



October 2022 | £6.50

Greenkeeper

International



JUST TOO GOOD

James Gaskell and Peter Pattenden emerge victorious at this year's Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards, hosted at Goodwood

Recruitment

Expert advice if you are working with recruitment agencies to enlist staff

Shiskine

Visiting Stewart Fotheringham at this cult favourite located on Arran's shores

Stoneham

How the creation of a new practice area generated additional income for the club

Setting budgets

How understanding your position in the club will help you gain more resources

BIGGA Conferences Learning opportunities are coming your way. Scan to find out more



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The magazine for BIGGA members

Greenkeeper International exists for you, our members. Since 1987 BIGGA has helped thousands in golf greenkeeping to progress their careers, find inspiration and get involved in our varied and vibrant community. This magazine aims to reflect the passions and preoccupations of our members and we'd like you to be involved. Please drop us a line, send us a picture or post on our social media pages (the details are listed below).

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BIGGA Photographic Calendar 2022: October's image was taken by Elliot Walters, Robin Hood

WELCOME

Like many of you, I will remember where I was on 8 September 2022 for a long time to come.

That, of course, was the day when Queen Elizabeth II passed away, having served her country for over 70 years.

It had been a very busy day for BIGGA, coinciding with the finals of the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards and the first day of the BMW PGA Championship at Wentworth Club. I began and ended the day at Goodwood, venue for the Toro awards, and visited Wentworth inbetween for a key meeting of golf industry CEOs.

As ever, the student greenkeepers were 12 excellent candidates, all of whom could have finished in the upper places. No doubt they are destined for superb careers in our wonderful industry. May I congratulate



Chief Executive Jim Croxton

the winners, James Gaskell and Peter Pattenden, who I know will be brilliant ambassadors for BIGGA, Toro and their employers.

I must also congratulate Dan Clarke and the team at Wentworth for presenting the golf course beautifully, under very strange circumstances.

I know it was a challenge to navigate the immediate aftermath of the Queen's passing and the subsequent cancelled day but, as ever, the iconic West Course made for

an outstanding championship and I know the BIGGA volunteers that assisted the home team gained a lot from the experience.

The golf industry meeting was very positive and never before has the golf workforce been so high on the agenda in discussions. There is a strong commitment to working collaboratively to improve pay and conditions for greenkeepers and other members of the golf club workforce. Without professional and educated staff, our game will suffer considerably. We will be leading efforts to ensure our members are appropriately treated and rewarded for the benefit of golf.

This magazine marks the launch of BTME, happily restored to its traditional January slot. Bookings are open, so sign up today.

Remember we are here to support you when you need us

Full Members Personal Accident Helpline
0161 687 2178

Health and Safety Advice
01698 572 830
graemetaylor@citation.co.uk

Greenkeepers Legal Assistance
0808 181 9194

Lifestyle Counselling
0333 000 2082

Human Resources
0845 646 1332
bigga@hrservicescotland.co.uk

BIGGA Greenkeepers Benevolent Fund
benevolentfund@bigga.co.uk

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Editor's Notes

Greenkeeper International editor, Karl Hansell



Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year is usually a vibrant, exciting event as some of the association's most ambitious members come together to contest the competition.

And so it was odd at the conclusion of this year's event, when news began to spread about the death of the Queen. We had just announced the two very worthy winners – James Gaskell and Peter Pattenden – and were sitting down to a celebratory meal, when BIGGA's chief operating officer, Sami Strutt, showed real fortitude to stand up and make the announcement that the Queen had died. It was a sad, heartfelt moment, but one that necessitated the reshuffling of our post-event activities. It was no longer appropriate to issue a celebratory press release about the awards and we made the decision to alter BIGGA's logo to a sombre, black version that reflected the national period of mourning. BIGGA declined to issue any statements on social media, instead leaving the airwaves clear for those who had a clear relationship to the monarch. We chose to bow our heads respectfully while others delivered the eulogies and I hope that approach was appreciated and respected by all our members.

I hope you enjoy this month's magazine, which reflects upon the awards, as well as other great content.

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THE PEOPLE BEHIND YOUR MAGAZINE



Mike Chappell

A former groundsman who entered the recruitment and training consultancy business, Mike responded to the BIGGA Workforce

Survey with some advice to help golf clubs access new talent through agencies.



Mike Hyde

Mike works across the golf club industry, supporting both BIGGA as a freelance writer and the GCMA in its communications activities.

He's also a lifelong golfer and the owner of Carefree Golf Photography.



Laurence Pithie MG

The first BIGGA member to achieve Master Greenkeeper certification, Laurence continues to keep his finger on the pulse of

the industry, this month taking a visit to Stoneham to check out its new practice facility.



Kevin Fish

A former club manager at the Glen in North Berwick, Kevin was named UK Golf Club Manager of the Year in 2004. As director of

Contemporary Club Leadership, he now supports clubs in their management activities.



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TAKING TEMPORARY RELIEF

Why don't golf clubs utilise recruitment agencies?

Mike Chappell, recruitment expert, Chappell Enterprises UK

This summer BIGGA released the Workforce Survey 2022, which showed some alarming statistics about greenkeeper happiness, pay, conditions, attitude to staff and recruitment.

After reading about the survey, I immediately contacted BIGGA to see what I could do to assist with helping to address and solve some of these issues, so we can find a way to attract a new wave of talent to the industry.

Who am I? I am Mike Chappell and I own Chappell Enterprises UK, a recruitment and training consultancy. We work within the transport and logistics, warehousing and grounds maintenance and sportsturf industries. Before moving into recruitment in 2015, I worked for 15 years on golf courses, grounds maintenance contracts and as a head groundsman. I completed five years at Reaseheath College and departed with a handful of qualifications, including a foundation degree and HND in Golf and Sportsturf Management.

Some interesting information that came from the workforce survey centred around recruitment:

- / 53% of respondents have vacancies
- / 83.5% of respondents say they struggle to recruit
- / 78% have not used an agency to help recruit before

So, why have course managers and golf club managers not used recruitment agencies? Could it be they just don't know the process? Is it cost? Is it time?

I can offer some insight to these questions.

What is a recruitment agency/ consultancy?

A recruitment agency/consultancy sources candidates for their clients' roles. They should also provide recruitment advice and insight into the current job market to their clients to help ensure they are seen as an employer of choice, as well as offering a competitive remuneration and benefits package.



Why use a recruitment agency/ consultancy?

Along with providing advice and expert knowledge in the recruitment process, the time saved by using a recruiter is invaluable! While they are spending time putting together the advertisements, speaking to candidates and sifting through CV's, the hiring manager can concentrate on other priorities.

Finding the right agency

Many recruitment agencies will work the same way. However, I would always recommend a specialist agency that has consultants who have knowledge and experience in the industry. An agency that has consultants with 'on the tools' experience will understand the type of person who would be suitable for a specific role, as well as being able to confidently explain the job to an inexperienced candidate, sharing the detail of what day to day activities can be like in a positive way that entices new applicants.

“53% of respondents have vacancies. 83.5% of respondents say they struggle to recruit. 78% have not used an agency to help recruit before

We would advise to initially work with only one agency, which will mean you can build a strong and long-lasting relationship, give them incentive to work on your role and avoid diluting the market.

How do you engage and liaise with a recruitment agency?

Firstly, take your time to research and speak to the recruitment agency, making sure they have the knowledge and ability to not only recruit for your roles but also to build an honest, genuine, and

reliable service. Being honest about the challenge of recruiting or difficulty in filling a role is important operationally as it enables you to plan accordingly!

Once you have chosen the agency you wish to work with, arrange a meeting with the consultant responsible for the recruitment of your roles to discuss the requirements. The consultant should be asking about the role, the team a person would be joining, the facilities, the machinery, the culture, the package on offer, the benefits, overtime/weekend rota and so on. Give the consultant a tour of the facilities and let them get a feel for the place.

After the initial consultation and fact-finding meeting, the recruiter will then start the search, utilising all tools at their disposal to do so. Ask to have regular update calls to receive feedback, good and bad. Book two calls in a week, Tuesdays and Fridays work well as this gives the recruiter time to speak with applicants who have applied over the weekend and throughout the week.

The recruitment consultant should feel like an extension of your team, »



ACROSS THE BOARD

Steven Lloyd | BIGGA Chairperson | Course Manager | The Worcestershire

Autumn is rapidly drawing in and the season has turned colder, although the latent soil temperatures and increased rainfall means we're getting significant growth on surfaces.

It has been a successful summer for BIGGA for many reasons. One of the highlights for me was being at The 150th Open at St Andrews as part of the volunteer support team. This would obviously be a highlight of any golf fan's year, but it was made even more special as our president, Gordon Moir, was also part of the team and could give many insights into life at St Andrews after more than 20 years running the team there.

This is also a great chance to remind members that it's time to get your applications in for The 151st Open support team, which will be heading to Royal Liverpool next July.

I would like to congratulate this year's ICL Scholars on being selected for that initiative and all the finalists of the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards. I've spoken to a number of the BIGGA team and some of the National Board who attended the finals and they all said the best way to describe all the candidates was inspiring. It's great to know that the future of the greenkeeping industry is in safe hands.

The workforce survey that



The Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards are always an inspiring event

“Volunteering with BIGGA not only supports our community but it also helps improve your network and boosts your CV.

was sent out to the membership earlier this year had a fantastic response rate, so thank you to everyone who took the time to fill it in. The information that has been generated is now the evidence BIGGA has needed to get all the other influential bodies in golf to realise there are issues in the golf industry regarding staff welfare and conditions that need resolving if golf is to survive.

A lot of work is taking place at BIGGA HQ and across our team to make sure this is just the starting point as we strive

to improve working conditions for our members.

The restructure of BIGGA's Sections and Regions, which was confirmed at the AGM this year, is starting to fit into place. The thought behind this proposal is to reduce the workload and responsibility placed on volunteers, while also making sure all of BIGGA's Sections and Regions receive the same education and networking opportunities.

This does not mean that we don't rely upon the help of volunteers and the association absolutely could not exist

without the help of members who give up their time to support their fellow greenkeepers. We still require people to help at golf days, host turf clubs, pass the word around about BIGGA events and keep the BIGGA team up to date with news and developments.

If you can lend a hand, please let your MSM know. Volunteering with BIGGA not only supports our community but it also helps improve your network and boosts your CV as you can demonstrate your commitment to the industry and eagerness to support your fellow peers.

The five forthcoming BIGGA Conferences are another way to boost your knowledge and CV. They are taking place during November and there are some fantastic venues and fascinating speakers. I'm sure they will be well supported, so have a look at the schedule on the BIGGA website and book your spot.

I'm delighted that this month we're also able to launch registration for BTME and the Continue to Learn programme, with both returning to their usual January timing. A change to the layout has been made to help create space for more exhibitors and I'm looking forward to seeing many of you there next January.

BIGGA TURF MANAGEMENT EXHIBITION



INFORM

INDUSTRY-LEADING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

INNOVATE

DISCOVER THE LATEST TURF TECHNOLOGY

INSPIRE

TAKE YOUR TEAM TO THE NEXT LEVEL



REGISTER NOW AT [BTME.ORG.UK](https://btme.org.uk)

BTME: 24-26 JANUARY 2023

CONTINUE TO LEARN: 22-25 JANUARY 2023

The BIGGA National Board is comprised of the following members who volunteer their time to support the association:

Stuart Ferguson MG, Jack Hetherington, Andrew Laing, Antony Kirwan, Lucy Sellick, Iain Macleod and Richard Whyman

BIGGA President Gordon Moir, **BIGGA Vice President** Andy Smith, **BIGGA Chairperson** Steven Lloyd



We are committed to the continual professional development of our members, working with the leading bodies in golf for the good of the game.



BIGGA's activities are underpinned by the generosity of our industry partners and supporters. BIGGA's various activities, initiatives, learning and development opportunities and member benefits are made possible due to the ongoing commitment shown by these companies, organisations and individual donors. From our supporters all the way up to our premium partners, our thanks go to all of them for their dedication to BIGGA and its members.



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



ENTER THE BIGGA AWARDS

The BIGGA Awards are an opportunity to showcase your team's successes and highlight the quality of your golf course and team. They are also an opportunity for you and your team to celebrate your achievements and network with other likeminded BIGGA members.

They reward the innovation delivered by BIGGA members who are at the cutting edge of their profession. Any BIGGA member within the UK, regardless of facility size, age or reputation, can enter these awards.

The closing date for nominations is 31 November 2022. The winners will be revealed at the BIGGA Welcome Celebration, held on the opening night of BTME next January.

What are the categories?

Greenkeeping Project of the Year

Prize: Full course photography session including drone footage from Carefree Golf Photography worth £1,000.

Championship Greenkeeping Performance of the Year

Prize: Ecology visit from James Hutchinson including full ecology plan.

Outstanding Contribution of the year sponsored by Baroness

Prize: £500 donation to the winner's charity of choice.
All winners also receive a £250 Virgin Experience Days voucher and a BIGGA Awards 2023 trophy.

Why enter?

1. Awards are a fantastic marketing tool. Just being shortlisted can improve awareness of your golf courses and the success of your greenkeeping team.
2. Raise your profile. Assist the career ambitions of yourself and your team by gaining recognition for your efforts.
3. Demonstrate your capabilities. Show why you are a leading turf manager.
4. Celebrate your achievements. The awards are a fantastic opportunity to reflect upon the hard work you have put into the course and celebrate as a team.
5. Attract talent. Other ambitious greenkeepers and industry professionals will be more eager to join a successful team.

How are the awards judged?

Nominations will be judged on the following criteria:

- / Scale of project in comparison to resources
- / Challenges overcome, including greenkeeping, climatic, personnel
- / Innovation
- / Effort
- / Quality

Want to know more?

For more information head to the BIGGA Awards pages on the BTME and BIGGA websites:

www.btme.org.uk/attendees/what-s-on/the-bigga-awards.html or scan the QR code



BIGGA CONFERENCES 2022

The BIGGA Conferences bring members together from all corners of the association to access excellent education and networking opportunities.

- 8 November Somerset County Cricket Ground
- 9 November The Wentworth Club
- 10 November Villa Park
(Aston Villa Football Club)
- 15 November Stirling Court Hotel
- 17 November Elland Road
(Leeds United Football Club)



Scan the QR code to book your place



AROUND THE GREEN

Identity of 2023 ICL Scholars revealed

Five members receive Continue to Learn education package

National

BIGGA and association Premium Partner ICL have revealed the five participants of the seventh ICL Continue to Learn Scholarship.

The five BIGGA members, drawn from golf clubs across the United Kingdom, have been invited to attend the Continue to Learn education programme, considered the largest learning experience for those in sports turf management outside the United States.

Continue to Learn is held each January and coincides with the BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition (BTME), hosted by BIGGA at the Harrogate Convention Centre in North Yorkshire.

BIGGA Chief Operating Officer Sami Strutt said: "BIGGA appreciates that budgets are tight at the moment and that's why we are providing more opportunities than ever before to access the learning we provide for our members in new and more cost-effective ways.

"That includes the latest Continue to Learn timetable, which features more free education opportunities than ever before.

"Thanks to ICL, five BIGGA members will enjoy the countless hours of personal and professional development that come



The ICL Scholars at BTME in 2022

with attending BTME and Continue to Learn. Our sincere thanks are extended to ICL for their continued support of BIGGA and its members, particularly through the current economic climate."

The 2023 ICL Continue to Learn Scholars are:

- / Patrick Brown, assistant greenkeeper, Wentworth Club
- / Jarno Ruscoe, greenkeeper, Ingestre Park

- / Allan Spalding, assistant greenkeeper, Lundin
- / Michael Sparke, deputy course manager, Kings Hill
- / Nicholas Thorley, deputy head greenkeeper, Saunton

The ICL scholars will receive three nights' hotel accommodation and 15 hours of training and personal development opportunities. Head to the BIGGA website to find out more.

Join the team for The 151st Open at Hoylake

Northern - North West

Royal Liverpool will host The 151st Open from 19 to 23 July 2023 and BIGGA Volunteer Support Team members will assist with maintaining the bunker presentation throughout the duration of the tournament.

If you have been a BIGGA member for at least two consecutive years, you're invited to apply for a place on the team, when you will gain incredible behind-the-scenes access to the world's greatest golf tournament.

To apply for a place, head to the Members' Opportunities area of the BIGGA website or scan the QR code opposite.

Daniel Ashelby, deputy head greenkeeper at Reddish Vale, was a member of the support team in 2022 and said: "If you love golf, or if you're just a part of the greenkeeping community and enjoy that aspect, then I would encourage you to apply as it's a wonderful week for bonding with other likeminded guys. It's not just raking bunkers on the course, it's a bit of a surreal week away from the real world and it's something special."

Royal Liverpool will be staging The Open for the 13th time in 2023, with the last occasion being 2014, when Rory McIlroy lifted the Claret Jug.



Paul Armour raked the final match at Royal Liverpool in 2014



Thank A Greenkeeper Day

Initiative makes more than 10m impressions

National

The third annual Thank A Greenkeeper Day was held on Tuesday 13 September, with messages of support being sent on social media to greenkeepers and sports turf professionals all over the globe.

Thank A Greenkeeper Day is an extension of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America's (GCSAA) Thank A Superintendent Day and BIGGA is incredibly proud to support the initiative on behalf of our members.

In total, the hashtags #ThankAGreenkeeper and #ThankASuper made 10,401,354 impressions on social media throughout the day, with 7,454,723 being for #ThankAGreenkeeper and its derivatives (such as #ThankAGreenkeeperDay) alone. At various points in the day, the hashtag trended 8th in the UK on Twitter.

Breaking it down further and there were 1,947 social media posts by 1,066 users including The R&A, DP World Tour,



BIGGA CEO Jim Croxton visited his local club, Knutsford, to deliver a gesture of thanks to the team

the home golf unions and various golfing media outlets. These posts were overwhelmingly positive and generated 22,948 engagements with 3,422,208 different people seeing them throughout the day.

Thanks go to everyone who took part in the initiative, which will return next year. Thank A Greenkeeper Day 2023 will be held on Tuesday 12 September and we're already looking forward to it!

Ryan Leicester

Northern - North West



Congratulations to Ryan Leicester, the deputy course manager at Warrington, and his partner Claire on the safe arrival of their baby girl, Zara Ann Leicester on 23 August.

Ryan said: "We are over the moon. Life will certainly never be the same and despite the lack of sleep, I have never felt love like this. She is perfect!"

London events

South East - London

Despite a lull in activity following a busy summer, two events are planned for the London Section.

On Tuesday 29 November an Art of Spray Application Short Seminar is being hosted at Mill Hill. Then, on Thursday 8 December, there is the return of the Turkey Trot, which is being held at Northwood, where Wes Walker and his team will have the course set up to its usually high standard.

DOGS ON COURSE



Name: Trevor
Breed: Labrador
Owner: Steve Hemsley
Location: Penwortham
Favourite treat: Chicken
Favourite spot on the course: 18th fairway, nice and wide to run around
Naughtiest moment: Pooping in the mother in law's living room and covering it up with a cushion!

WHAT'S ON NEAR YOU?

Scotland and Northern Ireland

- 1 BIGGA Scotland - Presentation Skills Workshop**
Date: 11 October
Location: Auchterarder
- 2 BIGGA Scotland L&D Roadshow**
Date: 25 October
Location: Auchterarder
- 3 Northern Ireland Education Day**
Date: 27 October
Location: Belvoir Park
- 4 BIGGA Conference**
Date: 15 November
Location: Stirling Court Hotel

Northern

- 1 BIGGA Conference**
Date: 17 November
Location: Elland Road (Leeds United Football Club)
- 2 Yorkshire Christmas Golf Day**
Date: 24 November
Location: Huddersfield

Central England

- 1 BIGGA East of England Golf Day**
Date: 12 October
Location: Newark
- 2 BIGGA Conference**
Date: 10 November
Location: Villa Park (Aston Villa Football Club)

South West and South Wales

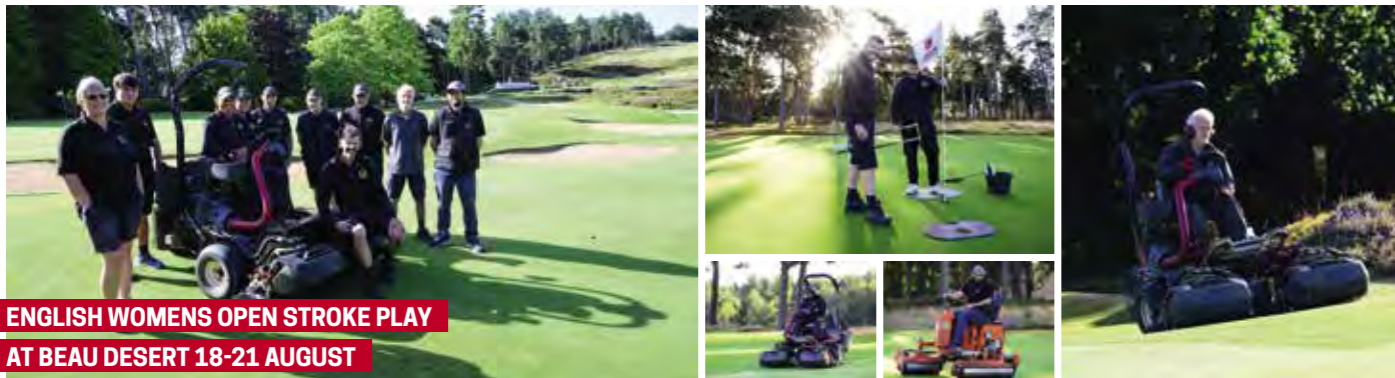
- 1 BIGGA Devon & Cornwall Turf Club**
Date: 12 October
Location: St Enodoc
- 2 BIGGA South Wales Turf Club**
Date: 18 October
Location: Celtic Manor
- 3 BIGGA Conference**
Date: 8 November
Location: Somerset County Cricket Club

South East

- 1 East Anglia Autumn Golf Day**
Date: 13 October
Location: Middleton Hall
- 2 South East Region Day at Ransomes Jacobsen HQ**
Date: 19 October
Location: Ransomes Europark
- 3 BIGGA Conference**
Date: 9 November
Location: Wentworth Club

CHAMPIONSHIP PERFORMANCES

BIGGA has teamed up with Leaderboard Photography to celebrate the greenkeeping teams that are hosting England Golf events this summer



**ENGLISH WOMENS OPEN STROKE PLAY
AT BEAU DESERT 18-21 AUGUST**



**BOYS COUNTY FINALS AT
FURNESS 23-25 AUGUST**



**WOMENS COUNTY FINALS
AT STONEHAM 16-18TH SEPT**



**ENGLISH CHAMPION CLUB AT
LILLEY BROOK 17-18 SEPT**

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Key to membership

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

SCOTLAND & NORTHERN IRELAND

Gerard Brown, Dumbarrie Golf Links, GK; **Marc Brown**, Portstewart, GK; **Derek Downie**, TurfCare, BA; **Ramsay MacGregor**, Agrovista Amenity, BA; **Ewan McKinnon**, Corrie, GK

NORTHERN

Kiel Barrett, Leeds United Football Club, HG; **Jodie Clark**, Silkstone, AGK; **Samuel Dickinson**, Otley, AGK; **Daniel Hill**, Wentworth Club, GK; **Sidney Hodkinson**, St Melyd, AGK; **Jamie Jones**, Royal St David's, AGK; **Ryan Jones**, Royal St David's, AGK; **William Jones**, Royal St David's, AGK; **John Kenny**, Pryors Hayes, AGK; **Matthew Kesterton**, Childwall GK; **Sam Knox**, Westerhope, HGK; **Ryan Linkhorn**, Childwall, AGK; **Ciaran Prendergast**, Haydock Park, AGK; **Jonathan Pritchard**, St Melyd, HGK; **Tim Randall**, Nelson, DHGK; **Craig Smith**, Haydock Park, AGK; **Paul Smith**, West Derby, AGK; **William Smith**, Easingwold, AGK; **Callaway Tooby**, Woodsome Hall, FA; **Liam Watson**, Otley, GK; **Stephen Watts**, Waterton Park, AGK.

CENTRAL ENGLAND

Daniel Allard, Harpenden, M; **Corey Cherry**, Kings Norton, AGK; **Nicholas Cooper**, Bloxwich, GK; **Simon Cooper**, Bloxwich, GK; **Nikola Cvagic**, Wentworth Club, AGK; **Ian Davies**, Bloxwich, GK; **Jesus Di Salvatore**, Wentworth Club, AGK; **Ben Grew**, Great Barr, AGK; **Stewart Marshall**, Dudley, AGK; **Benjamin Wright**, Willesley Park, AGK; **Gary Yeoman**, Willesley Park, AGK.

SOUTH EAST

Ryan Allen, Old Thorns Hotel & Resort, AGK; **Thomas Arbon**, Woodbridge, GK; **Toby Ayles**, Woodbridge, GK; **Ralph Barker Smith**, Colne Valley, AGK; **Charles Chewter**, Sweetwoods Park, AGK; **Harry Cornish**, Royal Mid-Surrey, AGK; **Adam Dolphin**, Royal Mid-Surrey, AGK; **James Draycott**, Woodbridge, GK; **Tomas Dyerson**, Fulwell, AGK; **Tom Fowler**, Woodbridge, GK; **Tom Grace**, Chartridge Park, CM; **Kevin Harding**, Royal Mid-Surrey, AGK; **Karl Harvey**, Woodbridge, GK; **John Lindsay**, Chingford, GK; **India Lockett**, Copthorne, GK; **Tom Martin**, St Paul's School, HG; **Raju Midhun**, Wentworth Club, AGK; **Joshua Milbank**, Beaverbrook, AGK; **Robert Naunton**, Woodbridge, GK; **Philip Quelch**, Copthorne, FA; **James Siggins**, Royal Mid-Surrey, AGK; **Jack-William Weeks**, Harewood Downs, AGK; **Patrick West**, Sweetwoods Park, AGK.

SOUTH WEST & SOUTH WALES

Becky Hallsworth, Advance Grass Solutions, A; **Charlie Hancock**, Barton-on-Sea, AGK; **Harry Horn**, Stoneham, AGK; **Joshua Jewell**, Thurlestone, AGK; **John Kidd**, Stoneham, G; **Toby Long**, Broadstone, GK; **William Short**, Old Thorns Hotel & Resort, AGK; **Caitlin Stephenson**, Thurlestone, AGK.

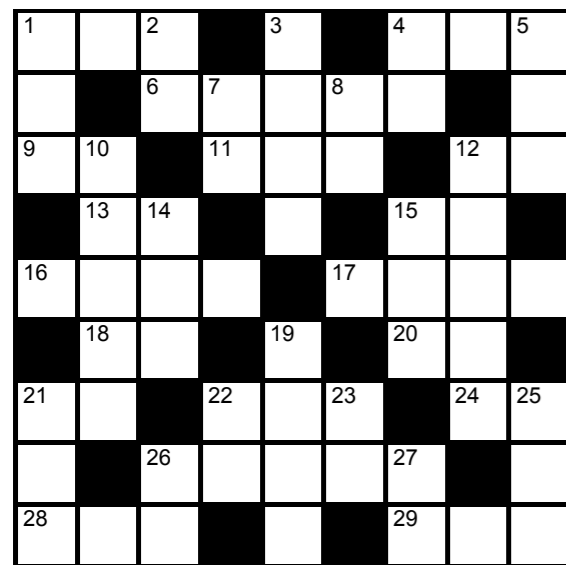
INTERNATIONAL

Pedro Assunção, Golfclub Breitenloo, I.

ENTER THE BIGGA AWARDS 2023

TURN TO PAGE 14 TO FIND OUT MORE

TEE BREAK



NUMBER CROSSWORD

Solve the sums, then enter your answers in the grid to the left.

Across

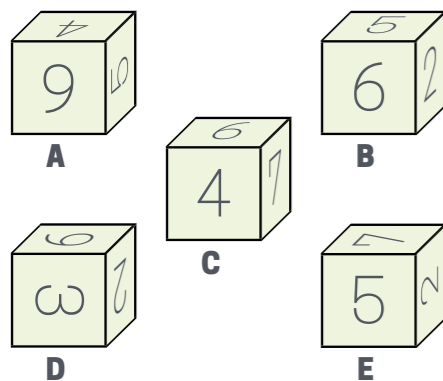
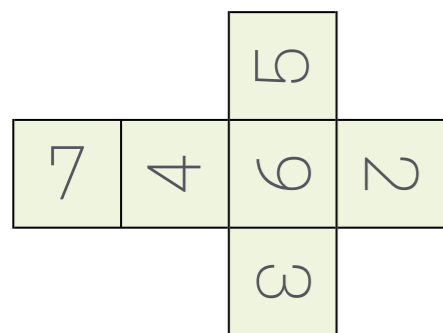
- 1 5 Down multiplied by three (3)
- 4 9 Across plus 14 Down minus 12 Across (3)
- 6 27 cubed plus 101 (5)
- 9 Inches in four feet (2)
- 11 1 Down plus half of 9 Across (3)
- 12 Seven squared (2)
- 13 Double 9 Across (2)
- 15 12 Across plus five squared (2)
- 16 4 Across plus 3 Down plus half of 28 Across (4)
- 17 29 Across multiplied by 4 Down (4)
- 18 One sixteenth of 14 Down (2)
- 20 21 Across minus ten (2)
- 21 18 Across plus two (2)
- 22 29 Across plus 14 Down plus 17 (3)
- 24 Inches in seven feet (2)
- 26 316 squared plus 20 (5)
- 28 20 Across multiplied by three (3)
- 29 Months in a decade (3)

Down

- 1 25 Down minus six squared (3)
- 2 4 Down plus seven (2)
- 3 17 Across plus 18 Across plus 29 (4)
- 4 Ounces in four pounds (2)
- 5 29 Across plus 19 (3)
- 7 15 Across plus 20 (2)
- 8 Pints in 11 gallons (2)
- 10 Double 12 Down minus three times 24 Across (5)
- 12 212 squared minus 13 Across (5)
- 14 13 Across multiplied by seven (3)
- 15 14 Down plus 26 Down minus one (3)
- 19 1 Across multiplied by five (4)
- 21 1 Down plus one plus half of 26 Down (3)
- 22 Square root of 7921 (2)
- 23 7 Down plus three (2)
- 25 7 Down multiplied by five (3)
- 26 13 Across minus four (2)
- 27 One eleventh of 4 Across (2)

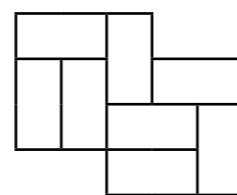
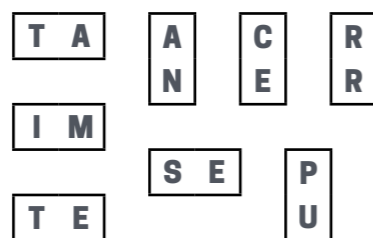
BOX CLEVER

When the box below is folded to form a cube, just one of the five options (A, B, C, D or E) can be produced. Which?



TILES

In this puzzle, the tiles must be fitted into the pattern so as to form four words reading across and five words reading down. No tile may be rotated!



FIND THE ANSWERS ON P67

THE SAVINGS SOON ADD UP

MEMBER BENEFIT



BIGGA Xtra Benefits: Here to help you save time and money

Get moving and save with MyActiveDiscounts

MyActiveDiscounts offers BIGGA members great savings on things that get you active and healthy such as footwear, sportswear and nutrition. You can also save money on adventure days, travel, spa breaks* and more!



Catch the latest blockbusters and save money on tickets

Want to catch the latest blockbusters on the big screen, and save money on tickets? BIGGA members can save up to 40% on cinema tickets at nationwide cinemas such as ODEON and Vue*.



Save up to 65% off* holidays and UK breaks

Through Holiday Exclusives' VIP Club, BIGGA Xtra Benefits members explore the best travel offers in the UK and abroad. Choose from days out, theatre trips, hotels, skiing and much more.



Free case of craft beers from Beer52

Claim your exclusive free case of beer (worth £27) from Beer52! Eight incredible craft beers, the Ferment Magazine and a tasty snack, all you need to pay is postage! What's more, you'll save 10% off every month's selection of craft beer going forwards*.



To take advantage of these and other fantastic deals log in to the BIGGA website and click on Xtra Benefits or scan the QR code



*Terms and conditions apply to all benefits. See website for details. Offers subject to change without notice and correct at time of print. The Cinema Society - Discounts vary between cinema venues. Please check when purchasing vouchers, registration to The Cinema Society required to access discount. Beer52 - Full terms at www.beer52.com/terms. Holiday Exclusives - This is a web only service, savings range up to 65% off, all hotels and deals are subject to change and availability. For full terms and conditions please visit www.holidayexclusives.com. BIGGA Xtra Benefits is managed and run on behalf of BIGGA by Parliament Hill Ltd.

INVEST IN YOURSELF



CONFERENCE

CLASSES

SEMINARS

EXHIBITION

Continue to learn 2023

“Coming to this event is good for me as a greenkeeper who wants to move forward and progress. It’s an opportunity to make greenkeeping better as an industry.”

Jeremy Ward, head greenkeeper, West Bradford

There’s a lot of talk about the spiralling cost of living and as our daily household bills continue to rise, we are all looking to build the resilience that will not only enable us to maximise our potential earnings, but also help protect us from potentially difficult circumstances.

One way to support yourself is by making savvy investments. We can’t all be successful on the stock market, but there is another form of investment that never fails to provide dividends and that is investing in yourself and your own future. Continue to Learn at BTME provides you with the opportunity to do just that.

Over the past 30 years, Continue to Learn has grown to become one of the most influential events in the golf

industry calendar. Attended by greenkeepers, course managers and turf professionals from all over Europe and further afield, educational opportunities at Continue to Learn amount to over 2.5 hours of training for every golf club in the United Kingdom.

And this year there are more cost-effective ways of

learning than ever before, with discounts if members of the same club book onto the Conference schedule, opportunities to purchase learning through Turf Rewards, free BTME Breakfast Club sessions and our cost-free range of Seminars.

Deb Burnett, BIGGA Learning & Development Executive said: “Continue to

Learn provides today’s turf professionals with the expertise, knowledge and ability to overcome the challenges we all face on a daily basis, while also providing the skills to help you achieve your career ambitions.

“The education programme is built with input from leading experts and educators and topics are selected by BIGGA members, which means content is tailored to the needs of the modern greenkeeper or course manager.

“With such an influential role in shaping the greenkeeping industry, Continue to Learn is always incredibly popular, so make sure you book early to avoid missing out on the world class education that is on offer.”

CONFERENCE

The two-day conference programme spans Monday and Tuesday. Sessions are typically 40 to 60 minutes in length and there will usually be two sessions taking place at the same time, so you can choose which you would like to attend. We’ll also be recording the sessions, so you can watch anything you miss at a later date.

Topics are varied and primarily aimed at course manager, head greenkeeper and deputy level, although all are welcome to take part.

This year the Conference will take place in the DoubleTree by Hilton Harrogate Majestic Hotel & Spa, located adjacent to the Harrogate Convention Centre.

Conference topics include: motivation; sustainability; nature; optimising light; Marco Simone Golf and Country Club; communications; aggregates; using data; plant parasitic nematodes; environmental stewardship; workplace culture; golf course design; supporting greenkeepers; biodiversity; summer diseases; course renovation;

mindful resilience; climate change; managing fine fescue; Royal Liverpool Golf Club (Hoylake).

“Meeting and learning with the rest of the industry is really exciting.”

Matt Milligan, first assistant, Ridding Park

CLASSES

Classes are held across full or half days and cover a wide range of subjects for greenkeepers at every stage of their career. Classes take place Sunday to Wednesday and are usually held in the Queen’s Suite, within Harrogate Convention Centre, although a limited number take place in the adjacent Crowne Plaza hotel.

With smaller class sizes than the Conference, the Classes are often an opportunity for interactive learning, helping you develop practical or theoretical skills for the benefit of your golf

facility and your career. Topics vary from agronomy to people management and places sell out quickly, so don’t hesitate to book if a topic catches your eye.

Class topics include: irrigation; developing teams; turf machinery maintenance — electrics and hydraulics; mindful greenkeeping; strategic planning; turf diseases; combatting drought; governance in golf; non-pesticidal disease management; water security; course renovation; fertiliser programmes; grinding; agronomic data; personal wellbeing; soil

analysis; budgeting; soil surfactants; motivation; turf species identification; brilliant management; managing a greens committee; rhizosphere engineering; sprayer calibration; surveying trees; weed management; supporting others; coaching and mentoring; using Excel; soil microbiology; hosting effective meetings; creating greens complexes; dealing with negativity; being a better boss; soils; creating videos; positive thinking; succeeding at meetings; organisation; how to criticise and correct people.

Continue to Learn is supported by





SEMINARS

Held on the Tuesday and Wednesday during BTME, BIGGA hosts free seminars for all attendees to the show.

Seminars are presented by industry experts on behalf of our exhibitors and run hourly between 10am and 4pm. There is no need to book and seats are allocated on a first come, first served basis, so make sure you arrive early to guarantee a spot.

Seminars will be held in the Seminar Theatre, located in Hall 4.

Seminar topics include: choosing fertilisers; locking up carbon in turfgrass; biostimulants; soil data; sustainable agronomy; selective herbicides; reducing nitrogen inputs; fertiliser use; nature; turf management; fine fescue species; biological; chelates and iron projects; using soil biology.

FURTHER NOTEWORTHY SESSIONS:

BTME BREAKFAST SESSION: THE AGRONOMIC AND GREENKEEPING STORY OF THE 150TH OPEN

Time: Tuesday 24 January 8-9am
Cost: Free
CPD Value: 1 credit
Location: Main Auditorium, Harrogate Convention Centre

Hear about the behind-the-scenes work that went into presenting the Old Course for The 150th Open at St Andrews Links.

Director of Greenkeeping Sandy Reid will be joined by The R&A's Sustainable Agronomy Team for Championship Venues.

Richard Windows and Adam Newton, and Head of Sustainable Agronomy Alistair Beggs to share their experiences and learnings from the staging of such a momentous event. The BTME Breakfast Session is free to attend for all visitors and there is no need to book a ticket.

“It’s good to be around people in the industry who you may not have seen for a couple of years.”

Sean McLean, course manager, Royal Birkdale

“Golf is more popular than it’s ever been and greenkeepers can never stand still so they have always got to look to evolve.”

Marc Westenborg, golf course architect

YOUNG GREENKEEPERS CONFERENCE

Time: Wednesday 25 January 10am-12.30pm
Cost: Members £15, non-members £30
Location: Queen’s Suite, Harrogate Convention Centre
CPD Value: 3 credits

Aimed at young greenkeepers and those who are new to the industry, this conference will feature short sessions on a range of relevant topics relating to a career in greenkeeping.

Presented by well-respected industry speakers and course

managers, this conference promises to be informative, engaging and provide the opportunity to meet others who are embracing their career within the greenkeeping industry.

If you’re new to greenkeeping at BTME, it’s the perfect place to start.

“It’s just about keeping up to date with new developments, new industry standards and keeping yourself relevant.”

Wendy O’Brien, course manager, Beaverbrook

GOLF COURSE 2030 AND SUSTAINABLE AGRONOMY

Golf has a special relationship with the natural environment and a responsibility to ensure that future generations can enjoy the sport played by millions around the world.

The R&A is pleased to collaborate with BIGGA to bring a series of education events to Continue to Learn with a focus on key sustainability topics for golf courses and the support available to the industry to address them.

Golf Course 2030 is an innovative industry-wide roadmap that was established by The R&A in 2018. Bringing together greenkeepers, research institutes and golf’s governing bodies, the initiative explores methods of mitigating the impact of climate change, resource constraints and regulation on



R&A Sustainable Agronomy.

How to book your tickets



- / Book and pay directly through Eventbrite by scanning the QR code
 - / Telephone our friendly team on 01347 833800
 - / Email your booking to education@bigga.co.uk
- Please provide a valid email when booking as your confirmation, education course details, pre-course work, feedback and certificates of attendance will be sent by email.

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Torrent™2 Debris Blower

MagnaPoint™ Technology lets you lock-in your optimal nozzle angles, gaining up to two hours per day in extra productivity. Take debris clean-up to a whole new level with the fastest, most efficient blower available.

For a demo, call John on 07512 909792



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BIGGA Annual General Meeting 2023



Tuesday 24 January 2023 at 3pm
 Main Auditorium, Harrogate Convention Centre
 All members of BIGGA are invited to attend the AGM with full members entitled to vote on matters arising. A current membership card will need to be produced to gain entry.





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

- / William Batty, Otley
- / Jake Bowe
- / Thomas Cable, Dulwich and Sydenham Hill
- / Robert Clark, Old Thorns Hotel
- / Jamie Ninnis, Tavistock
- / George Watkins, Barnham Broom
- / Adam Wilson, Barnham Broom

APPRENTICE CORNER

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE GREENKEEPERS TRAINING COMMITTEE

Considerations when carrying out maintenance on equipment or machinery

Here are some simple tips for you to consider when undertaking maintenance, because after all, there's nothing worse than breaking your club's brand new and really expensive piece of machinery!

Do:

- / Take care when undoing stubborn nuts and bolts. Pull on the spanner rather than push.
- / Always wear eye protection when working on machinery. Grit, grime and metal particles may damage the eye, but to a lesser degree can also cause delays in productivity if you need to stop to clean your eyes.
- / Use barrier creams or appropriate rubber or latex gloves to protect hands when doing dirty jobs.
- / Ensure that loose fitting clothes and hair are kept away from moving parts.

- / Keep the work area tidy.
- / Exercise caution with compressed springs or other mechanical parts that are tensioned. Always release the tension in a controlled manner.
- / Carry out the work in a logical sequence checking assembly and disassembly procedures.
- / Record machinery maintenance as per the manufacturer's instructions, such as date, type of work carried out, parts used, by whom and hours of machine use.

Do not:

- / Attempt to drain oil until it has sufficiently cooled.
- / Handle any part of the engine, exhaust or silencer without first ascertaining that it has sufficiently cooled.
- / Siphon toxic fluids by mouth or allow contact with skin.

- / Inhale clutch or brake lining dust as they may contain asbestos.
- / Allow oil or grease spillages to remain. Clean up straight away with absorbent granules or dry sand.
- / Rush jobs or take shortcuts. Follow procedures carefully and take your time.
- / Work under unpropped extended hydraulic rams or raised hydraulic tractor arms. These may fall and cause crushing injuries or death.
- / Work on an engine that is running. There are numerous moving parts and hot surfaces, including Power Take-Off (PTO) shafts and implements.
- / Pour cold water into a hot engine radiator. This will cause rapid cooling and may crack the radiator.
- / Use ill-fitting or damaged tools or equipment.

/ Lift heavy objects. The maximum unaided weight is 25kg for men and 16kg for women. No lifting if pregnant. Manual handling limits are explained on the HSE website in the guide 'Manual handling at work: A brief guide' (www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg143.pdf) or scan the QR code.



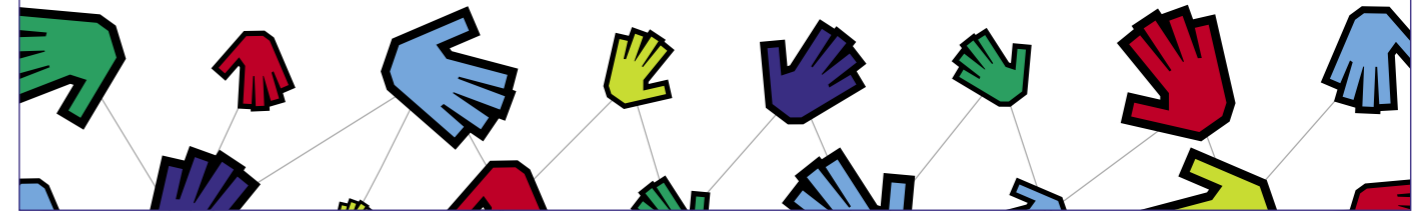
Here to lend a helping hand



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
- Financial Assistance:** during difficult times
- Support:** through tough times
- Care:** because YOU matter
- Guidance:** on your welfare and development

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



SGT - Sustainable Grass Technology



Products under the SGT banner promise stress tolerant grass for sustainable turf management and are the result of years of independent and in-house trials

Royal Porthcawl Golf Club

- Nitrogen-use efficiency
- Increased disease tolerance
- Drought tolerance
- Lower biomass production



#notallgrassesareequal

www.barenbrug.co.uk/SGT



Ecology Diary



James Hutchinson, Membership Services Manager (Ecology & Sustainability)

For the last six years I have produced a monthly page for Greenkeeper International and talked about topics including woodland management, holistic grassland thinning, fungi, wildflowers, wildlife and many other topics.

I'm excited to now be sharing this page with the GEO Foundation as they are doing incredible things to support golf, not least the On Course certification that is so influential.

If you want to revisit any of the topics I've discussed on the Ecology page over the years, you can head to the BIGGA website where there is a dedicated ecology section.

I'm going to continue provide you with a monthly update on my activities, including any interesting information I pick up on my travels, so please don't be a stranger and get in touch if there's anything I can do to help you at your club.

I also find myself spending an increasing amount liaising with key organisations, such as the Woodland Trust and England Golf. It is wonderful to see so many groups getting to grips with the sustainability opportunities that golf presents, so here's to a bright future for us all.

Ecology Roundup is sponsored by



SCOTLAND'S SUMMER OF SUSTAINABLE GOLF



A big summer in Scotland has come to a close, with the best players on the planet having visited the country for some of the biggest tournament's the sport has to offer.

The 150th Open, the AIG Women's Open, the Genesis Scottish Open, the Trust Golf Women's Scottish Open and The Senior Open were all held in Scotland between June and August, with the Alfred Dunhill Links Championship in September.

Such a busy calendar provided a platform from which to showcase the sustainable practices that many events adopted, with GEO Certified courses like Gleneagles and Dundonald Links playing host.

These events were aligned to a wider promotion of sustainability and climate action, a programme that is led by VisitScotland and delivered in partnership with GEO Foundation for Sustainable Golf. The

programme seeks to accelerate Scotland's leadership in golf and sustainability, as well as promote it on a global stage.

"It's something I'm very proud of," said Alan Grant, senior golf manager at VisitScotland. "We're the first national body to join with GEO Foundation. As the home of golf, we created this game hundreds of years ago and we should be responsible for its continued growth moving forward and lead the way for other countries to follow us."

VisitScotland's responsible tourism plan aims to minimise the Scottish tourism industry's carbon footprint and educate the industry on reducing emissions. The partnership with GEO Foundation aligns these goals with the sustainability activities being carried out at this summer's tournaments.

Alan added: "What's even more important now is the

impact these events have on the environment in which they're delivered, whether it's for the event week itself or the periods before and after.

"The environmental and sustainability initiatives are all key measures of government now. Moving forward, more and more events will be judged on how they deliver against these metrics as much as how they deliver against the media impact and the economic value of events. We have to deliver things in a safe and sustainable way and leave a future that is full of golf events for children of years to come to enjoy."

Alan was speaking at Dundonald Links, which hosted the Trust Golf Women's Scottish Open.

The course has been GEO Certified since 2013, joining Muirfield, St Andrews Links, The Renaissance Club and Gleneagles as certified facilities to have hosted events this summer.



Cold temperature seeding?

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- Cricket outfield
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Tetraploids germinate and establish faster, especially in colder conditions (down to 4°C)



Speed is everything
High vigour for fast establishment



Dig deep
Stronger, deeper, denser rooting



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Superior disease and drought tolerance



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Double the chlorophyll for increased energy production and stress tolerance



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High wear tolerance with superb colour



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www.originamenity.com

STAY LEGAL

Have you registered as a user of plant protection products?

If you did not register your golf facility as a user of plant protection products by 22 June 2022, you are now liable for prosecution.

Since the introduction of the law, only 4,000 facilities across the entirety of the amenity sector have registered, which makes for worrying reading. Although the potential punishments are unclear, one expert BIGGA spoke to explained that if a facility hasn't registered and they are the victims of fire or theft, the club's

insurance could be invalidated.

UK law dictates that any organisation that uses or applies professional plant protection products (PPPs) or adjuvants must register with DEFRA — and there are serious penalties if you are found to be in breach of this requirement.

The 2020 Official Controls (Plant Protection Products) Regulations 2020 are in place to enable regulatory authorities to support compliance and enforce legal requirements that apply to

the placing on the market and use of PPPs throughout the supply chain.

PPPs are known generically as pesticides and include insecticides, fungicides, herbicides, molluscicides and plant growth regulators. They can exist in many forms, such as solid granules, powders or liquids and consist of one or more active substances co-formulated with other materials to provide control of target organisms. All products that claim to control pests will contain active

“ If you did not register your golf facility as a user of plant protection products by 22 June 2022, you are now liable for prosecution.

ingredients on the GB Pesticides Approval Register, granting them approval for sale and use. All approved products will have a MAPP number, which is unique to each product name.

Products are registered as 'professional' or 'amateur' and most used by greenkeepers will be professional PPPs. This differentiation is important as it necessitates the requirement to register as a user. To confirm whether a product is amateur or professional, you can find details on the product label or on the HSE website (<https://secure.pesticides.gov.uk/pestreg/ProdSearch.asp>).

An adjuvant is a substance that enhances the efficacy of a pesticide spray. They are added to the spray tank prior to application, but most adjuvants do not have significant pesticidal properties. In order to be sold they have to be registered with HSE, if accepted they are issued an Adjuvant number and included in HSE database (<https://secure.pesticides.gov.uk/adjuvants/Search.aspx>).

Step-by-step guide to completing the form

The form to register is simple to complete and can be downloaded from the following link:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/professional-plant-protection-products-ppps-register-as-a-user



1. Complete organisation name and details
2. For contact details include the course manager/head greenkeeper's number and email and then select drop downs that apply to your facility

3. DEFRA is looking for volume of product used, stored or applied in an average year. This can be any 12-month period. The easiest number to obtain will be the volume of product applied, while details of volumes used or applied will be available from your spray records. The registration document is looking for units, so treat 1 litre or 1kg of products as a unit. Only include PPPs that have professional status or are registered adjuvants

4. If you store or apply products at a different address these need to be recorded on additional tabs provided in the spreadsheet.

Once completed, save the spreadsheet and email as an attachment to: GB-OCR-Notification@defra.gov.uk

Additional information is available from the link below:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/professional-plant-protection-products-ppps-register-as-a-user-of-professional-plant-protection-products-ppps-and-adjuvants](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/professional-plant-protection-products-ppps-register-as-a-user/how-to-register-as-a-user-of-professional-plant-protection-products-ppps-and-adjuvants) or by scanning the QR code.



ADDITIONAL HELP

If you need additional help completing the registration please contact info@bigga.co.uk. Also, contact us if you would like BIGGA to provide additional information, such as hosting a webinar or creating an online resource.



MEET THE MANAGERS: STEVE CHAPPELL

Golf Course Superintendent | Royal Bled

Steve Chappell, who has led teams at Gleneagles, Bath, Neath and now heads up the team at Royal Bled in Slovenia, is one of our top leaders. Steve has worked his way up through the ranks, from trainee groundsman at the local tennis club to successfully delivering a Ryder Cup. Phil Helmn MG chatted with him recently, to discuss his thoughts on all things career development.

What advice do you have for someone who is new to the industry?

Be proactive, ask questions, put your hand up for extra work to learn more practical skills, especially if there is a project taking place or a contractor on site. Get involved with BIGGA (or the GMA) and meet people. Most importantly enjoy it, as there are far worse places to go to work every day.

Phil: Totally agree here Steve. If you want to get on get going! I sat in a comfort zone for too long early in my career. The rewards you experience will be huge if you adopt a more proactive approach.

How did you get to your current role?

I invested in myself early on, put myself out there, travelled to events as a volunteer at my own cost, shadowed other



head greenkeepers and made as many connections as possible. I also worked hard. It's not always easy but the rewards are there if you push for them.

What skills did you develop early in your career?

The biggest thing I learnt was to appreciate what I was doing and where I was working more than what I was earning. With all professions it can take a while before you move up the ranks and start earning a decent salary.

What skills have you found vital to your job?

The ability to take a step back and think before acting; empathy; understanding; keeping a calm or level head and patience.

What mistakes did you make early in your career?

I was far too quick to give an answer even if it wasn't correct. I never understood the bigger picture as a young head greenkeeper. I didn't consider other parts of the business, which I later came to appreciate as being important too.

Phil: Adversity helps you to re-set the dial and reflect. It should help drive motivation for your new goals.

Was there a career setback you faced which you later realised was an advantage?

I got made redundant following the sale of a club in 2002 and I went to work for MJ Abbotts for a year. The experience was great, and I will always be grateful to them. I returned to greenkeeping as HGK at Neath, which gave my family the opportunity to make new friends.

What would you do differently if you could go back in time?

Without doubt I would have travelled to work in Asia and the United States.

This industry has so many options to say this and it's something we should be promoting to younger people.

Phil: I pinch myself sometimes when I think that turf management can help you travel the world, if you'd like.

What should I be doing to improve my career prospects?

Add value by getting out there and start investing in yourself! You need to stand out in the crowd when applying for higher positions, adding value will help.

Phil: If you want to move up the career ladder, sign up for as much training as possible, such as Continue to Learn.

BE FLUID.

COMING SOON

CIRRUSPRO

Scan to learn more about what CirrusPRO from Rain Bird has to offer.



It goes where you go.

Our revolutionary mobile-first irrigation control system lets you go with the flow while keeping control — whether you're on or off the course.



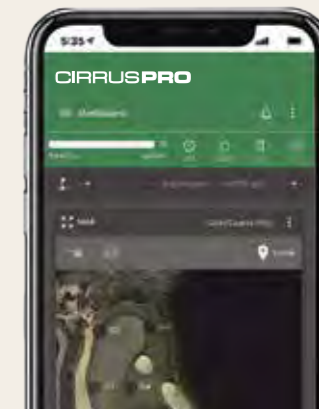
More Freedom – run your course from anywhere, on any device.



Complete Control – programme your irrigation your way.



Better Data – feel confident and irrigate with precision.



BIG DATA ADDS UP



Digital agronomy tools now offer the potential for a positive addition to conventional greenkeeping skills.

Daniel Lightfoot MG, Syngenta Commercial Head Europe North West

As the volume of data being generated and recorded in turf management continues to build up, finding tools that can make best use of the information to aid future decisions becomes ever more important.

Effective Integrated Turf Management decisions on what actions to take and which products to use must be driven by data if the success of results are to be assured.

Harnessing the information from the data that is being generated today opens the opportunity of increasingly accurate and reliable preventative modelling for the future.

With ever increasing pressure on conventional agronomic techniques, Syngenta research has demonstrated that some new biological products, for example, can achieve effective levels of control.

However, the trials show results with biologicals can often be inconsistent and less reliable compared with tried and tested chemical products.

Digital tools will underpin the future of the performance of these biological products to optimise their use. That will be crucial in the move to reduced reliance on chemical applications, where accurate biological treatments can

achieve the desired results.

With nematodes aimed at targeting leatherjackets, for example, studies have shown where an appropriate nematode species is applied direct to the pest, they can achieve a high level of kill – even of larger larvae. The challenge in practice is to have the appropriate conditions and activity at the time of application, to bring the nematodes into contact with their target.

One new avenue of research to achieve this addresses managing moisture levels in the soil. That can help attract the larvae into a target zone, as well as providing the crucial moisture necessary for nematodes to survive and seek out their prey.

At an individual course level, records of soil moisture under different conditions – both historic and current at the treatment timing – is crucial to enable accurate irrigation scheduling and moisture management. That will help to achieve more reliable results from both nematodes and Acelepryn applications.

On a larger scale, recording data of adult crane fly and chafer pest numbers and location using the Syngenta Pest Tracker tool has been instrumental in building a picture of when and where to make treatments at the optimum timing to target most vulnerable larvae stages. Over recent seasons the vast wealth of Pest Tracker data has helped to focus attention on later treatments for leatherjackets, as well as adapting timing of aeration practices.

The later treatment has also coincided with wetter weather that could prove beneficial in maintaining soil moisture to optimise results with integrated nematode and Acelepryn applications.

As weather patterns are changing, with more extreme and unseasonal events, forecasting is becoming ever more important. Many golf courses now have a weather station of their own, generating huge volumes of valuable local data and picking up trends over time that can help to influence decision making.

Allied to that, years of

historic weather data is available for any course on the Syngenta Turf website, along with historical disease risk records extending back for more than a decade. Compiled together, it's an incredibly powerful tool to pinpoint potential problem timings, and in time to make plans.

Now, the wealth of available global weather data has been tapped into to select key aspects most relevant to turf management with the WeatherPro tool. Capable of utilising weather forecasts from UK, European and global sources, it presents forecasts including soil temperatures, evapotranspiration, rainfall

and winds in a series of active maps that will help guide daily decision making.

Ever more powerful use of data comes with the capability to integrate decision making with forecasts of disease risks.

New ITM anthracnose trials at STRI this season further demonstrated the roll of disease forecasting. Risks were seen to be increasing rapidly in the hot and humid weather in mid-July – a full month ahead of scheduled treatment timings (Fig 1). The trial protocol, including elements of nutrition, biostimulant, PGR, pigment and fungicide treatments, was pulled

forward by more than three weeks to mitigate against the risk of attacks.

Such an action on a golf course could have averted a serious disease outbreak.

Disease risk forecasting and recording is also immensely valuable throughout the ITM planning process. If historic disease risk records were to show a particular course was subject to a high risk of early microdochium patch pressure in August, for example, there may be the case to adapt maintenance timing or the intensity of actions to avoid added stress through that time – as well as focusing on other ITM actions to minimise risk.

As digital solutions continue to develop, it can begin to bring ever more sophisticated tools – some of which have hitherto only been the preserve of research and academia – into the everyday hands of greenkeepers.

The Growing Degree Day Calculator, for example, can automatically create a personalised GDD plan for any course – which would have taken an individual

greenkeeper many hours each week to keep up to date. Now it is instantly available on your phone, as well as sending email alerts of trigger points if requested. It has proven the most popular digital tool so far on the Syngenta website.

The next step has been pulling the elements into mobile apps that can make them more accessible and easier to use for greenkeepers to use every day to support practical and agronomic decisions.

Digital agronomy is never going to take away the skills and experience of greenkeepers in managing their turf and responding to situations but it does have the real power to support decision making and reduce the risks of unforeseen events, which together adds up to delivering consistently better results.

Continue the conversation

Read the full feature at www.syngentaturf.co.uk

Fig 1. STRI Anthracnose trial disease risk



UK's brightest and best student greenkeepers celebrated as Goodwood Estate hosts finals of annual Toro awards

Karl Hansell, BIGGA



BIGGA and co-founders and sponsors Reesink Turfcare and Toro revealed the winners of the annual awards competition at Goodwood Estate in West Sussex.

The winners of this year's awards were revealed to be

James Gaskell (30), deputy head greenkeeper at Ripon City, and Peter Pattenden (19), a greenkeeper at Carden Park. Throughout the day, the 12 candidates — selected from a record 54 nominees — had contested the grand finals of

the Toro Student Greenkeeper Awards, which was being held for the 33rd time.

BIGGA Learning and Development Executive Deb Burnett said: "Among the many activities BIGGA undertakes each year to assist the professional development of our members, the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards are almost certainly the most inspirational. For those feeling disillusioned about the challenges our industry faces in coming years, our 12 finalists provide all the reassurance you need to be convinced that greenkeeping and the sport of golf have a very bright future."

James Gaskell has been greenkeeping for five years, taking up the profession on a full-time basis after graduating from the University of Sunderland. A talented golfer playing to a 1.6

handicap, the awards judges were impressed by his considerable dedication to the sport and his chosen career. James was endorsed by Myerscough College, where he is studying towards his Level 3 in Advanced Golf Greenkeeping. James's tutor, Andy Kenworthy, has contributed to the development of the three most recent awards winners.

The runner-up of the award was Andrew Ritchie (24) of St Andrews Links Trust, who is studying towards his SVQ Level 2 Sports Turf Maintenance at GOSTA Training College.

The sixth winner of the

Toro Young Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award was revealed to be Peter Pattenden, son of Carden Park's course manager, also called Peter. A talented rugby player, Peter has been greenkeeping full-time for almost three years, although he spent much of his childhood on the course beside his dad. Peter was endorsed by his employer and is studying towards his Level 3 in Advanced Golf Greenkeeping at Coleg Cambria.

The runner-up of the Young award was Luke Charnley (19) of Royal Liverpool, who is studying towards his Level 2 Certificate in Golf Greenkeeping at

Myerscough College.

David Timms, national accounts manager for Reesink Turfcare, said: "After a record number of entries and a thorough two-week online interview process, it was a pleasure to welcome and meet the best talent in greenkeeping at Goodwood for the finals of the awards.

"It was clear why these 12 finalists made it this far — a great achievement. Everyone shone and it was a close competition. The winners — James and Peter — are incredibly worthy and I look forward to seeing what they go on to achieve."

The Toro Student

Greenkeeper of the Year Award was introduced in 1989, with an additional Young category introduced in 2016.

Previous winners and finalists have gone on to become some of the most influential characters in the greenkeeping industry, helping shape the sport of golf in the UK and further afield.

The Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year receives enrolment in the 10-week University of Massachusetts Winter Turf School, a two-week expenses-paid placement at Adare Manor, host of the 2027 Ryder Cup, an all-expenses paid trip to the

GCSAA Conference and Trade Show in Florida and a visit to Toro Corporate HQ, R&D Centre and Equipment Operations in Wisconsin.

The Toro Young Student Greenkeeper of the Year winner receives a two-week work placement at Vidauban Golf Club in France, a five-night trip to Continue to Learn at BTME and a gift voucher for Toro Training.

The student award endorser receives a trip to the GCSAA Conference and Trade Show and the young student endorser receives a trip to Vidauban Golf Club.

All finalists receive a year's free membership with BIGGA.

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The Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year 2022 finalists



Award winners Peter Pattenden (left) and James Gaskell (right)



‘I enjoyed the experience a lot more than I thought I ever would.’

James Gaskell, deputy head greenkeeper, Ripon City
Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year 2022

For James Gaskell, greenkeeping began as a summer job, enabling him to earn a bit of money between terms at the University of Sunderland, where he was studying towards a Sports Science degree.

But the keen golfer soon realised that it was on the fairways where he wanted to build a career and he has now put Ripon City on the map as James, the club's deputy head greenkeeper, became the 33rd Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year.

“The period between terms gave me a great opportunity to go into my local golf courses and work the summers,” said James, 30. “I did it for a bit of money and experience and at the time didn't think much of it. But I just absolutely loved it. It changed from something that was going to help with my bank balance while at university and became my chosen career.”

Although he hasn't pursued his degree subject further as a career, attending university did equip James with some valuable skills that he uses in his management role at Ripon City. He explained: “I think university helped massively because you quickly develop your interpersonal skills. For example, when you first arrive there's a group of seven of you living together and you have to quickly adapt and bounce off each other, which is like day-to-day life in a greenkeeping team.”

“I've also done a lot of assignment-based work in the past and so that has helped with my Level 3 and preparing for these awards.”

Helping guide James on his journey is Myerscough College tutor Andy Kenworthy, who is celebrating the third consecutive year of one of his students winning the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award.

“Andy strives for the best possible answers,” said James.

“When he first started tutoring me he said the answers need to go above and beyond the marking criteria. He will never settle for just an answer that is passable and I think that's the most important thing — everything needs to be in depth and detailed.”

With Ripon City located just 15 miles from Ridding Park, where the previous two awards winners — Jason Norwood and Matthew Milligan — were based, that also provided James with an opportunity to prepare for the awards by gaining some knowledge from those who had already undertaken the process.

James said: “I managed to organise a game of golf with Matt and he talked me through the process, such as what happens on the day. But nothing can prepare you for the day itself. I didn't expect any of this. I also spoke to Jason and he was incredibly helpful in giving up his time and trying to explain what you come across on the day.”

“Despite all that, I was pretty apprehensive and anxious, but once you get into the interview process and the presentation and you see friendly faces that make you feel comfortable, it's a lot easier than what you think it will be in the morning. I enjoyed the experience a lot more than I thought I ever would.”

Having come from outside the industry, James said it came as a shock that there were bodies such as BIGGA, Toro and Reesink who were willing to invest so much time in supporting those beginning their career in greenkeeping and providing opportunities for them to make a name for themselves.

“When you first start working as a summer worker, you don't know about everything within the industry,” said James. “You would never expect what BIGGA or Toro and Reesink do for the younger greenkeepers



Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year James Gaskell (centre) with BIGGA Vice President Andrew Smith (left) and Reesink's Jon Cole

“It changed from something that was going to help with my bank balance while at university and became my chosen career.”

who are trying to make a career, it's just amazing.”

Despite all his preparation, the standard of finalists was so extraordinarily high that James said he was stunned when his name was read out as winner of the competition.

“I thought I was going to faint,” he said. “I was massively

shocked because, speaking to everyone around us, they were all so knowledgeable and it must just have been the toss of a coin as to who won because everyone is so good at their job and so passionate about it. In my head, I thought there were so many good people there and to have won,

I was completely shocked.” In winning the award, James now gets to participate in the University of Massachusetts' Winter Turf School, he will attend the GCSAA Conference and Trade Show in Orlando, he gets to visit Toro facilities in Wisconsin and he will also participate in a work placement at Adare Manor, host of The 2027 Ryder Cup.

James said: “I'll just soak in all the information that I can.”

“Speaking to Matt about his experiences, he said it is life changing. I watched Tiger Woods playing at Adare Manor on TV just a couple of months ago and the course is just amazing, so to go there and gain information about what they do will be amazing.”

Reflecting on his experience at the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards, James concluded: “I'm so grateful for this opportunity and so thankful to everyone at BIGGA, Toro and Reesink for what they do.”

“Obviously, congratulations to Pete, who is so passionate and knowledgeable, which is great to see, and thanks to everyone who has taken part.”



James's name will now be etched on the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year trophy



‘I feel like this is a chance to make my own name’

Peter Pattenden, greenkeeper, Carden Park
Toro Young Student Greenkeeper of the Year 2022

Peter Pattenden always knew he wanted to be a greenkeeper and even asked if he could leave school early to begin his career.

As the son of the renowned course manager at Carden Park, also called Peter, victory in the Toro Young Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award is the opportunity to make a name for himself as the ambitious 19-year-old embarks upon his own greenkeeping journey.

“People say, ‘when you left school, did you think you would become a greenkeeper?’ Actually, I did,” said Peter, who is studying towards his Level 3 in Advanced Golf Greenkeeping at Coleg Cambria.

“I feel like this is a chance to make my own name, otherwise I would forever be the ‘other’ Peter Pattenden. Now at least, when people say ‘Pete’s coming to BTME’, they’ll ask ‘which one?’ I’ve got my own name, so hopefully people will realise there’s another Peter Pattenden taking this industry very seriously.”

Born in Scotland, Peter moved to Wales when he was four years old as his dad took up a role at Carden Park, across the border in Cheshire.

He would spend school holidays working on the course and some of his fondest early memories are times spent out on the course with his family.

“I’ve been on a golf course from day one,” Peter said. “Dad would take me and my sisters for a walk on the golf course. He’d say ‘stand there, I’ll get a picture for your mum’ and he’d put the irrigation on and soak us. It’s things like that, which you keep with you.”

“I had a sit down with my dad about the industry and where it can take me. That conversation really pushed me to take it on full time and pursue it as a career.”

Both Peters are talented rugby players. Pete Snr played alongside Scotland’s Alasdair Strokosch, while Pete Jr turned out for North Wales

and Scottish Exiles.

Pete Snr began his career as a seasonal at Gleneagles, becoming head greenkeeper of the PGA Centenary aged just 27.

Although now making his own way in the industry, Peter looks to his father for inspiration and direction.

“I am hoping within the next year and a half at Carden Park to take on a little more responsibility and show leadership. After that, I’ll look to progress to become a deputy head greenkeeper, a head and then a course manager. The end goal for me is to become a course manager at a top venue, hopefully in Scotland as it’s the home of golf.

“Dad and I have a really good working relationship.

“Obviously we know when there’s time to be working and to crack on with the grass and there’s other times when we can have a little bit of a laugh to keep the day moving, so it’s



Peter in conversation with BIGGA's James Hutchinson and Gordon Moir

As part of the finals, each student must complete a course walk

“I was revising before work, after lunch, during breaks and every opportunity I could find.

all good.”

Despite being raised on golf courses, Peter didn’t take it for granted that he would do well in the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year competition and in conversations with the awards judges it was

clear that he had invested significant time into revising for the event. He displayed extraordinary knowledge and understanding of the golf course environment, but said that he was delighted the hard work had paid off.

“I put a lot of effort into the

competition,” he said. “I was revising before work, after lunch, during breaks and every opportunity I could find. Big thanks must go to my girlfriend, Sarah, as she’s been really supportive and understanding.”

Despite this, Peter said he was still surprised when he was revealed to be the winner of the Young award, adding: “I got chills, to be honest. I completely did not expect it and it was a surreal feeling to be honest.”

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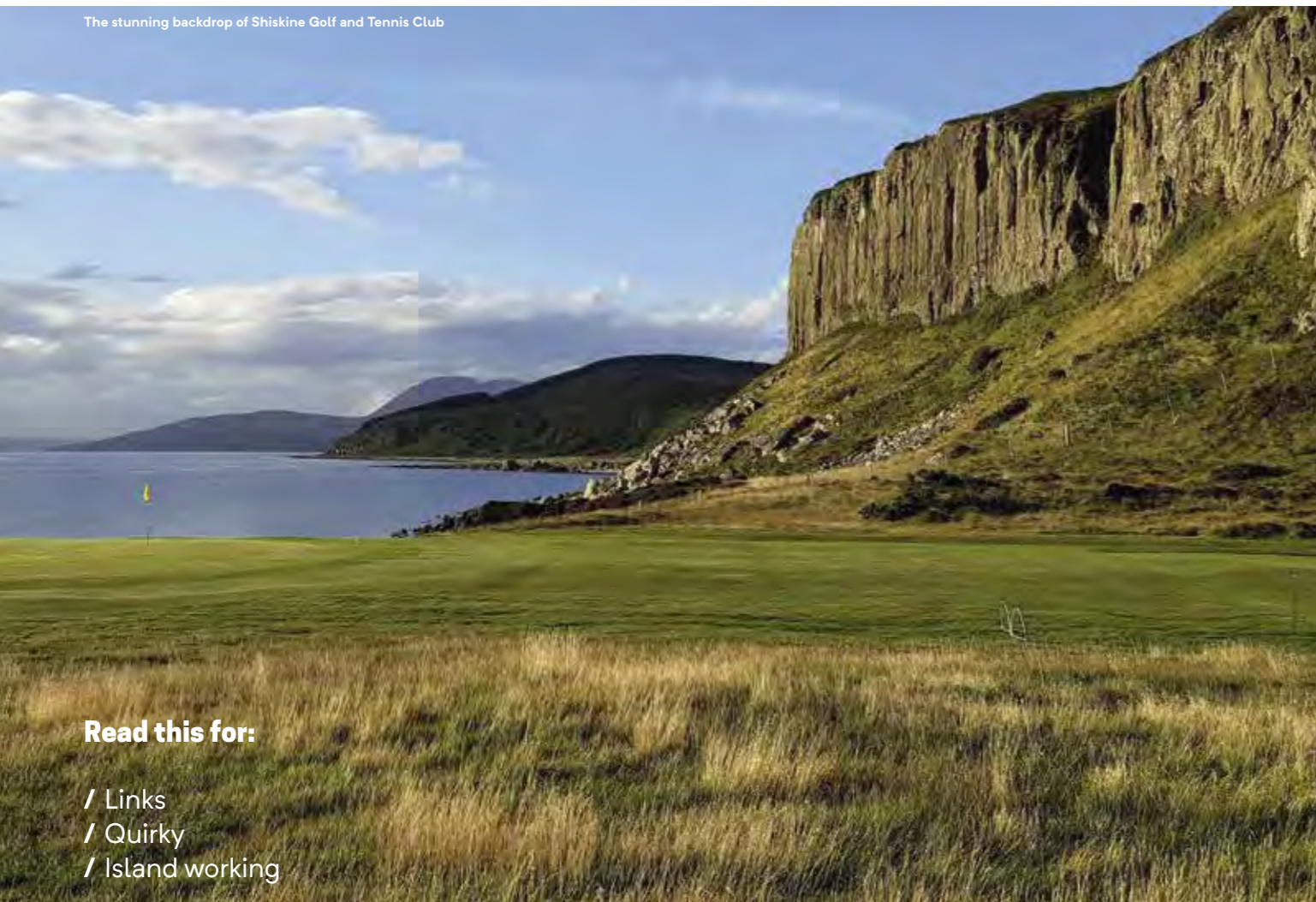
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The stunning backdrop of Shiskine Golf and Tennis Club



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- / Links
- / Quirky
- / Island working

‘Nature knows what it’s doing’

Stewart Fotheringham has spent a career creating a cult classic

Mike Hyde

It takes something special for a 12-hole course, located on a Scottish island, to become world famous and yet that’s the reputation Shiskine Golf and Tennis Club has built among the golfing public.

Shiskine has gained cult status as a seaside links with spectacular views across the Kilbrannan Sound to the Kintyre peninsula and blind shots on almost every hole as the wit of the golfer is pitted directly against the Arran landscape.

Head Greenkeeper Stewart Fotheringham recently celebrated his 40th anniversary tending the links at Shiskine and the years haven’t dulled his passion for the industry and his remote surroundings. Mike Hyde recently spoke to him about life on the island and the maintenance of this wonderful course.

Location: Arran



Mike Hyde: Describe Shiskine for anyone who hasn’t visited.

Stewart Fotheringham: To start with, it’s a 12-hole course, which lots of people find attractive as it’s in the sweet spot if nine holes doesn’t feel enough but 18 is too many. It also gives you the option of going out twice in a day if you want to.

The course fits right on the coast with views all around the area. My favourite view

is out on 4th green, looking out over the Doon Fort to the King’s Caves, where King Robert the Bruce saw the spider, if you know that story.

MH: How did you end up at Shiskine?

SF: I joined straight from school on a six-month Youth Opportunities Scheme in 1982, and I’m still here 40 years on!

That scheme was extended to a year, then into an apprenticeship and I then went to Elmwood for three years.

I took over as head greenkeeper around 1989 or 90 — it’s that long ago I can’t quite remember!

MH: How did you approach the job?

SF: I could see straight away a lot of things needed doing. Shiskine wasn’t really what you’d class as a golf course back then — just a big expanse of grass that was cut short. We just had an old farm tractor and a set of gangs, and wherever we could get to with that machinery, we would cut to fairway height, so there was no definition — it was just wide open.

The first thing I did was introduce a bit of shape to the course with some semi-rough, which the golfers didn’t particularly like at first as they were so used to this wide-open park. However, the way I sold it to them was that this was going to make them better golfers. I told them, ‘You’re going to have to stand on the tee and think about where it’s going to go and not just blast it left or right.’

We also had a terrible thatch problem on the greens, which took several years to reduce through the usual aeration processes — hollow-coring, topdressing and overseeding. They were so soft and spongy back then and they weren’t links-like greens as over-watering and over-feeding had left them



Stewart hasn’t lost any of his enthusiasm for the natural beauty of Shiskine

with too much grass on.

That was a fair old battle to start and then we started trying to reduce the fairway width and bring them in even more, creating more rough areas, which, of course, was frowned upon. We were trying to explain that that’s how it should be, telling them, ‘You want the natural grasses and any wee flowers that should be there to be growing’. It’s been quite a fight to get to how things look today.

MH: What are your ambitions for Shiskine?

SF: I want Shiskine to be known as a natural links with very little water, pesticide or fertiliser use. I want it to be as natural as it can be and we’re getting there, but it has taken a long time.



Regular maintenance needs to be scheduled around a busy golf course

The committee are now completely onboard with the plan and understand it’s the route we have to go down. We want to be seen as chemical free and given that may well all get banned anyway, we might as well be on that road now. It’s right that these things are getting banned as it was too easy just to reach for a chemical solution.

The thing that we have had to put across to members and other golfers is that while the course might not be as pristine as it once was, we don’t have lots of these treatments in our armoury anymore anyway.

So, when you come to play Shiskine you’re coming to play a natural links course, as it should be. For example, there are daisies on fairways as we’ve stopped spraying

them and we’re letting them grow. We’ve created areas of flowers — daisies, buttercups, dog violets, whatever is growing there — which brings bees and butterflies and other wildlife, and that’s where we want to be.

MH: Have you seen more biodiversity on the course as you have changed your approach?

SF: Absolutely — even just something like a tee bank, which used to be cut and strimmed, we’re now tending to leave. For instance, I was up on the 10th tee recently, which I did have to strim, but I left a tuft of dandelions and just let them grow. I went up a few days later and there was a bee buzzing all around them. Ordinarily they would be cut and while that’s only a small example, it shows the impact it has.

MH: What are your responsibilities and how is your team set up?

SF: Our full name is Shiskine Golf and Tennis Club — although we’re actually located in Blackwaterfoot — and I’m responsible for both sports, as well as the bowling green, although the bowling club is separate. We have 12 »

The wildflowers that Stewart and his team have introduced in full bloom



holes of golf, two tennis courts and the bowling green.

We currently have three full time and two part time members of staff — one of whom is my son, who may go on to do his apprenticeship.

MH: How does the 12-hole set up affect your work?

SF: It gets very busy here in summer and if the

greenkeepers are out at 8am, then by the time they reach the 12th, it's usually only about half nine and suddenly the course is full and there will be

a couple of groups on each hole for the rest of the day.

So that's why I'm always in very early in the morning and then sometimes come back in the evening to do a bit more. I'm usually in between 4 or 5am, and then I might work from 7pm for a couple of hours if we must get certain stuff done.

MH: You mentioned your approach to chemicals – does that reflect your general greenkeeping ethos?

SF: That's always the way I worked, even when I first took over. My ethos is, 'let nature do its work, but just give it a little helping hand here and there.' Nature knows what it's doing! We shouldn't be trying



Baked summer fairways

“We now have a guy on the island who does all our machinery maintenance and grinding”

to change nature — we're relative newcomers.

For example, if it's a cold spring and the grass isn't ready, we just wait — there's no point in trying to force things on in March or April when the soil temperature is down.

You must be patient, but the problem is golfers aren't always patient, of course.

It's fair enough for your inland and parkland courses to be bright green and striped up, but a links course isn't meant to look green — you're playing a course in its natural state. There will be rabbit scrapes, and bare areas — that's links golf, and how it was when we started here in 1896.

I've been saying to the committee that there's also a cost saving aspect to this approach, especially with everything going sky high.

Another economy is that if you don't throw fertiliser everywhere, you don't have to cut every day. It's not natural to be cutting in the morning and then find it has grown again by the afternoon. Grass shouldn't be growing like that on greens — it's not like we're trying to produce silage. A farm wants to encourage growth so they get as many cuts as possible, but we're the opposite!

We try to avoid what golfers might call 'the greens getting a bit hairy', and by reducing your cutting, you reduce your fuel costs, machinery wear and tear, and staff time.

MH: What do those savings in staff time allow you to do around the course?

SF: In the years since we stopped trimming and cutting areas that we've now let grow in, it's amazing how much time that frees up for concentrating on improving the areas that are actually in play! We leave tee banks, leave the side of the burns, leave some more rough.

Especially with the price of fuel now, the club can put that money we save into improving other parts of the course.



Stewart's first objective was to introduce definition across the course

MH: Shiskine has a number of members who live away from the club – how do you communicate with them?

SF: There are several members who don't live on the island, but we've always had mainland members on the committee, some even becoming captain. The club was founded by mainlanders from Glasgow as a 'holiday course', although back then they might come over for a whole month. We have around 700 members, and plenty of them are from the mainland.

We use social media a lot — we've a page called Friends and Fans of Shiskine — and I put a lot of pictures on there of what we're doing. When the mainland members come to visit, they do make a point of saying they love seeing those updates.

MH: And you undertake some unconventional activities too?

SF: After one of the big storms, we had a big load of seaweed dumped on the beach, so I took a load of it up and mixed it with sand. That's been breaking down for a couple of years now and we'll use it around the course, either as a divot mix or to spread over weaker areas of the course — it's just one of the quirks of life here.

MH: Does your remote location throw up any practical issues?

SF: We now have a guy on the island who does all our machinery maintenance and grinding, which is very welcome as we used to have to send everything off the island. We would send

something away in January and we might not see it again until March!

With a bit of planning, we can get most of what we need through local hauliers who are off to the mainland every day, although the costs have increased significantly recently. »

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MH: Are you facing any general challenges in greenkeeping?

SF: Like everyone else, we do struggle with recruitment — we can see it everywhere that there are people leaving greenkeeping and it's hard to get anybody in.

And, even with our approach to chemical use, the phasing out of treatments does cause some issues — specifically managing leatherjackets — and that's where members need to be educated to accept there will be imperfect surfaces from time to time.

MH: How do you keep on top of your professional development, especially considering your location?

SF: I get a lot of news through the magazine, as well as through chats on various industry Facebook pages. The amount of conversation that

goes on online is great.

Pre-pandemic I would visit lots of the courses on the Ayrshire coast and we would join up with the BIGGA Scottish section there, who have always been keen to include us.

I'm not a golfer, but whenever I'm away I'll always walk around a golf course — Machrihanish or Dunaverty,

for instance — and I'm always picking up ideas. Some people might believe if you don't play you can't know how to set a golf course up, but I think I've been doing it long enough to know how to set one up.

The other side of it is that a good golfer doesn't always make a good greenkeeper!

MH: What keeps you going at Shiskine?

SF: I only live 10 minutes up the road, but I'm back down here all the time — it's hard to not be here — I get withdrawal symptoms! I keep saying to the young guys that I am an artist and this is our canvas out here. What you see here today, we have created. The shapes, the contours, the bits we've let grow in, the wildflowers — it wasn't always like this.

The light changes throughout the day so it always looks different — just watching the sun coming up, or setting over Kintyre, it's stunning.

I don't think I've lost any of my enthusiasm for the job in the last 40 years. I'm still up at 4.30am in the morning and down here at 9pm at night and I'm always thinking of new ideas and ways to move forward, just wee changes here and there to improve the golf course.

I just love the place.

Native wildflowers, gorse and heather provide stunning colours around the links



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Rob Spaven, Head Greenkeeper, Richmond (Yorks) Golf Club



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The completed practice area. Picture by Andy Crook

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT AT STONEHAM

How Stoneham created a state-of-the-art facility that paid for itself

Laurence Pithie MG

The greenkeeping team at Stoneham was a finalist in this year's BIGGA Awards at Harrogate in the Greenkeeping Project of the Year category.

Led by Course Manager Matt Plested, the team was responsible for producing a first class and modern practice facility to meet the needs of this forward-thinking club. Laurence Pithie MG visited the course and met up with Matt to learn more about this and other projects that have recently been completed.

Location: Southampton



Stoneham is a private members' club, founded in 1908 and designed by Willie Park Jr. The course is located in the northern suburbs of Southampton on the site of a former deer park. The course is a mix of undulating heath, woodland and parkland, offering golfers a delightful but testing challenge. Although many small changes have been made to the course, the original layout has largely remained for over a century.

This popular venue has consistently been listed in the top 100 courses in England, however one feature of the course that fell below the desired standard was the practice area and so in 2018 the club embarked on the largest project in its history, beginning a journey that culminated in the creation of a superb all year-round practice facility. Three years previously, Matt Plested was appointed as Stoneham's course manager, following a seven-year spell in a similar position at Muswell Hill, and his creativity would drive the project forwards.

Planning & approval

Since 1970, the two-hectare practice range was little more than a long, sloping outfield on poorly drained land. Members provided their own golf balls and during the winter months play was limited due to the underlying ground conditions.

As 50% of the club's members were single handicap golfers, the objective of delivering a first-class practice facility was a must, but the question was how could it be done?

Matt said: "The initial plan was put to the members at an EGM in 2017 and involved the importation of material to raise the height of the range, provide a source of revenue and create a good quality practice area.

"However, the quantities involved would leave the club with a range half the width of the original. A new approach was required and this time we asked course architect James Edwards of EDI design to come up with a revised plan

that would enable us to achieve our objective. James presented a bold concept to the club that would require extensive infill over a longer period, but would provide us with a superb facility."

Following a second EGM with members, the project gained unanimous support.

Planning consultants SCR presented the plan to Test Valley Council and within a few months approval was gained and the work could commence in early 2018.

The journey begins

TJ Transport was appointed to source and deliver large quantities of material from three nearby locations. Two were from farmland where housing developments would be created, while material from the other site was gained from roadwork improvements on the adjacent M27.

Pro-Fusion was appointed to carry out all shaping and finishing work, while Matt would act as project manager.

"At first this appeared to be a daunting challenge, especially while still being responsible for managing the course and ensuring that 18 holes remained in play," said Matt. "However, I had tremendous support from club chairman Nick Clayton, who proved to be a tower of strength during the construction phase, and also my deputy, Graham Hastie, who took control of the day-to-day management of the course.



The 17th green, with signs of previous drainage lines

"On site I formed good working relationships with Nigel Wyatt and Simon Bolton from Pro-Fusion and their chief shaper Nathan Jones, while regular site meetings with James Edwards proved invaluable."

Following the construction of a temporary roadway onto the range, all usable topsoil was quickly stripped and stored and tipping began.

Check and control measures were implemented to record the large quantities of material delivered, followed by initial shaping.

Project and design details

A project on this scale will inevitably pose challenges and uncertainties and I asked Matt to highlight some of these.

Matt replied: "Even before we started, we knew we had to retain five large trees. But thankfully we were also granted permission to remove

several others that were less important, which allowed us to extend the width of the practice area.

"It also became clear that we did not have as much topsoil as we expected. Every load we imported was screened and split into three categories: namely base material, rough grade and topsoil. We also acquired a reasonable amount of topsoil from the two donor farm fields and this was used to cover the mounds that were created around the range perimeter."

Once initial shaping was complete, pipe drainage was added at five metre spacings, along with suitable outlets for the removal of excess water.

The entire practice area, now increased to 4ha in size, required the addition of 7,000 tons of 80:20 root-zone. This was supplied by Roffey Brothers and spread to a depth of 200mm.

One of the conditions of planning consent required the planting of up to 40 semi-mature trees on the mounds; these being three to 12 metres in height and at a cost of £100,000.

Once planted, all mounding was hydro-seeded with a 94% fescue mix and heather was added to various areas in order to naturalise the surrounds as best as possible. The latter was supplied by Tillers.

The club installed

temporary irrigation to ensure there would be successful germination and establishment following another dry season. The main outfield area of the range was sown with a rye/fescue mix similar to that used on football pitches and capable of accommodating the expected level of wear from ball collecting 365 days per year.

In regards to the content and layout of the practice range, this is summarised as follows:

- / Construction of 450m² practice putting green to full USGA green specification. This is in addition to external swales and approach area to provide a variety of play options.
- / Addition of one greenside bunker by the practice green, complete with rubber-crumbs lining.
- / Construction of two grass tees on sand-based root-zone and eight external synthetic grass tees.
- / Five synthetic target greens and collars, complete with five artificial bunkers. These were installed by South West Greens.
- / Three 250m² grass target greens at far end of range.
- / Six covered range bays, teaching area, swing studio, Trackman and workshop.
- / Three-year project costing £1.2million, which began in 2018 and opened for play in 2021. >>



The Stoneham greenkeeping team

/ Maintenance including ball collecting requires less than eight man hours each day

Range summary

Almost a year has passed since the practice range was opened by Tour player Richard Bland. The facilities and the quality of playing areas are superb and illustrates what can be achieved.

“If we can do it in a sound financial and sustainable manner, then anyone else can too”, said Matt.

Such is the popularity of the range, it is now the new home for the Hampshire County team and a training centre for England Boys. There has been a significant increase in junior members — both male and female, which is great to see — while there is now a seven-year membership waiting list.

While the main focus of attention has been on the practice range, other significant projects have also been undertaken to meet Stoneham’s quest to be one of the best courses in the south of England.

Projects and ambitions continue

One of the main benefits achieved from the importation of material has been additional revenue. This gave the club the opportunity to bring forward planned improvements that have been self-financing. While great strides have been made in turf quality and course presentation using on-site data, alongside sound agronomical practices, some of the wider issues required greater input. This conundrum is fairly typical at many clubs that wish to elevate their ambitions and improved standards in course conditioning.

The most recent project has been a new Toro irrigation system, which now provides



A synthetic bunker and practice green aiding year-round access

water to greens, tees, surrounds and fairways, as well as the entire practice area and a few walkways. A new glass fibre irrigation tank allows us the storage of 500m³ of water and this is delivered by around 800 sprinkler heads. The Lynx system is controlled via a 55inch touch screen, giving precise visual coverage of the entire system and allowing water to be targeted precisely and efficiently. The work was carried out by MJ Abbott and commissioned by Adrian Mortram.

Another major project has been the renovation of all 59 bunkers, working to an outline design by Ken Moodie. The addition of rubber crumb lining allowed the team to raise the sand line for improved visibility, while ensuring the sand was held in place.

Pro-Fusion completed the shaping and lining while the greenkeeping team completed the turfing and placement of heather around the banks.

“The finished bunkers are now more in harmony within our existing environment,” said Matt.

The other key project has been greens drainage. Two greens were pipe drained ‘in-house’ using conventional methods and techniques and while this worked well, they remained out of play for two months.

Matt said: “We decided to change tactics after reviewing other methods used locally and opted for the Passive Capillary (PC) drainage system, which was installed by DJUKE over a three-year period. Each green was completed and back in play within two days and the results so far have been superb. We found double coring along each drain line, back filling with sand and overseeding, gave us the best results for surface reinstatement.”

Other projects completed recently have included the installation of various paths, some tarmac and others consisting of a rubberised resin, the creation of a 1,500m² wetland area and a new halfway house by the 10th tees.

A significant number of trees have also been removed, alongside heather regeneration. This is part of an ongoing objective to improve the natural landscape of the course.

Matt continued: “I must also add that the success of all these projects wouldn’t be possible without the dedication and commitment from a great team around me.

“The input and support from everyone at the club from the board, the office and the pro shop, as well as from my own team, has been superb.”

Course manager’s changing role

The scale of work that has been completed, along with the quality and attention to detail is quite remarkable. Yes, it requires a hefty investment but in this case, it was largely self-funding.

It also required the backing of the membership and support from the directors of the club who are tasked with ensuring that members’ interests are best served.

Perhaps most importantly, projects on this scale need to be well planned and managed daily.

While most course managers are tasked with providing members and visitors with a well maintained and presented golf course, a growing number of progressive thinking clubs expect more. Compared to a decade or so ago, fewer clubs would embark on major projects and those that did usually expected this to be managed externally. There are now several good examples where clubs like Stoneham have managed these projects from within. For this to be successful, course managers require vision, passion and commitment to see it through to completion. This means coming up with solutions to overcome problems, set-backs and dealing with the unexpected.

Regular communication to the membership is also fundamental and in Matt’s case, a series of forums, video blogs and newsletters were used to keep an open dialogue.

It is these types of modern-day skills that a growing number of clubs expect their course managers to possess.

Continue the conversation:

Matt Pledsted is on Twitter at @plestee. Read the Stoneham greenkeepers’ blog at www.stonehamgolfclub.blogspot.co.uk

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WANT SOME HELP FIGHTING FOR YOUR BUDGET?

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Stop having opinions and start having data at your fingertips

Kevin Fish, Contemporary Club Leadership, with Karl Hansell, BIGGA

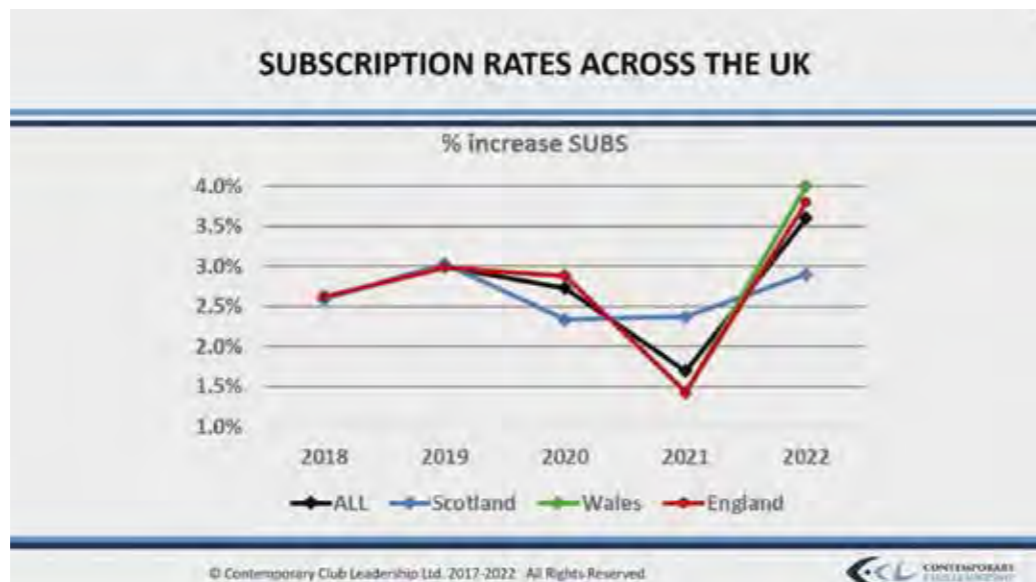
Do you have an opinion on what your course budget should be?

Well, so do your board members. The difference is they get to vote and you don't, and I don't like those odds.

But if you possess data and know how to use it, you'll soon find you begin winning those arguments. I want you to go into every committee room and every conversation with every member with more information than they have. If you do that, you will win nearly every time.

Let's begin by putting the feel good factor around the current golf boom in to some context. Golf membership has been in decline since the Millennium, with membership numbers reduced by around 20%. But then in early 2020 COVID-19 hit and, after that initial uncertain wobble, golf found it actually had a monopoly on fun and for a while it felt like we had won some kind of lockdown lottery.

As of November last year, over half the clubs in the country declared they had a



waiting list. While membership was in decline year-on-year, you could understand a club treasurer saying they were too frightened to put the subs up by more than 2 or 3%. But for a couple of years now, golf has never had it so good and yet those same treasurers only put subscriptions up by an average of 4%.

Clubs were, however, more willing to put the price up to visitors, with visitor fees

increasing on average by around 10%. Clubs knew that demand for their product was high and they experienced two outstanding financial years. Despite this buoyancy, they didn't want to charge members more when they could and that might be about to bite us.

Key takeaway 1: Golf won the lockdown lottery, but when we had the opportunity to capitalise, our treasurers thought a 4% increase on

members' subs would do.

Post COVID-19, if things return to normal for the club industry — as they have in most other industries — we will find that clubs experience a typical membership churn of around 6.4%. This means that every year, for every 100 members you have, at least six will need to be replaced. And that is before we factor in the current economic uncertainties in people's lives, which may see a decline in spending on what

might be called 'non-essential purchases'.

So, firstly, spare a thought for the people at the club who have to keep one eye on a crystal ball and their other eye on the spreadsheet containing the club's overall budget. Then, secondly, be prepared for all eventualities and be ready to justify your slice of the budget.

What really matters to members at a club when they are deciding whether to renew their membership? We asked over 30,000 golf club members what they think is important to them at a golf club. Of the 10 choices we gave them to choose from (beverage, club professional, competition golf, golf course, office support, clubhouse facilities, customer service, food, management of the club, social functions), the golf course came out as number one — the most important thing contributing to a members' enjoyment at a club.

Key takeaway 2: The golf course is the most important factor to members (but spare a



thought for your general manager who must deliver in all 10 areas)

I have a report containing the accounts from over 200 UK golf clubs and I can confirm that more than three quarters of a club's gross profit comes from membership subscriptions. When combined with visitor fees, it could be said that the golf course is responsible for around 94% of the club's gross profit. This doesn't mean

that those other areas aren't important but, financially, they do not contribute to the bottom line the way the golf course does.

Key takeaway 3: 94% of all

the profit that reaches a club is reliant on the golf course you manage.

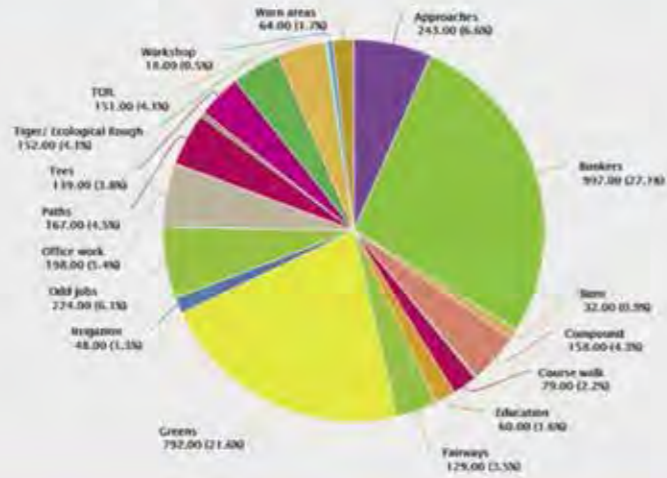
If that's the case, which department spends the most money? The biggest »



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overhead in a golf club is the course. You manage the biggest part of the club's budget and with that power comes great responsibility, so make sure that you earn the respect of your manager and board by being comfortable with the numbers at budget time. You can build confidence throughout the year by having a keen eye on your financial reports and forecasts.

Key takeaway 4: For every £100 a club spends, £47 is typically dedicated to the golf course, so make sure you have it all under control.

Incredible though it may seem, around the globe benchmark reports like ours reveal that the percentage spent on the golf course does not change significantly whether you are running a major championship venue or a nine-holer with an honesty box.

The largest expense within that course budget is payroll and our analysis of that data is also remarkably robust. There will come a time when a club captain says to you, 'I'll tell you what's wrong around here, we've got too many staff'. In that moment, you must be able to look up the data and present the facts, rather than

“ If you possess data and know how to use it, you'll soon find you begin winning those arguments

exactly what the team did with their time. That way, despite financial pressures on the club during COVID-19, there was never an arguable case for 'losing a member of staff' as he could quickly quantify the impact it would have on the product, by showing what would not get done.

If you don't have that data, eventually there will be a captain or course convener who decides you're going to have to let some people go.

I have seen an excellent example of helping the members to better understand the complexities of the course budget at my own club, where the former course manager, Darren McLaughlan, would send out newsletters that said

tasks your staff carry out, because if a recession bites, you are just one greens convener away from having two fewer staff.

Key takeaway 5: We all behave in the same way, but make sure you can explain to your committee what priority

tasks your staff carry out, because if a recession bites, you are just one greens convener away from having two fewer staff.

Golf club budgets can be divided into operating funds and capital funds. Operating funds are the blood flow that once spent is gone forever. These include employee costs, food and beverage supplies, course supplies, heating and lighting and administration expenses.

Capital funds are the skeleton that a successful club is built around and include buildings, asset replacement, refurbishment

costs, course developments and facility enhancements.

There is no single metric that tells us whether a club is in a healthy position. But the level of capital funds that are available is a good indicator as it represents a club's ability to not only fund its operations but also provide enough funds for capital reinvestment that will keep the whole facility attractive for the next generation.

Of the 200 clubs in our benchmark analysis, over a half had capital funding below zero. Those clubs are watching the assets of their club go backwards on their watch and making no provision for the replacement or development of assets.

It is your responsibility to make sure that you have a robust plan for replacing all of your assets. You may well have a machinery replacement plan and this could be financed through leasing arrangements, but what about the other assets you are responsible for? The buildings, office contents (IT) and the stuff below ground that, if you don't remind people about, they will simply forget it needs to be replaced.

Is your club putting enough money away so that when something goes wrong or reaches the end of its natural life, you can fulfil your role and maintain the course to the agreed standard?

Key takeaway 6: Take a professional and pro-active rather than reactive approach to management by taking control of your assets and budgeting accordingly.

If a club makes a healthy profit, it doesn't go down well with members because they don't like to think you are 'sticking it in the bank' at their expense. My suggestion is that clubs don't make a profit — not from operations anyway. Rather, seek to break even on operations, but highlight the importance of also making a permanent annual contribution to the capital

“ One club we work with in Scotland put a 'drainage levy' on subscription costs and now does a hole every year. Everyone thinks it's brilliant because they can see they are contributing to a specific improvement on their course.

investment fund.

Capital items include machinery replacement programmes, irrigation, course maintenance facilities, drainage and your IT equipment and team's welfare facilities.

Why would the owners of a business not want to see continuous investment in their business, particularly when it is one that they personally utilise every week?

By doing so, the members (owners), will start to pay more attention to the investments made by their club and, in our experience, become more likely to want to see this contribution increased because they are the visible beneficiaries of that investment.

One club we work with in Scotland put a 'drainage levy' on subscription costs and now does a hole every year. Everyone thinks it's brilliant because they can see they are contributing to a specific improvement on their course.

Now imagine that was across the board and the members had a genuine interest in the big ticket replacement items under your control.

Here are some basic capital needs assessment facts:

- Depreciation means you must eventually replace what is already there just to maintain existing standards
- Most items increase in cost over time
- Schedule a refurbishment programme, otherwise areas of your operations will be forgotten, including staff welfare facilities

to play our part and educate them to act like owners rather than customers, which will lead to investment in the business that will benefit generations to come.

In summary, I could make a strong case for saying that greenkeeping has led the way when it comes to data-driven decision making on the course and I want you to take that approach in to the boardroom, because the facts are on your side.

Continue the conversation

You can email Kevin at kevin@ccl.services or visit www.ccl.services for more information.

- An idea of aspirational capital investment will keep your club moving forward
- Key takeaway 7: Most treasurers think their fiduciary responsibility is to your members' wallets, so we need**

Kevin was speaking at Continue to Learn 2022. This is just a taste of the incredible learning that is on offer at Continue to Learn each year. Check out the Continue to Learn 2023 brochure that arrived with this month's Greenkeeper International and start building a better future for you and your golf course today. Visit www.btme.org.uk for more



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Is your club in a growth cycle ?

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Belt and braces

By Henry Bechelet, technical manager, ICL

October is a critical time for golf greens in the UK and Ireland as the declining temperatures slow down turf growth, making it more vulnerable to damaging disease attacks.

The period of leaf wetness is also increasing at this time to make conditions more favourable for the development of Microdochium patch disease.

This combination means that disease can strike hard, causing damage that can last for months, so it is vital our disease management plans are up and running in October.

Our management should aim to maintain plant health and create conditions that are less conducive to the development of Microdochium patch. It needs to slow down the rate of development of the disease to limit damage and give us time to act with our controls.

Our preventative fungicide applications are aiming to periodically 'zero out' the disease before it has a chance to develop. Our disease management strategy is to slow it down, zero it out, slow it down and zero it out etc. It is a belt and braces approach.

Our 'slow it down' strategies are to maintain plant health

with appropriate nutrition, minimise the presence of leaf moisture and strategically deploy sulphate of iron occasionally. Our 'zero it out' strategies are to preventatively use the most effective fungicides at appropriate intervals. It is not a complicated plan, but it does need to be fully in place to be successful.

In terms of nutrition during October, we need to be setting our inputs at the right level. We might look to deliver in the region of 2kg of N/ha/week if we are looking to keep things ticking over (or less if we are not). Too little or too much nitrogen may increase the risk of Microdochium patch developing.

The choice of nutrient source (either slow-release or conventional) would be dependent on ground conditions with slow-release sources needing soil temperatures above 8°C. The final choice of fertiliser would also take into account the balance of nutrients (such as the need for P and K) and the level of iron needed. We might be looking at applying a six-week slow-release feed like the SierraformGT K STEP 6-0-27 (applied at 20g/m²) or a 4-5 week

conventional release such as the Greenmaster Pro-Lite Invigorator Plus 4-0-14 +8Fe (applied at 25g/m²), it just depends on the type of response you need.

We need to be careful with the use of iron sulphate through autumn and winter but a granular application at this time of high disease pressure might be prudent.

This may be as a part of a fertiliser or as a stand-alone treatment such as Greenmaster Pro-Lite Pro Iron 0-0-0 +7Fe +3MgO (applied at 25-30g/m²). Liquid iron applications are less punchy and need to be applied at the first signs of disease activity to contribute.

The increasing period of leaf wetness will increase the level of pressure and so dew removal by switching, brushing, rolling, mowing, blowing or any other method is vitally important. The use of dew dispersing surfactants will come later in the autumn as growth tails off more. But if we experience a colder snap of weather, to slow down growth the use of H2Pro DewSmart might become appropriate. Specialist penetrant surfactants such as H2Pro FlowSmart have also

been shown to contribute to an ITM strategy.

We then use fungicides preventatively to periodically zero out the disease. There should still be some active growth in October and so both the FR321 and Instrata Elite will work well to prevent the development of Microdochium patch (and anthracnose). We would always recommend including a turf pigment with all fungicide applications to improve the turf colour and turf quality responses without constantly relying on iron.

In terms of fungicide longevity, we might expect 2-3 weeks' protection at this time and so applications made at monthly intervals might be asking too much of them.

During October, it is important to narrow those fungicide application frequencies accordingly.

October is a critical time for the greens and we need to be employing all our available methods to keep the development of Microdochium patch disease at bay. If we can slow down the rate of development and then preventatively zero it out at the right frequency, we should make a good start to the autumn and winter.

Tune in to the 'On the horizon with Glenn & Henry' podcast if you want to look and think a little further ahead.



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Luffness New Golf Club

Responsive, flexible irrigation delivers uniformity

The traditional links course at Luffness New Golf Club in East Lothian was established in 1894 and the challenges faced by Course Manager David Coull are shared by many of his counterparts across the UK and in Europe.

With a 30-year-old irrigation system, course maintenance and conditions were hampered by frequent leaks and poor pressure. With the east coast of Scotland experiencing dry spring weather over the past decade, it was an ongoing struggle to cope with bone-dry surfaces throughout the season with loss of grass cover starting as early as April. Against all odds, dedicated irrigation technician Douglas Lothian managed to keep the aged system operational.

The process to replace the irrigation system took three years, allowing the club to look at different options and talk to peers at other courses who had carried out similar installations. A new system was required to allow the club to record usage and water volumes as it is increasingly important for courses to closely monitor their energy and water resource data, particularly as they may find themselves having to justify usage when there are water shortages and hosepipe bans.

Irrigation consultant Adrian Mortram was appointed in 2019 to design an irrigation system to accommodate the current course layout, offer more flexible control and allow additional areas to be irrigated.

Adrian explained that developing and finalising the system design was very

“I previously had two people hand watering for six hours, four days a week, so that's 50 to 60 hours a week saved.

much a team effort: "Having completed a GPS survey of the course outlines and mapped sprinkler locations, we began finding out which areas they wanted to focus on. They had done their due diligence so were able to contribute a lot of ideas. We shared examples of system installations and results at other links courses, which informed our discussions and helped us decide priorities together.

"With an old system, there's always the tendency to overwater because you don't have the ability to react quickly and you can't take a risk. With a responsive system linked to a weather station, moisture levels can be set lower and then altered by a small degree when conditions require it. That's far better from an agronomic point of view and you achieve better surface uniformity."

Ocmis were successful in winning the contract as installation contractor with work scheduled to take place between mid-September 2021 and the end of February 2022. Installation included the Rain Bird IC System with the latest CirrusPRO Central Control software, offering multiple watering options and

data capabilities, with Rain Bird GSP providing full back up and support. Rain Bird 752 Series rotors were selected for their Timeless Compatibility, flexibility of arc control, irrigation efficiency and accuracy. Seven hundred 752IC Valve in Head rotors, 120 752B Block rotors and 240 1806 with R-VAN high performance nozzles combine to optimise irrigation control and coverage on greens, tees, fairways, approaches, surrounds and walkways. A new tank is replenished by the existing borehole, allowing for storage of a day's water supply, typical in Scotland.

Dan Whaites, irrigation sales manager at Ocmis, said: "As the winter was relatively dry and free from hard frost, the weather ended up being a positive factor. With minimal disturbance during installation there was very little impact on players.

"Changing the pipe routing to avoid rock behind one tee group on the course was a challenge but with continual communication throughout the installation, the process between the club board, greenkeepers, irrigation designer and the Ocmis team worked seamlessly."

For David Coull the new system is targeting all the right areas and has shortened the irrigation window. He said: "We've amended our irrigation process and saved hours of staff time. I previously had two people hand watering for six hours, four days a week, so that's 50 to 60 hours a week saved. That was a real headache that's gone now and that's been one of the most significant benefits.

"With the new system in place, grass cover hasn't been lost at all this year and we're now seeing grass recover, even with the recent drought. We're having to adapt to the course being dry all year so our approach to irrigation in the future is going to be different — it's going to be flexible, more efficient and more effective."



Scan the QR code to find out more



Picture by Luffness New Golf Club

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HOW TO BOOST TURF HEALTH AND COMBAT DISEASE OUTBREAK

Prior to the turn of the century, we had contrasting seasonal weather fronts.

We generally think of winter as the coldest time of the year and summer as the warmest, with spring and autumn being the transition seasons. However, in recent years we have seen a dramatic change in these weather patterns. This year we experienced one of the warmest and driest springs on record; rainfall has been low and inconsistent and we are experiencing milder winters.

These warmer conditions will, over time, influence the way we manage and maintain our natural turf sports pitches and facilities. This will bring a few new challenges, specifically in the control of weeds, pests and diseases.

Traditionally we would only expect outbreaks of disease in the spring and autumn. However, these warmer temperatures are prolonging the optimum conditions for disease well into winter and early spring.

Trigger conditions for disease outbreaks

Fungi tend to cause disease in turf when the right weather conditions prevail (moist conditions) and the

sward is susceptible to infection. These ideal conditions are generally driven when the surface of the grass plant remains wet for prolonged periods. Typically we see these conditions in spring and autumn, when we tend to have spells of early morning dew forming on the playing surface.

Most fungi grow well and are most active during periods when air temperatures range between 5–35°C.

Disease identification

Identifying a turfgrass disease and the true nature of the problem is the first step in disease management. Disease is only one cause of turf loss and the control methods associated with diseases do nothing to alleviate damage from other causes, such as maintenance practices, wear or plant stress.

Early identification of the disease is essential for good disease management.

However, the best form of management is preventive, cultural turf maintenance methods that limit the environmental factors that these diseases require for development. Implementing a robust maintenance regime that involves keeping the

plant healthy and regularly removing dew when present will help prevent persistent disease attacks.

Disease symptoms are varied, ranging from small, circular, tan-coloured lesions surrounded by brown or purple borders to yellow, red or tan blotches. Disease symptoms and their appearance will also vary depending on the type of disease, the severity of the attack and the stage of the disease.

Identification of a disease can sometimes be difficult in the early stages. It's often only possible to recognise the type of disease when the disease produces structures such as spores, mushrooms or mycelium (small, thread-like filaments produced by fungi) that can be seen without the aid of a microscope.

It's important to remember that pathogenic fungi can survive in a dormant state in plant debris and soil, remaining there until favourable conditions arrive again to activate another disease outbreak.

Understanding this and implementing practices that can break up the disease cycle will help control the opportunities for disease development and outbreak.

Disease control

Over the years, greenkeepers have developed a number of activities and methods of controlling the outbreak of turf grass diseases.

These have been focused on controlling one or any number of the three dominant catalysts that promote turf grass diseases: plant host, plant pathogen and the environment. Understanding

the disease triangle and the relationship between the three factors is crucial to maintain and promote healthy turf.

Cultural methods can help reduce disease pressure.

Methods such as removing thatch (which harbours pathogens) by verti-cutting and end-of-season renovations, as well as checking mower blades are sharp for a precise cut of the leaf blade, will reduce the potential for disease.

Dew removal during the spring and autumn months will help reduce the incidence of diseases by keeping the leaf blades dry. This is usually done by daily brushing or switching with a cane to remove the dew.

Chemical controls

Over the last few years, the industry has lost a number of chemical active ingredients and products that in the past we heavily relied on to help manage and control turfgrass diseases.

However, greenkeepers still have a few available. Dedicate is a contact and systemic fungicide for use in managed amenity turf that can be used at any time of the year and has been one of Bayer's key products in controlling the turf diseases microdochium patch, red thread, anthracnose, dollar spot, leaf spot and rust.

Working in partnership with



Putting the WOW (water, oxygen and warmth) into seed sowing

There are many reasons why renovation of greens or fairways may be undertaken.

These include a desire to improve playing surfaces by addressing existing problems such as poor drainage or surface trueness, improve the surfaces' ability to respond to environmental limitations, for example by using more modern cultivars adapted to the conditions in a particular location, or to repair any damage to the playing surface caused by maintenance activities, play or stressful growing conditions.

In highly managed environments like golf courses the practices used to provide good quality playing surfaces can already antagonise the health of the plant. This summer many areas of the UK have experienced drought conditions alongside high light and heat levels, significantly increasing the number of stressors on plant growth.

While cool season grass plants are able to survive periods of high temperature and low moisture through a process of summer dormancy, the plants will be weakened

following this experience and some may not survive. Renovations may, therefore, be even more important for some this year in order to rectify some of the damage caused by the stressful growing conditions experienced.

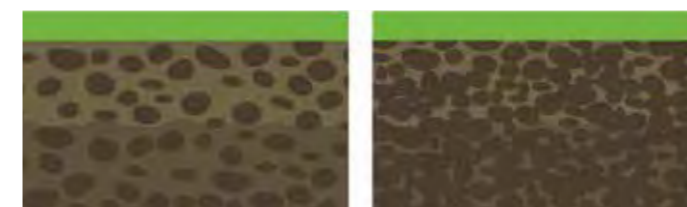
With all this in mind, sowing and overseeding are often essential aspects of renovation, so it is important to understand the factors that lead to successful germination and establishment.

Water

If kept in suitable conditions, dormant seeds can remain viable for many years. In fact, one experiment has found that some viability can be retained for more than 100 years (Telewski & Zeevaert, 2002). Water is needed to break seed dormancy and initiate germination. The initial phases see the seeds begin to swell and soften, followed by the emergence of tiny root hairs from the seed.

Water continues to be a key requirement, preventing the emerging seedling from drying out before it can

A well aerated soil (left) has many more spaces for holding both water and air in comparison to a compacted soil (right).



Optimum sowing depth and temperature range for different grass species

Species	Sowing depth (mm)	Air temp. range (°C)
Perennial ryegrass	12-15	6-25
Red fescue	4-5	10-25
Browntop bent	1-2	12-30

connect with moisture in the soil and become established.

During the early autumn months there is a high chance of sufficient rainfall to prevent emerging seedlings from drying out and enabling the young grass plant to build a strong root system while the temperature remains mild.

Moist conditions are also experienced in the spring months, making this an alternative option for sowing seed. However, in the spring we are heading more quickly towards increasing dryness, leaving the plants with less time to build up resilient root systems that will enable the plant to survive through dry conditions and other environmental challenges.

Oxygen

The energy for seeds to germinate comes from the respiration process in which oxygen from the air reacts with the seeds stored sugar reserves to release energy, enabling cells to divide and grow. The amount of oxygen held in the pore spaces of a soil can be reduced if it is waterlogged, compacted or has a hard surface. For this reason, good soil preparation is essential. For example, aeration reduces compaction and improves drainage and scarification reduces layers of thatch that can build up.

Correct sowing depth also helps ensure the seedlings have enough energy for the initial establishment phase before leaf growth enables the plants to begin converting energy from sunlight. To

further assist this process, the use of a plant growth regulator restricts growth of existing turf to give new seedlings a better chance of competing for available light.

Warmth

Warmer soil temperatures increase the speed of enzyme reactions and processes such as cell division leading to faster germination and establishment. Each grass species has a slightly different range of preferred temperatures for germination.

Soils have a higher heat capacity than air, particularly when moist due to the even greater heat capacity of water. This means that soils can act like a storage radiator, taking time to build up heat initially but over time storing the residual solar energy. As a result, the soil will be much cooler in the spring than in the autumn, even if air temperatures are similar, because there has not been sufficient time to build up residual heat. Germination therefore tends to be slower in the spring than later in the year.

Whatever the impacts of this season's weather, maintenance, and play on your surfaces, take time to consider your aims before renovating and always think about the requirements of establishing seeds because they can only germinate once.

Working in partnership with



A GRASS FOR ALL SEASONS

Understanding tetraploid technology

Jayne Leyland, Origin Amenity Solutions

A new generation of amenity tetraploid perennial ryegrasses offer exceptional qualities for golf course tees and the general area. With benefits such as cold temperature growth, fast recovery, high root mass and superior stress tolerance, how and why are they so exceptional?

Ploidy

This refers to the number of complete sets of chromosomes within the nucleus of each plant cell. Perennial ryegrasses bred for amenity use were all historically diploids, meaning two paired sets of chromosomes within each cell.

Tetraploids have four paired sets of chromosomes, such as chloroplast, and this physiological doubling of chromosomes explains how tetraploids deliver enhanced performance benefits.

Energised

Increased cellular chloroplast benefits the plant by boosting chlorophyll production for energy absorption and processing. The outcome is a high energy, robust, hard-wearing, healthier plant with improved stress tolerance and recovery capability, even in cooler temperatures.

Robust development

A tetraploid cultivar begins its journey as seed selected from an amenity diploid cultivar with desirable characteristics. A few grammes is treated with a natural plant hormone (colchicine), which doubles the chromosomes. The resultant tetraploids produce larger, high-energy seeds from which plants are grown and multiplied in isolation. It may take several generations of tetraploid offspring to yield stable, viable seed for use in field testing. Potential new cultivars are pushed to the limit and vital characteristics such as growth habit, wear, disease and drought tolerance, mowing height and visual merit are assessed. Only one or two cultivars from early selections make it through this rigorous process and those successful candidates must conform to DUS protocols, that being distinct, uniform



and stable. Ongoing research into the benefits of tetraploids continues at Origin Amenity Solutions Research Centre.

In the dark

Double chloroplast also increases tetraploids' capability to harness relatively more light, beneficial where light quality is poor, such as overcast conditions, shorter day length and in shade where temperatures are relatively cooler. Origin Amenity Solutions breeding partner Top Green routinely assesses all tetraploid cultivars in a shade and wear trial under reduced light levels at the research station in France. On golf courses, R25CRT with both tetraploid and creeping ryegrasses is proven on shaded tees.

Cool performers

Tetraploids germinate and establish faster than diploid ryes, even in cold soil temperatures from just 4°C. High energy seed, superior winter wear and robust re-growth helps maintain grass cover on tees, pinch points on fairways and grass walkways throughout the challenging winter season with regular divotting. The ultimate cold mix is R314 Rye, a blend of amenity tetraploid and annual ryegrasses for use during the winter to 'keep it covered'.

Fast establishment is a major benefit not only during the winter months but any time of year. Under intense wear pressure, the speed of emergence and high root mass helps restore a surface in the shortest possible time, making 4Tetra, R140 and Super Root perfect options for divotting, repairs and renovation throughout year.

Hot stuff

High root mass and deep rooting means tetraploids deliver greater drought tolerance and stability. Vital for heat survival, they are the first and fastest to recover from a prolonged period of heat and drought stress, an ideal choice for free-draining soils and sites exposed to full sun or without irrigation. For example, R6CRT includes tetraploid rye plus hard and creeping red fescues to produce a dense, hard-wearing sward with great recovery from heat and drought.

Toughen up

High disease pressure can be devastating to the performance and visual qualities of the playing surface.

Selecting cultivars with high disease tolerance is an important part of an integrated management approach. While selected cultivars can provide degrees of tolerance but not resistance, the official testing programme for the GEVES European Turf Testing Programme highlights great tolerance in tetraploids to common turf diseases such as microdochium patch, red thread and rust diseases.

Go-to choice

While a relatively recent introduction, the use of tetraploids for construction, renovation and repair of grass surfaces has rocketed. Their dramatic rise is down to proven performance and flexibility for wide-ranging applications right throughout the year. Blended with diploid ryegrasses or mixed with fescues they are reliable performers that always deliver.

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ADVERTORIAL Cooper Pegler | Padded straps on Cooper Pegler Classic and Series 2000 knapsacks heighten comfort and cut body stress



Professional knapsack specialists Cooper Pegler are introducing padded straps to its Classic and Series 2000 models to heighten operator comfort and limit body strain during use.

Many of the go-to knapsack models across the popular brand include ergonomically tailored harnesses to channel loading forces in a way that limits stresses on the body.

The latest advance from manufacturer Hozelock-Exel, which follows extensive trialling, further enhances operator safety and protection to include cushioned strapping on Cooper Pegler's Classic and Series 2000 knapsack models.

"This is a global initiative," says Allan Wainwright, Hozelock-Exel's Sales Manager, "which aims to make our knapsack brands fully inclusive for all spray operatives."

The cushioned strapping is introduced at a time when more sports venues and amenity sites are reducing the quantity of treatment liquids they apply in a bid to improve their green credentials.

Golf course greens teams report they are using knapsacks increasingly for spot-spray weed control, a practice that cuts the quantity of liquid applied significantly. Therefore, more knapsack hand spraying raises the importance of

operator comfort to new levels.

"Those who spend a full day knapsack spraying will find the new cushioned straps more comfortable," Allan adds, "reducing the stresses and strains possible on the body during extensive sessions in the field."

The strapping is understood to be available on new knapsacks from March 2023 but models already in use can be retrofitted with the accessory once launched.

Visitors to SALTEX 2022 will be able try out knapsacks fitted with the cushioned straps on the Hozelock-Exel stand, F125.

Continue the conversation

Continue the conversation by connecting with Cooper Pegler at cooper-pegler.com or [@CooperPegler](https://twitter.com/CooperPegler) [@cooperpegleruk](https://www.instagram.com/cooperpegleruk) [@cooperpegler](https://www.facebook.com/cooperpegler)



Article brought to you by



INDUSTRY NEWS

Association welcomes Aitkens

BIGGA is proud to welcome Aitkens as the association's latest Supporter and Regional Patron.

A four-generation family business established as Richard Aitken (Seedsman) in 1963, Aitkens is a leading supplier to the sportsturf and landscaping industry with depots in Glasgow and Yorkshire.

Commercial Director Richard Aitken (Jnr) said: "We are looking forward to increasing our involvement with the Association, as a BIGGA Supporter and Regional Patron. We know how important education and personal development is to the industry and we are very

pleased to be playing our part in helping BIGGA with these values."

Aitkens supplies products such as fertiliser, seed, pesticides, course furniture, sands and aggregates to course managers throughout the UK.

The company's portfolio includes over 900 products and Aitkens is also a main distributor for companies such as Terralift, ICL, Vitax, DLF, Barclays and Aquatrols.

The funding BIGGA receives from commercial partners and supporters such as Aitkens goes a long way to underpinning the association's membership benefits. Continuing Professional



Aitkens has become a BIGGA Supporter and Regional Partner

Development programme and educational activity. It is therefore vital to the ongoing prosperity of the association and its members.

For more information head to the BIGGA website.

Anderton new technical rep'

Aitkens has announced the appointment of Marc Anderton as its new technical representative.

Marc has spent 26 years greenkeeping in Wales, with the last six spent as course manager at St Mellons in Cardiff. He was previously at Celtic Manor and Newport.

Commercial Director Richard Aitken said: "We are pleased Marc has joined our team as he has a great deal of experience in using many of the products that we supply and will be able to use that experience in his new role."

In his role, Marc will cover South Wales, visiting golf clubs, schools and sports clubs.

Canterbury unveils refurb

A £200,000 investment at Canterbury Golf Club has been unveiled, with the ambition of guaranteeing year-round playability.

Previously, the 11th, 12th and 13th holes on the Harry Colt layout were frequently closed during winter and a survey completed by members indicated dissatisfaction at the courses' poor drainage.

General Manager Roger Hyder said: "It's fantastic to have the members happy and acknowledging the difference the work has made already."

The first phase of work began in August 2021, with the second phase completed in August this year. During 2022, 300 tons of sand and 400 tons of gravel were poured onto the course, while 400m of perforated pipe work was also laid.

Kubota parts centre



Kubota has opened a new European Parts Centre to strengthen its global parts supply chain network.

Located in Thionville in France, the warehouse is built as a dedicated parts distribution hub primarily to supply dealers and distributors across Europe and the UK, but with the ability to also support key regions such as the US and Japan.

"The development of this extensive parts centre will provide greater access and availability to further support our existing regional parts

supply operation in the UK," explained Simon Chadbone, Kubota (UK's) business development manager for parts. "Having a European Parts Centre will greatly benefit our dealer and distributor network by providing a more timely and cost-effective solution for the supply of original parts, which in turn will reduce the impact of downtime for customers."

Representing a €15m investment, the centre covers a footprint of 20,000 square metres and employs around 90 staff.

Wales funding for golf clubs

Golf clubs in Wales that are looking for funding to carry out sustainability projects can apply for an accelerator grant from Wales Golf.

Up to £5,000 is available to clubs to support projects that positively contribute towards fostering nature, community engagement, taking climate action and reducing emissions.

Hannah Mcallister, chief executive officer at Wales Golf, said: "The high number of applications we received for the Kickstarter Fund demonstrates a clear need and appetite from Welsh golf clubs to start embedding sustainable golf projects within the strategies adopted by clubs."

Funding is made available by the Welsh Government.

For more information, visit www.walesgolf.org

Royal Mid-Surrey awarded GEO Certified status

Royal Mid-Surrey has achieved GEO Certified recognition for its commitment to achieving a credible standard for sustainable golf.

The Thames-side 36-hole venue, under the stewardship of Gavin Kinsella MG and through sustainability lead Claire Silver, has undertaken an extensive list of measures to enhance its environmental and sustainability credentials.

Gavin said: "The commitment shown by our greenkeeping staff in embracing this challenging initiative has been inspiring and it's great that their dedication and hard work for environmental sustainability across both courses and around the club has now been recognised with this award."

The various initiatives undertaken by the club include the enlarging of habitats available to wildlife



Derek Downie

by increasing areas of eco rough and linking areas around the courses to create wildlife corridors. The team has also retained standing deadwood and formed log piles from fallen trees to provide habitat for invertebrates, while also conserving resources such as water and energy. The club has appointed a dedicated irrigation technician to conduct a full audit of the

original system and is replacing sprinkler heads around tees to reduce leaks.

GEO accredited verifier Tony Hanson said: "Royal Mid-Surrey demonstrates a range of projects, existing and new, which highlight their commitment to sustainability."

"Reducing the close mown amenity grass alone has reduced annual operational costs by around £10,000 and enhanced biodiversity."

John Deere's 30 years of talent training

John Deere is marking the 30th anniversary of its apprenticeship programme with an open day to recruit the next generation of technicians to work across its agriculture, turf and parts business.

Well in excess of 1,000 apprentices have qualified since 1992 and on 6 October John Deere and the scheme's training provider, ProVQ, will open the doors of its new training centre in Upper Saxondale, Nottinghamshire, where candidates will be offered guided tours and practical demonstrations.

John Deere's apprenticeship programme sees technicians work within the company's dealer network as a paid employee while completing a multi-year training course.

Bernhard appoints Peter Stewart



Peter Stewart

Bernhard and Company has appointed Peter Stewart as business development manager for Asia.

Peter has more than two decades' experience in greenkeeping, having worked at St Andrews Links, TPC Sawgrass, Royal Melbourne and Dubai's Emirates Golf Club. He has also worked in business development with SubAir Systems.

SALTEX Learning Live



The GMA has released details of its Learning LIVE schedule at SALTEX

The Grounds Management Association has revealed its seminar lineup as part of SALTEX 2022 Learning LIVE.

The education schedule has been extended to over 30 sessions that are free to attend across the two days of the show on 2-3 November and contribute to CPD accreditation. More information can be found at saltex.org.uk/learning-live

Alnwick Castle



A new clubhouse at Alnwick Castle is one of several improvements made possible by a £1.5m investment from Northumberland Estates.

The renovation and refurbishment plans, which started in September 2021, include a new clubhouse, changing block facilities and new dedicated access. A new greenkeepers store and compound have also been constructed at the club.

General Manager Andy Hill said: "The completion of building works and improvements at Alnwick

Castle mark the latest milestone in the club's history and will support our plans to prioritise participation and accessibility, host new events and provide the best experience for our visitors."

The design team of Richardson Surveying and Wardell Armstrong alongside building contractors DP Builders and KW Purvis have completed the project using local suppliers as far as possible. The clubhouse was opened on 1 September by His Grace the Duke of Northumberland.

1982



HISTORY OF GREENKEEPERS' ASSOCIATIONS

In October 1982 the first lady member of the British Golf Greenkeepers Association (BGGGA) was accepted.

Tracy Ruane (below) was a trainee at Gotts Park Golf Club and later became head greenkeeper at Oulton Hall in 1993.

In 1982 the first ever Greenkeeper Management course was run by Elmwood College (right). The week-long course was held at Elmwood College in February. This took place after much hard work by Walter Woods who, as chairman of the College Liaison Committee put in a lot of time and effort on behalf of the Scottish & International Golf



First ever week-long greenkeeping management course at Elmwood College in 1982

Greenkeepers Association.

The course was a success, although the tutors were still geared towards horticultural thinking and it would take a few years for this to be fixed.

In March, following a joint effort by SIGGA and Elmwood, 170 people attended a greenkeeping seminar. This was the start of future greenkeeping courses and seminars.

At the AGM in that year, membership of the BGGGA was announced as 1,378 greenkeeper members and 238 Class E members, making a total of 1,616.

Membership was growing but not all members were happy, especially in the south of the country where the feeling was that the association was oriented to the north.

See next month's edition for more association activities from 1982.



Tracy Ruane in 1993

TEE THE ANSWERS BREAK

Number Crossword

4	1	7		7		6	7	1
3		1	9	7	8	4		3
4	8		4	5	8		4	9
	9	6		1		7	4	
8	4	7	3		7	6	8	0
	4	2		2		3	4	
4	4		8	0	9		8	4
8		9	9	8	7	6		7
1	0	2		5		1	2	0

Box Clever

D

Tiles

I	M	P		
C	A	U	S	E
E	N	T	E	R
		T	A	R

Read Elliot Small's History of Greenkeepers' Associations on the BIGGA website



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