Dance, **15** Dust, **18** Daughter, **19** Deletion, **20** Done, **23** Isles, **26** Located, **28** Warrior, **29** Briar.
Down: **1** Unites, **2** Exec, **3** Mail, **4** Tied, **5** Horn, **6** Byte, **7** Avoid, **10** Aldrin, **12** Aphid, **13** Clean, **14** Quango, **16** Users, **17** Theme, **21** Outwit, **22** Elder, **23** Iowa, **24** Lurk, **25** Snip, **26** Lyre, **27** Cubs.

Easy

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Hard

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2	6	4	1	9	3	5	8	7

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BIGGA British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association

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From trainee vacancies to senior management roles, new greenkeeping job opportunities are added daily to BIGGA's online recruitment pages.

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For more information call 01347 833 800 or email info@bigga.co.uk

Workshop Manager
The Renaissance Club

A private members' club located in East Lothian on Scotland's 'Golf Coast'. Host to the 2019, 2020, 2021 Scottish Open and recently announced 2022 Genesis Scottish Open.

The Renaissance Club is looking for the right person to manage the machinery workshop and maintenance of all course machinery.

How to apply

If you have a proven ability in preparing and implementing routine maintenance for a large fleet of machinery then please apply with a covering letter complete with current CV and references to jamie@trcaa.com or by letter to Jamie Aitken, head superintendent, The Renaissance Club, Cowden Hill Drive, Gullane, East Lothian, EH39 5HS.

Closing dates for applications: 17 December 2021

Course Manager
The Addington

Applicants should have the following attributes:

- Golf course management experience, either in a deputy, head greenkeeper or course manager role.
- Able to make decisions driven by data.
- Excellent understanding of agronomy.
- Excellent course presentation skills.
- Construction and project management experience.
- Full understanding of irrigation systems.
- Able to manage a machinery fleet.
- Competent in the relevant IT skills.
- Management skills regarding health and safety on the golf course

Remuneration will be based on skill level, qualification and experience. Accommodation can be made available if required.

The course is undergoing major restoration with the aim of reclaiming a top 100 world ranking.

How to apply

To apply, please forward your covering letter and C.V. to ryan@addingtongolf.com

Closing Date: 31 December 2021

Assistant Greenkeeper
Minchinhampton Golf Club

An opportunity has arisen and we are seeking an assistant greenkeeper to expand our greenkeeping team.

- Host venue for the Regional Qualifying stages for The Open
- Chosen venue for South West Week 2022
- A close relationship with STRI
- A continued relationship with The R&A
- Three golf courses, each with their own characteristics
- Modern maintenance machinery that is continually upgraded
- Golf membership included for staff members
- Staff uniform provided
- Competitive salary
- Further training and education supported

Preferred, but not essential

- Previous experience maintaining sports surfaces
- Be able to operate maintenance equipment effectively
- Available to work weekends
- Driving licence
- Ability to work well in a team and individually

How to Apply

Send your CV to Adam Matthews — a.matthews@minchinhamptongolfclub.co.uk

Closing date: Monday 3 January 2022

Turf Mechanic
North Berwick Golf Club

North Berwick Golf Club is one of the longest established golf courses in the world.

We are embarking on an exciting new era at North Berwick that will include a brand new workshop with hydraulic lifts and grinders. A full fleet of Toro machinery is due for delivery early next year including top of the range electric 3370 models. Full training on electric diagnostics will be provided to the successful candidate.

The turf mechanic will support the course manager in ensuring the maintenance of the fleet of machines for its 18 hole links course, 9 hole wee course and driving range. They will be responsible for carrying out routine maintenance and servicing on all course machinery.

How to Apply

To apply email: coursemanager@northberwickgolfclub.com

Seasonal Assistant Greenkeeper
Tyrifjord Golf Club, Norway

Tyrifjord Golf Club offers outstanding service to both members and visitors and is one of the best maintained courses in Norway. As we prepare for the 2022 season, we have a vacancy for a seasonal assistant greenkeeper.

The role offers an exceptional opportunity for personal development as you will be working under the guidance of our experienced head greenkeeper, Ian Ross, who was Syngenta/NGA Greenkeeper of the Year 2017.

You will be suitably qualified, capable of producing the highest standard of course presentation, proficient in using modern maintenance equipment and possess the ability to work on your own initiative but within a team role.

How to apply

If you are interested in the above position, please apply via email to ian@tyrifjord-golfklubb.no attaching your CV and covering letter.

Greenkeeper
Bradley Park Golf Club

Working as a professional greenkeeper you will maintain a charming parkland golf course to a championship standard.

Our 18 hole course is open all year round which features bunkers, contouring greens and variations of level including a 9 hole Par 3 course, practice facilities together with a floodlit driving range.

Hours: 37 hours
Salary: £22,079 per annum

How to Apply

If you are interested in joining this small, friendly team please apply online via our website: www.kalleisuretrust.org.uk/working-for-kal.

Closing date: 2 January 2022

Benefits

We can offer you a great package of benefits through our Staff and Family Membership scheme, we also have a generous annual leave entitlement and an excellent pension scheme (West Yorkshire Pension Fund).

Recruitment

From trainee vacancies to senior management roles, new greenkeeping job opportunities are added daily to BIGGA's online recruitment pages.

BIGGA reserves the right to refuse listings if we believe the employer is not adhering to employment law. BIGGA works with employers to promote good working and recruitment practices and is a key partner of the Committee for Golf Club Salaries. BIGGA welcomes any feedback or comments regarding its recruitment listings service.

Greenkeepers
North Berwick Golf Club

North Berwick Golf Club is one of the longest established golf courses in the world.

We are embarking on an exciting new era which will include a brand new workshop with hydraulic lifts and grinders. We are also hosting final qualifying for the AIG Women's Open in 2022.

We are recruiting for a number of greenkeeping positions. A mixture of temporary and permanent positions are available. Reporting to the course manager, the successful applicants will be involved in all aspects of golf course maintenance and presentation.

How to Apply

If you wish to apply, please send your CV and covering letter (include current salary), detailing the attributes and qualities that make you the ideal candidate for the role to: coursemanager@northberwickgolfclub.com

Experienced Greenkeeper
Hesketh Golf Club

Hesketh Golf Club is seeking to recruit an experienced greenkeeper to join the team.

Applications are welcome from qualified greenkeepers looking to develop their career. The presentation of our championship course is a key priority, along with the development of the course and its ranking within the golfing community.

Requirements

- NVQ Level 2 or equivalent.
- Chainsaw certificates.
- Excellent attention to detail.
- The ability to work on your own and as part of a team.
- Ability to work early mornings and weekends.
- Golfing experience.

Benefits

- Salary of £20–22,000
- Uniform
- Contributory pension scheme
- BIGGA membership
- CPD support
- Use of golf course

How to apply

Please send covering letter and C.V. to Peter Mcvicar, coursemanager@heskethgolfclub.co.uk

Closing Date: 17 December
Start Date: Early 2022

Qualified Greenkeeper
The Renaissance Club

A private members' club located in East Lothian on Scotland's 'Golf Coast'. Host to the 2019, 2020, 2021 Scottish Open and recently announced 2022 Genesis Scottish Open.

The Renaissance Club is looking for a hardworking, highly motivated greenkeeper to add to the greenkeeping department. This is an exciting opportunity for the right person to join this forward thinking and ambitious club.

How to Apply

If you feel you are up for the challenge please apply with a covering letter complete with current CV and references to jamie@trcaa.com or by letter to Jamie Aitken, head superintendent, The Renaissance Club, Cowden Hill Drive, Gullane, East Lothian, EH39 5HS.

Closing dates for applications : 17 December 2021

Assistant Greenkeeper
Bird Hills Golf Centre

What we are looking for:

- NVQ Level 2 or higher.
- At least 3 years' experience.
- Spraying certificate desirable.
- Chainsaw certificate desirable.
- Good time management.
- Ability to work alone and in a team.

The ideal candidate must be competent in the following areas:

- Switching and brushing.
- Mowing all playing surfaces to a high and presentable standard.
- Scarifying/verticutting and aerating turf.
- Applying topdressing and repairing divots.
- Setting up the golf course in accordance with the rules of golf i.e. changing holes and moving tee markers.
- Maintaining bunkers.
- Driving a tractor with attachments.
- Preparing and maintaining machinery for use and storage.

How to Apply

A competitive salary will be paid to the successful applicant

Please apply to: ian.richards@birdhills.co.uk

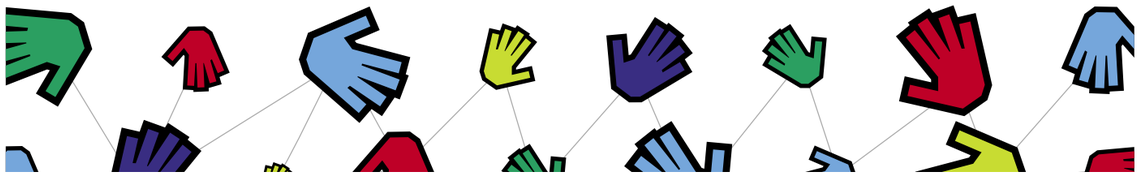
There to lend a helping hand

The official charity of BIGGA provides assistance to its members and their dependents, offering financial assistance and practical help during difficult times.

- **Help:** when you need it most
- **Support:** through tough times
- **Guidance:** on your welfare and development
- **Financial Assistance:** during difficult times
- **Care:** because YOU matter

For more information on how the BIGGA Greenkeepers Benevolent Fund can help please call 01347 833 800 or email benevolentfund@bigga.co.uk

BIGGA British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association



1964–66

HISTORY OF GREENKEEPERS' ASSOCIATIONS

1964

There was a sad day for the British Golf Greenkeepers Association (BGGA) as news came through of the death of Lord Brabazon who, as Lt Col Brabazon, was president of the association from 1938 to 1949.

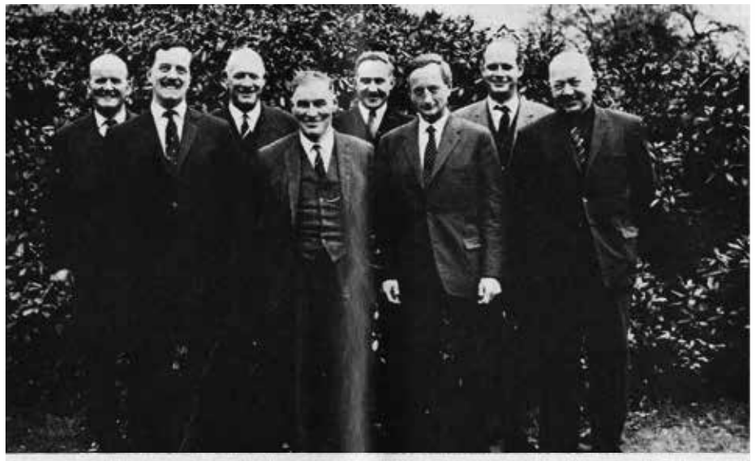
BGGA was especially indebted to him for his efforts in building up the benevolent fund from a nominal sum into a four-figure amount.

He was a pioneer of the aviation and motor industries, a keen yachtsman and an enthusiastic golfer. As well as being president of the BGGA, he was also president of the English Golf Union in 1938, captain of The R&A in 1952 and became president of the Professional Golfers' Association (PGA) in 1954.

In his free time he also did the Cresta Run — a toboggan track in Switzerland — when he was 70 years old.

Also in this year, The R&A made an offer to the Scottish Golf Greenkeepers Association (SGGA) to have a tent at The Open. This was gratefully accepted and so began a close relationship with The Open that continues to this day.

However, the SGGA themselves were in the midst of a bit of an identity crisis. It was proposed that the name of the association be changed to the Golf Course Superintendents Association and surprisingly at the AGM in November the motion was carried. However, the decision to change the name was quickly rescinded and they reverted back to SGGA!



JOINT COUNCIL FOR GOLF GREENKEEPER APPRENTICESHIP MEETS AT BINGLEY

1966

At this point in time the membership of the BGGA stood at 675.

Financially the association was doing very well, with the association's magazine gaining extra revenue from advertisers and helping the balance sheet.

The benevolent fund was also in a healthy state and was being used every year to assist some members in one way or another.

The F G Hawtree Memorial Fund, which was set up after Hawtree's death in 1955, had helped three or four greenkeepers each year to further their education, which had always been one of Hawtree's ideals.

Read more about the history of greenkeepers' associations on the BIGGA website

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