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# Greenkeeper

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International



# THE WINNERS ARE...

We catch up with the teams at Abridge and Strathaven, winners of the BIGGA Awards 2023

## Andy Kenworthy

He's taught the last three Toro Student Greenkeepers of the Year – we ask what is the Myerscough tutor's secret?

## Bob Moffat tribute

Born in the greenkeeper's house at Lanark, Bob spent a career in service to the education of greenkeepers

## Tips to save money

BIGGA and golf's other leading bodies have issued advice on saving money around the golf club

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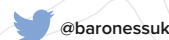
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The magazine for BIGGA members

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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March's image was taken by Craig Sinclair of Camberley Heath and was the winner of the Wildlife category in the BIGGA Photographic Competition

# WELCOME

BTME is much more than a trade show for BIGGA, though of course the exhibition is the driving force and we are grateful to the more than 125 exhibitors who supported the event this year.

BTME also provides us with the opportunity to do various other important things; uppermost is the world class education programme. Continue to Learn, which this year saw our largest ever number of education hours delivered. In my view it is the single most impactful annual event on the way the UK golf industry is run.

Key though, particularly in more recent years, is the benefit of our members and other stakeholders in our industry getting together for a few days. We are able to discuss key issues, such as the recruitment and retention of staff, and also celebrate the



Chief Executive Jim Croxton

incredible achievements of members around the Association.

I'm delighted we are able to share a couple of those stories in this magazine. The teams at both Abridge and Strathaven went far above and beyond in their efforts during 2022 and it is a huge benefit for our industry when we get to celebrate achievements like this, in addition to the usual tales of preparation for major championships.

Just a week after BTME, the

10 BIGGA Delegates to the GCSAA event in Orlando gathered at Gatwick. Huge thanks to Bernhard and Company for supporting this career-enhancing initiative.

The GCSAA event had a very similar vibe to BTME, with strong attendance, people thrilled to be face-to-face and exhibitors enjoying the commercial element. It seems Association events are in a very strong place, which is crucial to our continued work.

The delegates were an absolute credit to BIGGA, Bernhard and their employers.

It is one of the great privileges of my job to spend time with BIGGA members during opportunities like this.

There are significant challenges facing our industry but I know BIGGA members have the determination, talent and knowledge to ensure we navigate those successfully.

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# INSIDE THIS ISSUE

## Editor's Notes

Greenkeeper International editor, Karl Hansell

### Recognition of a job well done comes in many forms.

Perhaps you've been nominated for a BIGGA Award or, better yet, you've won one. We covered this year's Outstanding Contribution Award, David Golding, fairly comprehensively last month, so it was great to catch up with the winners of the other categories for this magazine. Awards like these aren't just about those who are standing up on stage. The publicity they generate helps raise awareness of the outstanding work the entire greenkeeping industry is doing and they further our ambitions to improve working standards for all. That's worth considering when you're looking at your completed winter projects this month and wondering whether to nominate your team (see pages 34-43 for details).

Recognition can also come individually. It takes a significant investment in yourself to be selected for the BIGGA Delegation with Bernhard and Company and, to paraphrase one of the delegates, it shows you're made of the 'right stuff'. None of the delegates were 'nepo babies', given an unfair leg up, and all have achieved what they have through hard work and a passion for this industry. Their stories are also featured in this magazine and online, so have a read, be inspired and seek out your own recognition.

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## THE PEOPLE BEHIND YOUR MAGAZINE



### Andy Kenworthy

When the third consecutive student who was taught by Andy won Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year, we knew we

had to speak to him and find out the Myerscough College tutor's secret.



### Geoff Smith

It's impressive enough that Abridge won a BIGGA Award at BTME 2023, but their head greenkeeper Geoff has a fantastic story

to tell in his own right, charting his journey from the City of London to greenkeeping.



### Stephen Hunter

We learned from his nomination for the Greenkeeping Project Award that Stephen has an extraordinary mind for

creativity and it was great to discover more about recent developments at Strathaven.



### Laurence Pithie MG

There are many who collaborated to develop education opportunities for greenkeepers and this month Laurence

remembers one of the more reserved contributors, Bob Moffat, latterly of Yeovil

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# MEET THE TRIPLE CROWN TUTOR

What is the secret behind this Myerscough tutor's student awards success?

Karl Hansell, BIGGA

Each of the last three winners of the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award, Jason Norwood, Matt Milligan and James Gaskell, all share something in common.

True, they all lived in North Yorkshire and two were employed at Rudding Park in Harrogate at the time of their awards success, working under the stewardship of Richard Hollingworth.

But what united them all was the tutelage of Andy Kenworthy, who won Myerscough College's Teacher of the Year award in December 2022 and who is rapidly gaining a reputation as one of the UK's leading turf management educators.

Born in Bradford, Andy started his career in horticulture as a 16-year-old. He worked for a housing association for 20 years but realised his career had stagnated and he would need to gain

qualifications if he was to progress. Achieving his NVQs, he was invited to become an assessor and 15 years ago became a tutor with Myerscough College.

Today, Andy's working day begins at 6am, when he logs onto the online platform that enables him to view the portfolio of the students he is visiting that day. He looks at the weather and considers what stage in their development the students are at. With an idea of some activities in mind, he sets off around 7.30am to visit learners at their golf clubs, usually visiting two or three each day.

With three successive Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year winners in a row, Andy's obviously doing something right and with nominations open for the 2023 edition of the awards until the end of March, we caught up with Andy to discover what makes an award-winning student greenkeeper.

Andy Kenworthy (left) and Jason Norwood

**GI: Congratulations on having three winners of the Toro Student Greenkeeper Awards. How did you react when James, the latest, was announced as the winner?**

**AK:** It's been fantastic and I still can't take it in that it's been three on the bounce.

I originally got these guys together when they started their Level 2. Matt was at Oakdale in Harrogate, Jason was at Rudding Park and James was at Ripon City. Once I had introduced them, they started talking and meeting up

and just chatting. For them all to reach the height of being a Toro Student of the Year is absolutely fantastic.

**GI: When did you realise these three students were a bit special?**

**AK:** You can tell because they're keen and really interested in the industry and want to learn more. They've got a real thirst for knowledge and they're always looking for that bit extra. They're going to go on and do great things with their lives and their careers.



When Matt, Jason and James were all students, Andy got them together and provided learning opportunities

**“** If you're aiming high, even if you don't quite achieve it, you're never going to be far away.

**GI: They're three very different lads though, aren't they?**

**AK:** They're very different, but the key thing is they all have a passion for the industry, although they may approach it in slightly different ways. I've tried to help them understand that there is not one direct line and that you can take bits from over here and over there and see what works best for you in your environment.

Jason was a mature learner and he came into it at a time when he's thinking about his family and his career. He had a clear goal that he wanted to work on a links. He found his passion in greenkeeping, but why he picked a links nine hours away [Reay GC on the north coast of Scotland], I'll never know!

But he loves it and he rang me yesterday for a catch up.

He told me I had set him on the right path and that made me feel really good, that he appreciated how I'd helped him.

I tried to get James to apply for the awards when he was doing his Level 2 and he kept saying to me 'I'll do it', but really he didn't feel ready.

That's fair enough, there's nothing wrong with that.

When he progressed onto his Level 3, he felt ready and he's made the right decision.

**GI: Where does the passion come from in these guys?**

**AK:** I think it comes from the team around them. You look at this whole industry and people that come to



James, Jason and Matt during their first study visit at Oakdale

events like BTME and the one thing that sets them apart is they've got a real passion for what they do.

Look at what we went through with the pandemic, when most people weren't allowed to go to work but you had greenkeepers turning up to look after their greens throughout. These people turn up day after day at 6 o'clock in the morning in all weathers to do what they do and that passion just builds throughout the whole team.

You don't want to work outdoors in all kinds of weather

unless you're a certain type of person; I've always loved it and that's another reason I love this job. I'm not office based or stuck in a classroom, I'm out on site with them and I get enthusiastic about it when I can take them out on the golf course.

**GI: What's the relationship you have with your students?**

**AK:** It's friendly and open. I try to make sure I'm there to always support them because although I may only see them every six weeks, they can all >>

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Andy, Reesink UK's David Cole, Matt and Rudding Park's Richard Hollingworth celebrating Matt's win in 2021

get in contact. If they are looking for support then I'm happy to give them it.

**GI: How have you seen the learning process evolve over the last 15 years?**

**AK:** I think students get a lot more engaged today. It's not like it was when I first did my qualifications, when you were given a portfolio and left to your own devices to get that done. There are much stricter timetables to fulfil now and an online portfolio means you have got more direct contact.

I used to do an assignment and if it needed some work, I wouldn't see my tutor again for another six weeks. Progress could be quite slow, whereas now it can be instant.

Sometimes a learner will send me some work and I'll give them feedback and they can now resubmit it within a couple of hours.

**GI: What makes you consider nominating a student for the awards?**

**AK:** It's about the passion and enthusiasm to learn. They must also have the confidence in their own abilities that they want to put themselves forwards. I've had some really good ones in the past who I've

wanted to nominate but they haven't wanted to because they were nervous about the public speaking side of it.

But I open it up to everybody and say if you're interested in doing it, I'll support you. It then comes down to them and how they perform in the interviews.

**GI: What do you like about the Toro Student Greenkeeper Awards?**

**AK:** It's renowned throughout the whole industry. Even just getting to the finals is a big achievement and you'll see people putting 'Toro Student Greenkeeper finalist' on their CVs for years afterwards. It shows they're in the top echelon of students in the industry.

**GI: It can't be a coincidence that you've had three winners in a row, so what is the key to your success?**

**AK:** The one thing I do is make sure they are well prepared. I put them in touch with previous finalists to find out whatever information they can about the process. By talking to each other, they are already planning for what they might face in the interviews.

The employers can become

really involved, too. The two lads at Rudding Park did presentations in front of the directors and heads of department in the hotel. That really set them apart, so that when they went and did it at the finals, it was second nature.

Last year, James was a little more worried about it because he's a quiet lad anyway. The other two had done something special that was quite individual, whereas he went with a straightforward presentation. He said to me, 'this is what you get with me', but he still did what he needed to do.

**GI: What is it about your teaching that is special?**

**AK:** The honest answer is I have absolutely no idea. I try to push them to think a little bit more. It's not just about meeting a target, we try to go

for the next step and look a little bit higher. If you're aiming high, even if you don't quite achieve it, you're never going to be far away.

**GI: How does Myerscough College help you achieve this success?**

**AK:** Myerscough always set the highest standards with everything they do.

Sometimes it's about new ways of thinking, but they set that bar high and they're always looking to be seen as the standard bearers of education.

**GI: What are your ambitions for your students?**

**AK:** I want to see them excel in whatever they want to do. I want to see them go on to be course managers and be the next generation coming through. That doesn't necessarily mean going on to the biggest clubs in the country, but just that wherever they go they are progressing and getting the best out of their abilities.

It all stems back to when I was a landscaper, working with people who were very negative and there was no progression. I got stuck for years until I realised I needed to do something different to get out of it. I don't want anyone else to get stuck in that situation, so I'm always pushing them to progress.

**Continue the conversation**

Andy is on Twitter at @amkenworthy

**Nominations are open for the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards until the end of the month.**

Being part of the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards enables ambitious BIGGA members to meet and compete with the best greenkeeping students in the UK.

The finals of the awards will take place this September at Carden Park Golf Resort in Cheshire.

For more information and to submit your nomination, visit the BIGGA website



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# ACROSS THE BOARD

Lucy Sellick | Head Greenkeeper | Wenvoe Castle Golf Club | South West & South Wales

At Wenvoe Castle we're punching holes everywhere as we get our surfaces ready for the golfing season's start.

November to January this winter saw 547mm of rain fall onto the course, which amounted to over half of our annual rainfall. The course was soup for a long period and although we never use winter greens, we did move flags to the aprons to allow golfers a game in the awful weather.

Hearing about the experiences of the BIGGA Delegation with Bernhard and Company this year takes me back to when I took part in the trip in 2020. I remember standing with a group of American superintendents and they were in awe at what British greenkeepers achieve with the staffing levels and resources we have available to us. They're used to applying preventative sprays once a month, not twice a year, so it really showed just how well British greenkeepers do.

For the delegates who have just come back from America, I would say now it is time to put into practice those skills that you learned. It's not just one trip, it's about starting a lifelong commitment to be better. That includes maintaining the friendships that you made out there, both American and among your fellow delegates. Try to keep



“It seems like greenkeepers are happy to talk about what needs to happen, but I would say to those ‘sit at the table rather than shout from afar’.

those forms of communication open and maintain that valuable network.

At BTME I was humbled to receive the Women In Golf Trailblazer Award that I was given in December. To receive something like this felt strange, as my career has been spent doing something I have loved my entire life.

I am aware that myself and the other leading women in greenkeeping are setting an example for those coming behind. We have got to have golf clubs accepting women into these roles and I think my

biggest responsibility has always been to show golf clubs that we can do the work.

They use the term 'grass ceiling' in America and I know that I've crashed through a few of those in my time.

Once was when I joined the BIGGA National Board, becoming the first female member to do so. I am enjoying the experience and I believe more people should put their hands up and volunteer for positions.

In the South West & South Wales we are desperate for regional representatives. It

seems like greenkeepers are happy to talk about what needs to happen but I would say to those “sit at the table rather than shout from afar”.

Often, you can't see much of what is happening behind the scenes unless you get involved and it's an effective means of having a positive impact on the association.

We all know there are problems in the industry, but we aren't going to solve things unless we work together.

One of the big things I wanted to do when I came onto the board was raise awareness of greenkeeper welfare across the wider golfing public. We're responsible for golf's biggest asset and yet there are still people eating their dinner off machinery or having to buy their own PPE, which is crazy.

But you can't make a difference if you're alone and so if we come together collectively as an association, we have a greater voice.

This year it will be interesting to see what happens to the golf industry as we are in an unknown period where we're at the back end of the COVID boom and asking what is the new norm?

I'm looking forward to some stability, so fingers crossed we get the weather we want and we all enjoy a really good, positive season.



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The BIGGA National Board is comprised of the following members who volunteer their time to support the association: Stuart Ferguson MG, Jack Hetherington, Antony Kirwan, Andrew Laing, Iain Macleod, Lucy Sellick and Richard Whyman  
BIGGA 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.



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# RETURN TO SAWGRASS

Your chance to represent British greenkeeping in the Florida sunshine

**BIGGA members are being invited to apply for an incredible volunteering opportunity, made possible by our Premium Partner, John Deere.**

With its famous island green and stunning Florida setting, the Stadium Course at TPC Sawgrass is considered among the most spectacular golfing challenges in the world.

Each year the PGA Tour headquarters hosts The Players Championship, with the home greenkeepers supported by a multi-national team of volunteers, including representatives from each of BIGGA's five Regions.

We're looking for five members, one from each BIGGA Region and an

**“**As the only Scottish representative, I felt I had been bestowed with a badge of honour and was looking forward to participating with others from around the world.

Edward Irvine, deputy head greenkeeper, Trump International Aberdeen

additional overseas member. These will be flown to Ponte Vedra Beach in Florida courtesy of BIGGA Premium Partner John Deere, who will also provide accommodation, food and uniform for the duration of the 10-day stay in America.

The trip will take place from 9 to 19 March 2024 and during

that period you will be fully integrated into the TPC Sawgrass agronomy and course maintenance team.

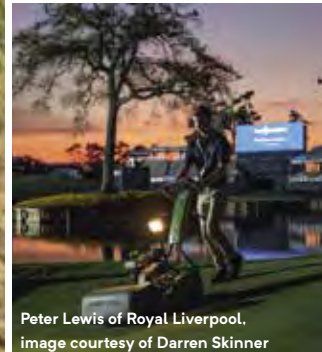
It's a wonderful opportunity to get up-close experience of hosting a major PGA Tour event, all in the incredible setting of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida.



Jordan Spieth and Eddie Irvine



Paul Casey with the BIGGA volunteers



Peter Lewis of Royal Liverpool, image courtesy of Darren Skinner

## WHO IS IT FOR?

The application process is open to all full BIGGA members over the age of 21, who have been a full member for at least 12 months. You must be eligible for entry into the United States and you must be able to provide evidence of COVID vaccination (entry requirements may be updated).

## HOW TO APPLY

Applications are open until 31 May. Visit the BIGGA website or scan the QR Code to apply



TPC Sawgrass, image courtesy of Ben Hunter

**“**Wednesday evening was a real eye opener and something I had been looking forward to witnessing first hand – it was rough mowing day. To see 40 greenkeepers set off cutting rough in unison, it was reminiscent of the Red Arrows, an awesome sight!

Mark Tucker, head greenkeeper, Temple

# 2023 VOLUNTEERS

The Players Championship in 2020 was disrupted by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the BIGGA volunteers who were in Florida at the time were rushed home at the nearest opportunity.

John Deere has invited the members back out for this year's championship and you'll be able to follow their activities on BIGGA's social media channels throughout the build-up to this year's event. Keep track on Facebook at [/golfgreenkeepers](https://www.facebook.com/golfgreenkeepers), on Twitter at [@BIGGALtd](https://twitter.com/BIGGALtd) and on Instagram at [@BIGGA\\_HQ](https://www.instagram.com/BIGGA_HQ)

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Head Greenkeeper  
Broadway Golf Club



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# AROUND THE GREEN

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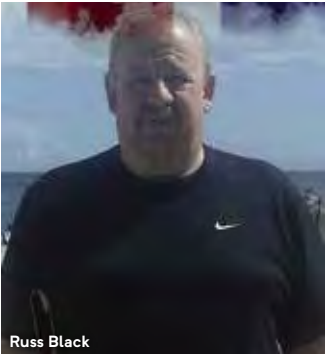
Everyone at BIGGA was saddened to hear of the death of Russ Black aged 69 following a period of ill health.

Russ was an avid supporter of the North East Section, holding the post of chairperson for many years.

He was a member of the British Golf Greenkeepers Association and then BIGGA for over 40 years.

Russ joined many of The Open volunteer support teams over the years, making friends from all corners of the association.

His career in greenkeeping lead him to become head greenkeeper at Westerhope, from which he latterly retired.



Russ was a visitor to BTME in Harrogate each year, where he would catch up with his many colleagues and friends.

Russ's funeral will be at the West Road Crematorium in Newcastle at 3pm on Monday 6 March. A wake will follow at Blucher & District Social Club.

## Husqvarna steps up to BIGGA Partner status

National



Husqvarna, which only became a BIGGA Supporter in December, has reaffirmed its support of the association and its members by taking the step up to Partner status.

With over 330 yeras of innovation and passion, Husqvarna is a world leading producer of professional products in the greenkeeping and grounds sector.

"It is a pleasure for Husqvarna to be a Partner of BIGGA," said Jonathan Snowball, head of Business Unit Pro, Husqvarna UK. "We're looking forward to working with BIGGA and learning how we can really support golf greenkeepers with our technology focused

solutions."

Leading the way in robotics since 1995, Husqvarna is the inventor and world leader in autonomous mowing. The company is also driving sustainable performance through research and development with other products, with a focus on battery technology, connectivity, digitalisation and autonomous systems.

BIGGA is hugely grateful to all its Partners, Supporters and individual contributors.

The funding the association receives goes a substantial way towards underpinning BIGGA's membership benefits and education activity.

## Sussex golf days

South East - Sussex

The Sussex Section has announced its calendar of events for 2023.

The spring opener will take place at Littlehampton on Thursday 13 April and the BIGGA National qualifier will be held at West Sussex GC on Wednesday 16 August.

The annual Turkey Trot will be held on Thursday 7

December at Worthing.

Please contact Dean Franks on deanfranks18@hotmail.com for more information.

Details of great BIGGA events taking place in your Region and Section are updated daily on the What's On pages of the BIGGA website, [www.bigga.org.uk](http://www.bigga.org.uk)



## Carbray and Sweetzer join trade

Scotland - West and South East - London

Agrovista Amenity has announced the appointment of Stewart Carbray and Sam Sweetzer.

Stewart joins Agrovista Amenity from Bothwell Castle, where he worked for 23 years after initially joining as an apprentice. He worked his way up to the position of head greenkeeper, spending six years in the role.

Stewart said: "I achieved what I set out to do at Bothwell Castle and I saw so many improvements at the course. I



wanted to stay within the industry and always had an interest in the other side of the business, so the Agrovista opportunity was just too big to ignore."

Sam Sweetzer also comes from a greenkeeping background and his last role was at The Buckinghamshire as deputy course manager. Sam is an R&A scholar, an FTMI graduate and has volunteered on various support teams.

He was also runner-up in Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year 2015.

## Hutchinson to depart association

Northern - North West



James Hutchinson is departing BIGGA to take up a newly-created role at Ribby Hall Holiday Village

A popular member of the BIGGA team is departing the association during March.

Joining BIGGA in 2016, James Hutchinson acted as Membership Services Manager - Ecology & Sustainability and took a leading role in promoting the sustainability activities of the association and its members.

James will take up a new position as green space adviser at Ribby Hall Holiday Village, close to his home in Blackpool.

James said: "I've thoroughly enjoyed my time with BIGGA and I've made some wonderful friendships. Within my role at BIGGA I got the chance to visit places I never would have otherwise, such as golf courses on Arran, the far north of Scotland and even as far afield as Latvia.

"BIGGA has given me the opportunity to visit these places and meet the wonderful people who maintain them for the enjoyment of golfers. I will forever be thankful to Jim Croxton and the rest of the BIGGA team for that experience.

"I hope I leave the industry in a better position than I found it and I hope that in years to come I'll hear more great stories about the work BIGGA members do to support the wider environment.

During his time with BIGGA, James estimates he has visited around 475 golf courses, offering advice and creating ecology plans that will benefit clubs and the wider community for years to come.

An R&A Gold Scholar, James joined BIGGA having served as environmental officer at St Andrews Links and previously working in a similar role at Fairhaven.

## WHAT'S ON NEAR YOU?

Scotland and Northern Ireland

1 BIGGA Scotland L&D Roadshow

Date: 7 March

Location: Mortonhall

2 BIGGA Scotland L&D Roadshow

Date: 8 March

Location: Elmwood

3 BIGGA Scotland L&D Roadshow

Date: 16 March

Location: Newmachar

4 BIGGA / CAFRE Machinery and Seminar Day

Date: 22 March

Location: Cafre Greenmount Campus

5 BIGGA L&D Roadshow Portlethen

Date: 23 March

Location: Portlethen

Northern

1 BIGGA Northern L&D Roadshow

Date: 1 March

Location: Birchwood

2 BIGGA Northern L&D Roadshow

Date: 2 March

Location: Campey (Macclesfield)

3 BIGGA Northern L&D Roadshow

Date: 15 March

Location: Rotherham

South West and South Wales

3 BIGGA SW & SW L&D Roadshow

Date: 9 March

Location: Stover

South East

1 BIGGA South East L&D Roadshow

Date: 2 March

Location: Windlesham

2 BIGGA South East Region Golf & Dinner Day


Date: 3 March

Location: Walton Heath


3 BIGGA South East Region Golf Day

Date: 22 March

Location: London Golf Club



### ON COURSE



**Name:** Nellie  
**Breed:** Husky  
**Owner:** Michael Budd  
**Location:** Shirley Park  
**Favourite treat:** Papadams  
**Naughtiest moment:** At the base of trees waiting for squirrels  
**My dog is happiest when:** Chewing a strimmer handle to bits

## Greg Milton

Northern - Yorkshire



Origin Amenity Solutions has appointed Greg Milton as technical sales representative for the East Yorkshire/Humber region.

A former greenkeeper and spray technician at Brough, Greg has worked in the sports turf industry for over 15 years, on golf courses and racecourses. He was worked at the Royal Automobile Club and Lingfield Park Resort, as well as working and volunteering at international tournaments including the AMEX World Golf Championships at The Grove.



# 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
RP	Regional Patron

SCOTLAND & NORTHERN IRELAND

**Manuel Arrieta Rosado**, Portlethen, GK; **Andres Calvo Duran**, St Andrews Links, GK; **Fraser Cochrane**, The Duke’s Course, GK; **Jim Davidson**, Baroness, RP; **Warren Finnigan**, The Gleneagles, APP; **Paul Johnstone**, Baroness, RP; **Andrew Jordan-Brown**, St Andrews Links, GK; **Scott Kirkpatrick**, St Andrews Links, GK; **Neil Latto**, St Andrews Links, GK; **Matthew McAulay**, Ranfurly Castle, AGK; **Stewart McBain**, Idverde UK (MIXTO UK), A; **Gordon Mclay**, Murrayshall, APP **Robert Milton**, Brodick, AGK; **Gregor Norrie**, Kingenie, HGK; **Keegan Pitt**, St Andrews Links, GK; **Kenny Thom**, St Andrews Links, APP

NORTHERN

**Jake Bell**, Scarcroft, GK; **Roger Cairns**, Kendal, AGK; **Elias Carter-Darwen**, Preston, AGK; **John Gibson**, Scarcroft, DHGK; **David Hammond**, Myerscough College, S; **Oliver Holden**, Penwortham, AGK; **Harry Hood**, Ramside Hall, AGK; **Ben Mason**, Bedlingtonshire, AGK; **Matthew Megson**, Howley Hall, AGK; **Marcus Morris**, John Deere, BA; **Lucas Patchell**, Preston, AGK; **Joseph Priestley**, Birley Wood, APP; **Bailey Revill**, Lincoln, AGK; **Joel Robson**, Blyth, AGK; **Nick Traynor**, Prestwich, A; **Dave Webster**, D & H Landscaping, A; **Damian Wormald**, East Bierley, HGK

CENTRAL ENGLAND

**Stuart Betts**, Aberdovey, AGK; **Ashley Bulpitt**, Copsewood Grange, HGK; **James Clarke**, Greenway Hall, AGK; **Rhys Edkins**, St Giles Newtown, HGK; **Aidan Evans**, Aberystwyth, AGK; **Jamie Garey**, Redditch, AGK; **Mark Grummant**, Greys Green, AGK; **Zack Hedgcombe**, Manor, AGK; **Alwyn Humphreys**, Aberdovey, AGK; **Nathan Page**, Aston Villa AFC, G; **Jamie Staddon**, Burford, AGK

SOUTH EAST

**David Buckett**, Guildford, AGK; **Tom Cable**, Guildford, GK; **Sin Per Caflisch**, Royal St George’s, AGK; **Hayley Clarke**, Barenbrug UK, RP; **Paul Durrant**, Seckford, HGK; **Charlie Ham**, Roehampton Club, GK **Rory Jamieson**, Saffron Walden, AGK; **Dylan Jeffries**, Thorpeness, APP; **Maisie Jonas**, Barenbrug UK, RP; **Nathan Parrish**, Little Channels, G; **Sean Purdy**, Roehampton Club, GK; **Glenn Sullivan**, Saffron Walden, AGK; **Peter Vaughan**, Guildford, AGK

SOUTH WEST & SOUTH WALES

**Max Boxall**, Thornbury, AGK; **Albert Frederick**, Broome Manor, AGK; **Richard George**, Broome Manor, GK; **Stuart Green**, Burnham & Berrow, AGK; **Michael Iwaniszyn**, Broome Manor, AGK; **Edward Lamb**, Burnham & Berrow, AGK; **Paul Miles**, Knighton Heath, GK **Ian Mills**, Burnham & Berrow, AGK; **Greg Shaw**, Tracy Park, CM; **Ross Tyler**, Burford, AGK

INTERNATIONAL

**Jason Dziabel**, Cabot Cape Breton, I, **Francesca Faldella**, Barenbrug Italia, I, **Aindriu Jackson**, Carr Golf, I, **Christophe Luro**, Golf de la Nivelle, I, **Stuart McDermid**, Miklagard, I, **Marco Nembrini**, Golfclub Gerre Losone, I, **Ed Pettit**, Carr Golf, I, **Alan Walsh**, Moyvalley, I



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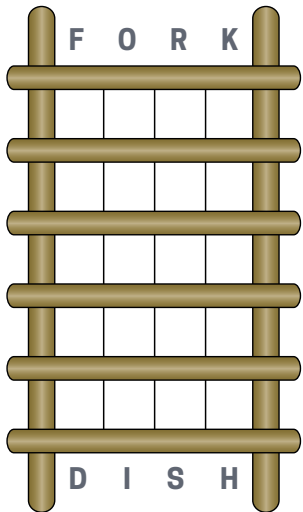


# TEE BREAK

FIND THE ANSWERS ON P66

## WORD LADDER

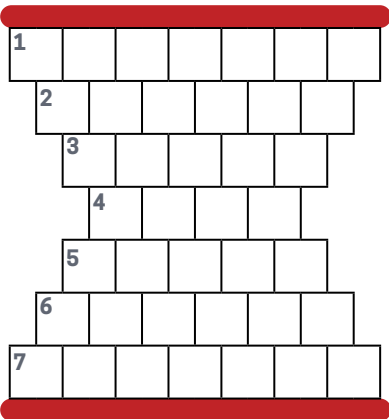
Change one letter at a time (but not the position of any letter) to make a new word – and move from the word at the top of the ladder to the word at the bottom using the exact number of rungs provided.



## EGG-TIMER

Can you complete this puzzle in the time it takes to boil an egg? The answers to the clues are anagrams of the words immediately above and below, plus or minus a letter.

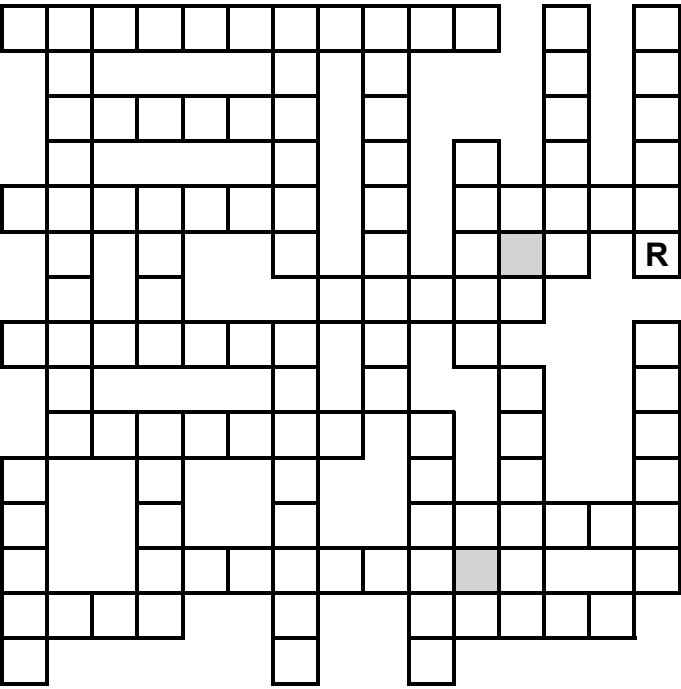
- 1 Temporary relief
- 2 A man of God
- 3 Lining of the stomach of a ruminant used as food
- 4 Cheeky, irreverent
- 5 Come to a point
- 6 Catch in a snare
- 7 Black leopard



## CRISS-CROSS: Keep in Touch

Fit the listed words into the grid below, one letter per square.

- |  |   |                                  |
|--|---|----------------------------------|
| <b>4 letters</b><br>TALK<br>TEXT                                       | <b>6 letters</b><br>ANSWER<br>CALL UP<br>CONVEY<br>GOSSIP<br>IMPART<br>LETTER<br>LIAISE<br>REPORT | <b>8 letters</b><br>TRANSMIT     |
| <b>5 letters</b><br>GREET<br>ORATE<br>SPEAK<br>TWEET<br>UTTER<br>WRITE | <b>7 letters</b><br>AIRMAIL<br>CONTACT<br>DISPLAY<br>GESTURE                                      | <b>9 letters</b><br>DISCOURSE    |
|  |   | <b>10 letters</b><br>CORRESPOND  |
|  |   | <b>11 letters</b><br>ACKNOWLEDGE |



# THE SAVINGS SOON ADD UP

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Benefits



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### Discounts on seasonal blooms for every occasion

Arena Flowers is the UK's most ethical florist, sourcing from ethical and Fairtrade certified growers so you can mark life's moments with beautiful flowers. BIGGA members can save 15% on all hand tied or letterbox bouquets and 20% off your first order via the Arena Flowers App\*.



### Save on your favourite retailers through Gift Card Savings

BIGGA members can buy a range of gift cards and eGifts at discounted rates\*. It's a great way for you to save hundreds of pounds annually, from everyday essentials like your weekly supermarket shop to life's luxuries such as dining out.



### Savings on gym membership, digital fitness subscriptions and more with MyGymDiscounts!

Save up to 25% on a membership at your chosen club, closest to wherever you live or work. Choose from a wide range of options at over 3,600 gyms, leisure centres, yoga and pilates studios and bootcamps across the UK. If the gym isn't for you — don't worry! They also offer up to 55% off digital fitness subscriptions so you can kickstart your fitness regime from the comfort of your home.



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



The BIGGA delegates pictured alongside Matt Shaffer (fourth from left), the former superintendent at Merion



The 2023 BIGGA Delegation:

- / Alex Brougham, assistant course manager, Trentham
- / James Bruder, head greenkeeper (Old Course), Walton Heath
- / Michael Budd, course manager, Shirley Park
- / Scott Corrigan, course manager, R&A Lethamhill
- / David Edmondson, head greenkeeper, Prestwick
- / Andrew Kerr MG, course manager, Surbiton
- / Steven Thomas, head groundsman, Hibernian FC
- / Brian Toall, course manager, Baberton
- / Jeremy Ward, head greenkeeper, Renishaw Park
- / Bradley White, senior greenkeeper (West Course), Wentworth Club

This opportunity is made possible by BIGGA's Premium Partner, Bernhard and Company



The BIGGA Delegation 2023

These BIGGA members sampled the best of America turf management, courtesy of Bernhard and Company

The BIGGA Delegation to the GCSAA's Conference and Trade Show is renowned as one of the most inspirational initiatives in the BIGGA calendar.

Every year 10 BIGGA members are flown to the United States courtesy of BIGGA Premium Partner Bernhard and Company, where they not only gain access to the world's largest golf course maintenance exhibition, but they also participate in exclusive education opportunities and field trips to some of



golf's most famous courses.

In February the delegates were flown to Orlando, Florida, where this year's trade show was taking place. In addition to taking time on the BIGGA stand to represent the association, the delegates also took in visits to Bay Hill, home of the Arnold Palmer Classic, and Lake Nona.

The delegates also enjoyed an exclusive chat with Matt Shaffer, the former superintendent at Merion who oversaw the hosting of the US Open, among other elite championships.

Over the following pages we caught up with the delegates following their trip to discover more about their experiences. You can read each story in greater detail on the BIGGA website.



Our thanks go to Bernhard and Company for providing this incredible learning opportunities for BIGGA members. Applications for the 2024 delegation will open later this year.

What was your favourite moment from the entire trip?

**David Edmondson:** I enjoyed every part of the delegation, from meeting the guys in Harrogate, to meeting up to travel at Gatwick airport. It was great to hit it off from the very first moment we were introduced and this continued throughout the entire trip.

The education aspect of the Conference and Trade Show was very enjoyable and I took a lot from it. The site visits were top notch and it was brilliant to visit Bay Hill three weeks out from the Arnold Palmer Classic and see the course in top condition. It was also excellent to listen to the staff of the club and the USGA agronomist with regards their work scheduling and preparation for the event.

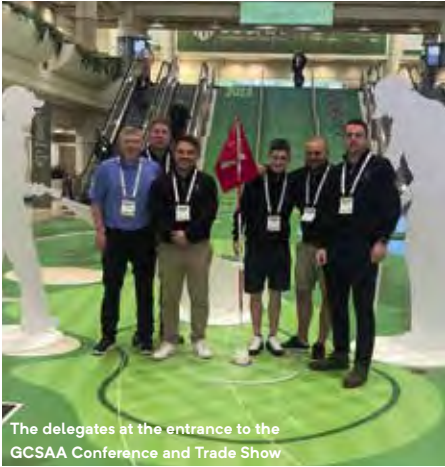
I particularly enjoyed the VIP session with Matt Shaffer. It was so inspiring and it was great to listen to Matt's experiences that he had gained throughout his wonderful career. I, like the other delegates, walked out of this meeting feeling extremely motivated as to what can be achieved with hard work, dedication and passion. It was amazing and a moment I will never forget.

**Michael Budd:** We have all had a discussion and honestly can't pinpoint one standout moment. Trip to Bay Hill? That was great, but then what about the education seminars? What about hearing Matt Shaffer and hearing his story? What about playing golf at Lake Nona? A great day was always followed by another great day and so this is impossible to answer.

The trip has been one of the highest points of my career and offered me so much that when I returned to my team, I explained that in an eight-hour day I couldn't possibly pass on all we had experienced and learned.



Lake Nona



The delegates at the entrance to the GCSAA Conference and Trade Show

What did you learn from your fellow UK BIGGA members that you didn't know before?

**Brian Toall:** I learnt that no matter what position or role you hold within your club and whatever budget or size of course we worked on, we all had the same passion, love and goals. These goals were to be and do the best we can and help push on and create fantastic golf courses.

**Brad White:** Chatting to the rest of the guys was brilliant on a day-to-day basis as they are all in more senior positions than me, so to get knowledge about management and how they look after their course is something I'll keep with me.

**Alex Brougham:** One thing I loved about the trip was how quickly we bonded as a team. Everyone was very open, honest and non-judgemental, which meant we could confidently share ideas and discuss our personal highs and lows and learn from each other's experiences. Some hot topics that we discussed were machinery and tree management. I particularly enjoyed discussing tournament support and how best to apply as I would like to volunteer for more tournaments in future.



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

- / Adrian Adascalitei, Roehampton
- / Peter Allam, Verulam
- / Alan Boyd, Bothwell Castle
- / Tom Bromfield, Trentham
- / Alan FitzGerald CGCS MG, LedgeRock
- / Taylar Foley, Frilford Heath
- / Scott Gardner, Heswall
- / Les Howkins MG, The Richmond
- / Richard Johnstone MG, Nairn Dunbar
- / Matt Kitson, Royal Mid-Surrey
- / David Langheim MG, Woking Football Club
- / Matthew Milligan, Rudding Park
- / Chris Naughton, Bothwell Castle
- / Ryan Oliver, Hornsea
- / Johnathan Peacock, Luffenham Heath
- / Craig Potts, Ingestre Park
- / Andrew Ritchie, St Andrews Links Trust
- / Luke Scuri, Thetford
- / Christopher Sharp, Wycombe Heights
- / Peter Smith, Stirling
- / Michael Sparke, Kings Hill
- / Ian Wade, (The) Rolls of Monmouth
- / Patrick West, Sweetwoods Park
- / Marc Wilcock, Conwy
- / Kimberley Yeldham, Flemspton

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

- / John Anderson, Prestwick
- / Allan Black, Royal Jersey
- / Graham Burnett, Nairn Dunbar
- / Craig Mackay, Royal Dornoch
- / Ryan Oliver, Hornsea
- / Richard Ponsford, Clevedon
- / Steven Thomas, Prestonfield
- / Patrick West, Sweetwoods Park

Keep your CPD record up to date:

[www.bigga.org.uk/member-homepage/continuing-professional-development.html](http://www.bigga.org.uk/member-homepage/continuing-professional-development.html)



The delegates had the opportunity to wander the halls of the GCSAA Conference and Trade Show



Participation in the education programme was part of the delegation

What did you learn from the American aspect of the trip?

**James Bruder:** I'm really encouraged by the way American golf courses like to train and promote within the agronomy department. They have very large teams in comparison to the UK, but they really invest a lot of time and money into training members of the team to take on that next role.

**Andrew Kerr MG:** The American way of greenkeeping is very technically oriented and everything is bigger. When I say bigger, I mean huge! The conference, the courses and even the irrigation systems are many times larger. We have smaller, intricate golf courses and the Americans go for big statements, which are impressive to see. However, it does go to show that even with smaller budgets, we can create excellent golf courses.

**Brian Toall:** America and the UK are both leaders in many things and golf courses are no exception. I learned that the UK is miles ahead of our American counterparts in that we grow grass in a

“At 42 years old this trip gave me the injection and kick I needed to continue producing the course conditions that I’m known for.

more sustainable fashion, with low inputs and fewer chemicals. The Americans are stripping and growing, throwing tonnes of seed, fertiliser and chemicals to make their courses. As the world changes and chemicals continue to get banned globally, the Americans will have to adapt to our style and they are aware of this.



Andrew, Alex and Michael with a representative of Lake Nona



Michael Budd tees off

How will the trip change how you work going forwards?

**Michael Budd:** Improvements to my maintenance facility are already underway. I will be doing some other tweaks to improve my team's workplace, so they remain happy and we retain staff.

The use of growth regulators is something they are big on in America. It makes sense that for my site, with a small team and a busy course, that we push this more. Coverage should improve after feeding and using growth regulators and this will hopefully improve our surfaces.

**Brian Toall:** At 42 years old, having been in management from the age of 20, this trip gave me the injection and kick I needed to continue producing the course conditions that I'm known for.

**Brad White:** It gave me a good opportunity to see where I want to go and what I want to do in the industry. Learning off everyone on the trip was really helpful for my career.

**Alex Brougham:** I think the education

was exceptional and the information gained will help my knowledge of things, such as disease management and understanding golf course architecture.

The trip also opens your eyes to the other styles of management practices that could be used and adapted to suit your own site or staff needs.

**James Bruder:** I would like to take a stronger stance on in-house training and promoting from within.

This was a fantastic opportunity that you can't get in a lot of other industries, so I will pass it down through the team and outside the industry to encourage the next generation of greenkeepers.

**Andrew Kerr MG:** If I had the budget, I'd make a lot more changes! I have started to think about taking half a day each week to concentrate on the finer details on the course, just to take the presentation that little bit further. I'll also do more team building exercises to boost morale and I'll use my new group of colleagues for support.

**Jeremy Ward:** The trip has allowed me into a circle of fellow greenkeepers who have ideas, experiences and potential answers to situations I may face in the future. Will it change the way I work? Maybe not, but it has allowed me to see



Brad White, Scott Corrigan and David Edmondson chatting to Bernhard and Company's Angelique Crosnier

how the other side lives in terms of budgets, staff, climate and available machinery. Maybe one day I might have a slightly bigger budget to work with — here's hoping.

**David Edmondson:** I took part in an extremely interesting seminar on work-life balance while in Orlando and took an awful lot from it. Being someone who is turf management and

greenkeeping mad, I realise that I had to spend more time with my wife and family, something that I had been working on since moving back to the UK.

Life is short and it's important that guys in the industry share their time, not just with their golf course but also with friends and family.

It's all about finding the correct balance at the end of the day.

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

- / Haydon McCance, Honiton
- / Toby Robertson, Canterbury
- / Thomas Scurfield, Billingham

APPRENTICE CORNER

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE GREENKEEPERS TRAINING COMMITTEE

# RULES AND GUIDELINES OF GOLF AFFECTING TEE MARKERS

It is important that greenkeepers place tee markers correctly.

In order for this to happen, they should know the basic rules and regulations affecting tee marker placement.

Below are some basic points to remember when moving tee markers:

- / Ensure the markers are in the correct order. At most golf courses this will be: White, Yellow, Red.
- / However, many clubs are moving towards gender-neutral tees and many will utilise different colours to avoid the traditional stereotypes
- / Ensure the markers are at least two yards from the rear of the tee
- / In a competition do not change tee markers during a round of golf
- / In men's medal play, the markers must be placed within a distance of 10 yards of the permanent distance marker
- / In ladies' medal play, the markers may be moved 10 yards in any direction of the permanent marker
- / When tee markers are placed, the overall length of the course must not be altered by plus or minus 100 yards. For example, if all tee markers were moved 10 yards forward of the tee distance marker, it would make the course 180 yards shorter, altering the length of the course. This would affect the legitimacy of the



- competition.
- / Ensure that any tee position is free of overhanging branches
- / Ensure the tee markers line players up with the direction of play
- / Ensure tee markers are placed on level ground
- / Ensure the markers are not placed so that the player is standing in an area of unrepaired divots.

R&A Rules 6B states the following on tee markers:

- / Teeing area becomes unusable after start of round
  - / If a teeing area becomes covered in temporary water or for some other reason is not usable after the round has started, the committee may relocate the teeing area if this can be done without giving any player a significant advantage or disadvantage.
- / Tee markers are moved
  - / If tee markers are moved by a member of the course staff or if tee markers are moved by a player or anyone else, the committee should determine if any players have been significantly advantaged or disadvantaged. If so, the round should generally be declared null and void. If the course has not been altered significantly and no player has been given a significant advantage or disadvantage, the committee may choose to let the round stand.

This information is taken from the GTC's Level 3 Learning Materials, available to purchase on the GTC website. The GTC produces Learning Materials to support apprentices with the knowledge required to achieve their qualifications. These materials are not exclusive to apprentices and are available to all golf clubs to help with best practice.



# It cuts three things: grass, emissions and costs



Wouldn't it be nice to arrive, each morning, to a freshly cut turf? A fairway or semi-rough that's cut in a way that – compared to conventional petrol and diesel machines – saves on equipment and maintenance expenses, and that produces zero CO<sub>2</sub> emissions during use?

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James Hutchinson,  
Membership Services  
Manager (Ecology &  
Sustainability)

**Is it raptors you're after?**  
If so, then head over to the West Midlands' highest golf course, Dudley.

With falcons nesting on phone masts, kestrels hovering over the newly introduced roughs and more buzzards than you can shake a stick at, this fine venue appears to be packed to the rafters with our sharp-toed friends.

Of course, we all know that if you want to find wildlife, you head to your nearest golf course, but why is it so diverse here?

Well, three of Dudley's holes were rewilded and then managed sympathetically as open grasslands rather than self-set trees and, as we know, kestrels, buzzards and owls need grasslands to hunt in.

Other reasons are that the course has housing and industry surrounding it, so where else has the wildlife to go?

Course Manager Stewart Marshall kindly showed us around this magnificent golf course and for that we thank him for his time. At this moment, I have been to around 475 golf courses and during my time with BIGGA I have met the most charismatic, enthusiastic and proactive greenkeepers you can ever imagine. Stewart is unquestionably up there with the best of them and I have no doubt the course is in good hands – just remove those leylandiis and we'll get on just fine!



**It has been a busy start to the year for Sustainable Golf with the conference season in full swing as course managers and superintendents and other associations come together around the world.**

BTME kicked things off at Harrogate and was soon followed by the GCSAA Conference and Trade Show in the United States before a return to Europe for GCAE and FEGGA conferences. It is a packed schedule before the golfing spring hits the Northern Hemisphere.

Each of these conferences offer an invaluable opportunity to reconnect with old friends and make new acquaintances; meetings made more special as we emerge from the COVID restrictions of the last couple of years. They provide unrivalled networking opportunities along with the chance to learn, discover and explore the latest technologies and innovations hitting the golf market.

Climate action and carbon are particularly hot topics and areas of focus and interest across the industry. At GEO Foundation for Sustainable

Golf we are dedicated to taking often complex and daunting challenges and simplifying them with tools, advice and best practice.

Measuring, tracking and reducing emissions is a challenge facing many sports and has quickly become an important consideration for golf clubs and courses, associations, tournaments, tours, players and sponsors throughout the game.

For clubs and facilities using the OnCourse Facilities programme, new and enhanced Sustainable Golf Scorecards including carbon reports, feature annual data insights, comprising key sustainable golf metrics and provide observations on possible areas of improvement or areas to be celebrated and more widely communicated.

The Carbon Report, calculating carbon emissions and sequestration, is similarly drawn from the data provided in OnCourse, combined with practical suggestions for reducing emissions and increasing sequestration to improve carbon footprints year on year.

Carbon calculators

custom-built for golf, whether club, organisation, event or player, are just one area of support, so contact GEO Foundation for Sustainable Golf to explore more.

Sustainability is at the heart of the golf industry and BTME offered a platform to highlight initiatives taking place through The R&A, England Golf, BIGGA and others, reinforcing the growing momentum behind golf's position as a leader in this field.

Greenkeepers are at the forefront of actions to integrate sustainability into the course and club operations. Visitors to the Sustainability Zone at BTME, for example, were many and varied, some looking for advice on how to take the next steps on their sustainability journey while others sought guidance on a particular challenge they were facing.

Every facility is different but everyone had the common ambition of delivering a better future for their club, members and the wider community and playing their part in addressing some of the challenges we face.

JACOBSEN

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# CUTTING TURF GROWTH

Climatic changes over the past decade indicate we should expect an early start to the coming season

Sean Loakes, Syngenta turf technical manager, UK & Ireland

This season there has been an increased interest in growth regulators to restrict turf growth for a variety of reasons, such as coping with a labour crisis and better managing machinery input costs, as well as enhancing turf health and surface quality.

The question we are most frequently asked is, how often should you apply plant growth regulators (PGR) and at what rate?

A huge wealth of research and development behind the PGR Primo Maxx II shows that it works by supressing the turf plants' gibberellic acid (GA) hormone, which is responsible for growth. The more product in the plant, the greater the suppression.

Following each application, the concentration of active ingredient (AI) begins to decline and its effects gradually reduce as the turf starts to regrow more strongly.

The rate at which the AI declines can be influenced by a number of factors, often associated around the rate of plant growth and, primarily, temperature, which degrades the product faster at higher levels.

In cool conditions the positive effect lasts longer, so the application interval can be extended. In warmer temperatures the PGR effect will degrade more quickly and so the application interval needs to be closer.

Growing Degree Days (GDD) are a useful tool to model the speed at which the PGR effect could be reducing, and thereby the speed at which plants will come out of regulation.

However, it's not an on/off switch, so while GDD is a useful guide to optimum application intervals, plants will come out of regulation gradually and can be quickly returned back under control with subsequent applications.

GDD is calculated using data for the

maximum recorded temperature, plus the minimum temperature, and then divided by two. Depending on the model used, a base temperature is then subtracted to give a GDD figure for the day. In the UK the base figure is typically 0, 6 or 10°C. GDD can be calculated manually by recording the daily max-min temperatures on the course or from sources of weather records. However, that method takes no account of things such as the daily duration of temperatures suitable for growth or the length of cold nights. It also depends on where any thermometer is situated or the accuracy of data.

The Syngenta website GDD Calculator automatically makes the calculation using hourly weather data, which takes account of more of the variables. It gives the option to select a base figure of 0, 6 or 10°C.

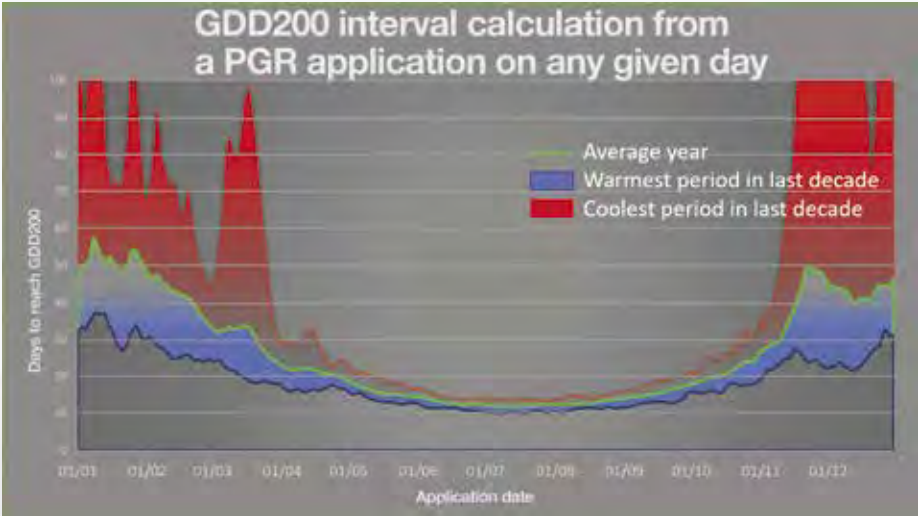
The results are logged for any selected site, with the opportunity to create different start dates and GDD target figures to fit specific turf management operations. Users can also select a notification of when target GDD figures set to be reached, in time to act.

### Base temperature

While many turf managers in the UK have historically used a base of 6°C to represent typical timing when grass growth starts, Syngenta analysis has shown that 0°C is a more effective base to use, particularly in the early season temperatures in spring and as conditions start to draw in over the autumn.

One of the world's greatest exponents of GDD, Dr Bill Kreuser of the University of Nebraska, advocates the use of 0°C as the base in his modelling for cool season

Fig 1 GDD intervals



GDD is a useful guide to optimum application intervals

grasses. A study of temperatures in the UK (Fig 1.) has shown that through the early spring and at the end of the season in autumn, application intervals at GDD200 could, on average, be over a month apart — shown by the green line. The calculation is using a base of 0°C throughout the year.

However, from mid-April through to mid-October the application interval would need to be less than 21 days to optimise growth control. From mid-May to mid-September the GDD200 model demonstrates that 10 to 14-day applications would be necessary to keep turf in regulation.

If the PGR interval were to be extended to 21 days in these conditions, for a label restriction or weather interruptions to application, for example, the turf would rapidly move further out of regulation between treatments and irregular growth patterns occur.

While GDD200 has been shown to be a good starting point for most Primo Maxx II programmes, experience will indicate how that might be tweaked to best match any specific site's growth.

### GDD limitations

A high-fertility, parkland setting may find a GDD180 better suits the level of consistent growth control required, compared to another site where a GDD220 may deliver precisely the level of regulation desired. Adaptations for fairways and greens may also be considered.

Where all other factors affecting growth are unlimited, such as moisture, nutrition or light, then GDD is an excellent tool to tailor PGR application timing, particularly on the more consistent conditions of greens.

However, if there are other factors that are naturally compromising turf growth, such as drought on unirrigated fairways, it may be judicious to pull back on PGR applications, even when GDD targets are being triggered. Monitoring grass growth or clipping yields is a good guide as to when to reinstate treatments. That is where the experience of the turf manager in understanding and interpreting the GDD data is so important.

### Continue the conversation:

Read the full feature at [www.syngentaturf.co.uk](http://www.syngentaturf.co.uk)



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## ADVERTORIAL

# THE DEMAND OF INNOVATION

ICL's new biodegradable coating for controlled release fertilisers

Susan Sijstermans, ICL



“You can come up with an idea, test it, and work on it all the way until the innovation ends up with the user. I can really make an impact and with eqo.s we made an important breakthrough.”

**ICL has introduced eqo.s technology, a new fully biodegradable coating for its controlled release fertilisers (CRF) in turfgrass.**

Susan Sijstermans, senior specialist product development at ICL's R&D department, has explained what it took to develop what ICL is calling one of its greatest ever breakthroughs.

As part of the ICL product development team, Susan is involved in the entire process from idea generation through to market launch.

“That is what I love about my job,” said Susan. “You can come up with an idea, test it, and work on it all the way until the innovation ends up with the user. I can really make an impact and with eqo.s we made an important breakthrough.”

Innovation is a demanding process that starts with an idea, but it needs a lot of work to bring that idea to life.

“First we need to understand what we are focusing our development on,” said Susan. “We need to make sure the idea is something the customer needs and that we could produce commercially.”

Another key aspect of the innovation process is the collaboration between specialists from different backgrounds.

“We are working with many departments and so we need to be able to collaborate freely in order to come up with the best possible outcomes,” said

Susan. “For eqo.s we had clear boundaries in terms of product attributes, performance and timescales. It needed to comply with legislation, perform in the field, be commercially viable and all before the legislation deadline of 2026.

“We all had to work together to find a strategy and work through all the different challenges. Our team ethic pushed us hard to develop what we consider to be the very best solution.”

The eqo.s journey started years ago, with a focus on finding a sustainable innovation for coating urea that complied with the new EU legislation. Possible options were screened and then reviewed on all kinds of different aspects (What can and can't we do? What does the end user need? Can we sell it?)

“There is a process behind innovation,” said Susan. “From the start, we created a team of specialist colleagues to get it done. At R&D we focused on product development, but engineers were involved in the challenges of large-scale production.

“Marketing looked at the implications for our product portfolio. Agronomists tested the products in the field to review performance. The quality department ensured that eqo.s would always meet ICL's high standards.

“Long story short, a huge amount of expertise, time and money has been

“The eqo.s journey started years ago, with a focus on finding a sustainable innovation for coating urea that complied with the new EU legislation.”

involved in this project. This is what it takes to launch ground-breaking innovations.”

CRFs have outer coatings that protect the nutrient core. The coating allows the nutrient to release at a time and rate that is optimal for the turf to utilise. The eqo.s coating for nitrogen is compliant with the biodegradability criteria outlined in the EU Fertilising Products Regulation (2019/1009) and is intended to help turf managers create more sustainable turf management programmes.

With its patented eqo.s release technology, ICL said it has taken the lead in providing a fully biodegradable coating that breaks down faster than existing coating technologies to minimise any impact on the environment.

A great deal of testing has been required to develop the eqo.s coating and evaluate its performance on turf. Susan continued: “Eqo.s was extensively tested under controlled conditions in the lab, but only in field trials can you really see if it holds the working principle. To create a coating that degrades, but at the same time protects the granule core, is quite a contradictory concept.”

Through trials at external independent trial stations, eqo.s technology received official certification for its biodegradability according to different ISO standards. Trialling is undertaken by a team of ICL agronomists all over the world to prove the added benefits of CRFs with eqo.s technology.

“R&D never stops”, said Susan. “With the development of eqo.s, we've made an important breakthrough, but we will keep innovating. Wherever we set our sights, we have the people, the knowledge and the collective desire to make further breakthroughs in turf nutrition. Let's just see what the future demands!”

Working in partnership with



Susan Sijstermans and Petra Vannuys discuss the eqo.s technology



Read this for:

- / Ambition
- / Teamwork
- / Communication

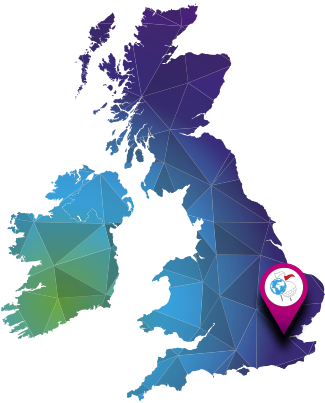


# ABRIDGE

Winner: Championship Greenkeeping Performance sponsored by Bernhard and Company

Pictured above – Front row: The Abridge greenkeeping team. Back row from left: Gary Alliss, PGA official; Geoff Smith; Lol Green, Greens Chairman; Roger Jeffries, chairman; Justin Webb, general manager

Location: Essex



The Championship Greenkeeping Performance Award was sponsored by Bernhard and Company



When Geoff Smith found out his team had won a BIGGA Award, he was sat in a hotel restaurant in the ski resort of Zell am See, Austria, with his son refreshing Twitter for updates about the awards ceremony.

Almost 1,000 miles away, in the Harrogate Convention Centre's main auditorium, Abridge Golf Club's deputy

course manager, Ben Scrivener, and other members of the team were making their way onto stage to accept the Championship Greenkeeping Performance Award 2023 sponsored by Bernhard and Company.

"We were watching the Twitter feed and when the BIGGA account sent out that we had won, there was a



Abridge

cheer in the restaurant," said Geoff, 56. "I was just really proud and pleased for the team to get some recognition outside of Essex. This award wasn't about me, it was much more about those guys and my deputy Ben, who is going to be a great course manager one day."

Abridge won its BIGGA Award following the successful hosting of the EuroPro Tour's PDC Championship. Although the tour has since ceased trading, the CEO at the time described the club as one of the best they had ever been to.

It was the culmination of a long journey for Geoff, whose professional career began in the City of London, working in financial services.

After a successful career but aged just 30, he suffered from burnout and decided to make the switch to greenkeeping. He joined The London Club, where he spent two years before moving to Abridge as an assistant greenkeeper. Moving up through the ranks, he became course manager in 2006.

"The very first day I started in greenkeeping was during renovations week at The London Club," said Geoff.



Abridge was in top condition for the event

"They were picking up three-quarter inch tines with snow shovels and going from one green to the next. I'd been a pen pusher until then and I went home and I wept. I said to my wife, 'I can't do this'. I was earning very poor money, but there's no comparison with the lifestyle. I still get stressed now, but they're nice stresses."

During his time as course

manager at Abridge, Geoff has overseen many large projects including the installation of an 18-hole buggy path.

He convinced the golf club to take forward his vision for sustainable improvements to the course that consisted of a three-part project, including a full coverage modern irrigation system.

Geoff designed the plans for a full course drainage

project that has been carried out in-house and is ongoing.

This keeps Abridge open all year round, despite being sited on the notoriously thick Essex clay.

Finally, with the help of a hydrologist, he designed a 34,000m<sup>3</sup> irrigation lake that is located strategically to serve the summer irrigation requirements. This is filled by linking parts of the drainage and abstracting flood water and the club is now completely off mains water.

Abridge has previously hosted regional qualifying for The Open, but the announcement that the club was to host the EuroPro Tour made for an entirely different challenge.

In deciding how to prepare the course for the week, the greenkeeping team sat »



The Abridge greenkeeping team alongside event winner Pavan Sagoo



The week was exhausting for the dedicated team





“You have to treat people as individuals if you are to make a team

down as a unit and considered how they would best achieve their ambitions.

“I thought it was important to involve all of my team as I often say we all need each other to make things work and so it’s important to listen to everyone’s point of view,” said Geoff.

One of the ideas put forward was that the team use on-site accommodation for the duration of the event. That showed incredible commitment from the greenkeepers, but Geoff kept one eye on balancing the needs of the course against the needs of his team, as individuals.

“They all had families and needed time off during the day to go and see them,” said Geoff. “You have to treat people as individuals if you are to make a team.

**BIGGA AWARDS 2024**

Nominations are now open for the BIGGA Awards 2024. If you know of a team that’s gone above and beyond this year there’s no better way to recognise their success than by nominating them for the Championship Greenkeeping Performance award on our website.



lovely and I was reduced to tears because wow, that was teamwork at its best.”

Post-COVID, the Abridge membership has swollen to more than 750 golfers and their needs would have to be considered during the build-up to the event.

Fortunately, the club bought into what the greenkeepers were trying to achieve. That was aided by communication between the team and their members, including a drone that gave them a view of the course from the air, showing what work had been undertaken and the other work that still needed to take place.

The greenkeepers also set up the course as they would for the championship the weekend before and after the event to give members a taste of playing their course as a championship venue, with the EuroPro Tour even leaving the advertising boards in place to add to the impact.

Geoff called in support from fellow greenkeepers who volunteered their time, while members of the trade also lent a hand. Each night up to 20 members would help with divoting fairways and tees and the hosting of the tour event was an incredible example of bringing various stakeholders and component parts together to achieve a single goal.

And all the hard work paid off. A key ambition of the greenkeepers was to achieve consistent greens and when



the PGA’s agronomists measured them each morning, all were found to be within 3 to 4 inches of each other.

“Months of hard work came to fruition at the right time,” said Geoff. “I can honestly say there was not an argument or a grumble among any of my team for the whole nine days.

“If one was tired, another stepped in and covered. It really was a joy to watch the team working together.



“One of the nicest thing for me was the last evening of setup when my wife and children came to see everything. The guys said ‘You don’t need to work tonight Geoff, we’ll do it

“I rotated staff to allow them time during the week to go and see their families when they wanted to, or have their families

come to the course to walk around with them, so their partners and children could see what ‘Dad’ does all week.

“My one-day-a-week mechanic came in every day for the week before and during the whole week. As machines came back from morning work, he took over the washing down, greasing, the resetting of blades and he gave each one a general look over and tagged them ready for their next shift. He even helped rope fairways for dew removal early each morning.

“What a star Gareth is!

“My staff all took some time to walk around during the actual event days and be »

**GREENKEEPERS’ TOOLBOX**

**The Team**

- / Geoff Smith, course manager
- / Ben Scrivener, deputy course manager
- / Jamie Blagden, first assistant
- / Gareth Clark, mechanic
- / Greenkeepers: Ian Cannell, Nathan Davis, Nick Lappage, Simon Bankes, Marc Mountney, Paul Bannock



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Geoff has built an incredible team ethos at Abridge



part of the crowd. While watching the golf, they were able to listen to how positive and complimentary people and players were about the golf course and the club as a family. It was great for my team to be able to show off their capabilities and deservedly hear the praise first hand.

"I insisted they all wore their Abridge team golf shirts and identification badges that I had supplied them with when they walked around the course and for them all to be at the presentation on the final afternoon. That meant my team could be recognised for what they had achieved."

For Geoff, the opportunity to bring renown to the course fulfilled a debt he felt he owed since a serious accident seven years ago that saw him dislocate his hip, damage his pelvis, break three ribs and required him to be off work for six months.

The day after the accident, Abridge's club chairman

visited him in hospital and told him not to worry about anything as he had always looked after Abridge and now it was their turn to look after him and his family. That personal touch resonated with Geoff and he has remained loyal to the club ever since.

"In summary, myself and my great, valued team had gone further than we had ever gone before and the results were clearly there for everyone to see," said Geoff.

"Yes it was knackerin', but I

recommend the experience to any greenkeeper as it was thoroughly enjoyable to have the opportunity to show the world what Team Abridge could really do.

"We also showed what a family our club was and how together, high success and standards can be achieved."

**Congratulations to Abridge Golf & Country Club, winner of Championship Greenkeeping Performance 2023 sponsored by Bernhard and Company.**



Volunteer greenkeepers supplemented the Abridge team

**The Finalists**

Find out more about the other finalists by scanning the QR code:

**Minchinhampton Golf Club**



**St Annes Old Links Golf Club**



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Read this for:

- / Innovation
- / Success
- / Creativity

Winner: Greenkeeping Project of the Year sponsored by Sports Turf Data Solutions

Location: Strathaven



The Greenkeeping Project Award was sponsored by Sports Turf Data Solutions



In 2019, following discussions with a neighbour and the club's insurance company, Strathaven in South Lanarkshire was forced to stop playing its 7th hole, to avoid golf balls entering a neighbour's garden.

Head Greenkeeper Stephen Hunter suggested redesigning the hole to

become a par 3 that aimed away from the adjacent property.

In order to maintain the par of the course, Stephen also suggested extending the 9th hole from a par 3 to a par 4 by moving the tee back and pushing the green forwards.

His vision was accepted by the management committee



Creating a bunker beside the new 9th green

and the club began a two-year project.

"The scale was quite daunting when we were asked to first cost the projects," said Stephen, who was appointed head greenkeeper of the South Lanarkshire club in 1993. "I'd say the biggest

The scale was quite daunting when we were asked to first cost the projects

challenge was to not replace two weak holes with another two weak holes. Judging by

the feedback, we managed to do this." The seven-strong home

greenkeeping team carried out the design and construction themselves, with the project being completed in April 2022. The team had considerable experience in completing projects, having previously changed the course's greens to a USGA »



Clearing trees to make space for the new 7th hole





Creating bunkers at new 7th hole



EcoBunker was used to stabilise bunker faces

specification construction — this would be the second time the 7th and 9th had been built to those standards.

Although the initial budget was set at £80,000, this was extended to £96,000, not including VAT.

“We are a normal golf club,” said Stephen. “We have five full-time greenkeepers, two apprentices and a part-time mechanic. If you put that in perspective, we still had all our other work on the course to carry out, while keeping a major project on track. All of this took place in the middle of a global pandemic and the problems of rising daily prices because of Brexit, a war in Ukraine and the pandemic.”

The challenges didn't stop there for the Strathaven team, with Stephen's deputy of 18 years, Colin Shanks, leaving to become head greenkeeper at Cathcart Castle. Another greenkeeper, Greg Dobinson, also left and Stephen said: “We were fortunate to replace

“My staff are a credit to themselves and their profession

them with good staff who, although not as experienced, proved themselves over the course of the project.”

There was also the small matter of preparing for the Scottish Golf Girls' Amateur Championship, which Strathaven hosted in July 2021, and dealing with serious staff illness, including COVID-19 absences.

During the construction of the 138-yard 7th hole, a forested area was cleared to be the site of the new green.

Rootzone was put down and the team cut and lifted the turf from the existing green and relocated it to the new site.

When the green had been prepared and turf laid on the green and surrounds, Stephen

and his team turned their attention to the teeing area.

As the tee was designed to be on two levels, railway sleepers were used to remove the need for banking and maximise the available space.

The 9th hole was to become a 324-yard par 4 and Stephen suggested an area that was a fairly steep slope in front of a spinney of trees could be used.

Due to the steepness of the ground, significant earth moving took place to give a reasonably level surface for the new green.

“I managed to convince the club to hire a quality local excavator operator and enlisted the help of member John Callan, who is a land engineer and assisted with all the levels,” said Stephen. “That's the only outside help we had.”

Sprinkler irrigation pipework was installed around the apron, with all drainage sprinkler and penalty area pipework prepared and

installed by the team.

Incredibly, the biggest challenge was possibly one you won't see on the course. Stephen explained: “The biggest stress we had during the 9th hole project was that we were moving sheds and had to move all our gear into containers while still constructing the new hole.

“At that time, we lost the use of our irrigation system, which added to the list of the many headaches associated with moving sheds.

“On top of that we had typical Scottish weather of storms, snow, hard frost and torrential rain to deal with. We had 16 trees blow down during the project and had to carry on working in blizzards to keep to the timetable.”

In front of the 9th green a

penalty area was constructed, again suggested by Stephen.

He was aware that there was an underground stream in the area and it seemed natural to utilise this to create a penalty area.

“There were a few areas where we had to be innovative,” said Stephen. “When concreting sleepers into the banking, we diverted that stream across to the 8th ditch from a pipe in the farmer's field at the 6th hole, to ensure we could put in the sleepers without having problems from a fast-flowing stream.”

All the excavation work was done by the Strathaven greenkeepers and once the critical work of laying the new green was complete, the team moved onto the work of levelling the ground of the »

“On top of that we had typical Scottish weather of storms, snow, hard frost and torrential rain to deal with. We had 16 trees blow down during the project and had to carry on working in blizzards.

## BIGGA AWARDS 2024

Nominations are now open for the BIGGA Awards 2024. If you know of a team that's undergone a major project this winter, there's no better way to recognise their success than by nominating them for the Greenkeeping Project Award. **NOMINATE HERE:**



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## GREENKEEPERS' TOOLBOX

### The Team

- / Stephen Hunt, head greenkeeper
- / Fraser Clacher, deputy head greenkeeper
- / Greenkeepers: Andrew Armit, Iain Turner, Ewing Bartram



Battling a Scottish winter to create drainage at the 7th hole





A raised teeing area was created to maximise the available space

existing raised green and turfing the area that would form part of the landing area of the new par 4 fairway.

With the successful completion of this by the Strathaven greenkeepers, the new 9th hole opened for play on Friday 29 April 2022.

"My staff are a credit to themselves and their profession, working in some awful conditions to get the job done," said Stephen. "The effort we all put in to plan, cost and carry out this project to completion and on time was astronomical, working all hours to ensure the course stayed in good condition throughout."

Over 10,000m<sup>3</sup> of turf was

“My staff are a credit to themselves and their profession, working in some awful conditions to get the job done

laid, all irrigation work was carried out in house, 230 railway sleepers were installed for tee construction and a new stream and over 5,000 tons of earth was moved to fit in both new holes.

But the biggest achievement may have been the vision and ability of the Strathaven team to carry this out, mostly in house and with the confidence to complete it on time to a high standard and on budget during a period of rising daily costs.

**Congratulations to Strathaven Golf Club, winner in the Greenkeeping Project Award sponsored by Sports Turf Data Solutions.**

### The finalists

Find out more about the other finalists by scanning the QR code:

**Astbury Golf Club**



**Prestwick Golf Club**



Turfing the apron of the new 9th green



## Nominations are now open for the BIGGA Awards 2024.

If you know of a team that's undergone a major project this winter, or gone above and beyond in their daily work, there's no better way to recognise their success than by nominating them for a BIGGA Award.

Nominate here:





# Remembering Bob Moffat

BIGGA remembers a stalwart of the association  
who took great strides to develop learning  
opportunities for greenkeepers

Laurence Pithie MG

## Read this for:

/ In memoriam  
/ Life members  
/ Education

**This year's Continue to Learn Conference, Classes and Seminars at BTME offered greenkeepers of all levels the opportunity to increase their knowledge, update their learning skills and share experiences with others in producing fine turf playing surfaces.**

This outstanding education conference is something many of us now take for granted, without realising the seeds for greenkeeping training were first sown back in the mid-1960s.

Prior to then, the lack of any recognised training was a concern for many head greenkeepers. Two men in particular, Bob Moffat and Cecil George, had a vision and the insight to start the ball rolling to rectify this omission. They, along with the support of Charles Crossan of Woodburn House College, approached City & Guilds in 1966 to establish a greenkeeping training course and for this to be officially recognised.

The following year it was accepted and a syllabus produced by the 'three', along with input from other like-minded head greenkeepers. Although the course was horticulture based, it did include plant biology and soil science and contained a mix of practical and technical learning. This was the foundation for

today's training and education and while we admire the range of educational opportunities that are now available for those pursuing a career in golf course management, perhaps it begs the question of where would we be without the foresight of these three gentlemen?

Cecil George passed away in January 2019 at the age of 91. A glowing tribute to him and his contribution to greenkeeper education was paid by those who knew him and which was summarised by Karl Hansell in Greenkeeper International four years ago.

A life member of the association, Bob Moffat was the quieter of the two stalwarts and perhaps less is known about his career. Sadly, Bob passed away in January 2022, but to discover more about his contribution to the industry, I contacted his son Allan, who has also served in various roles within the greenkeeping industry.

Bob was born in Lanark in April 1933 in the greenkeeper's house where his father served as the head greenkeeper. Bob was to become the third generation to work in greenkeeping, since his grandfather worked in the combined role of greenkeeper and gamekeeper at the club.

The family moved to Sandyhills GC in



Bob hitting a shot at Yeovil in 1988

Glasgow when his father was appointed as greenkeeper and steward. It was here that Bob started his career as an apprentice in 1947, when just 15 years old.

Three years later he took up the

assistant's position at Douglas Park in Bearsden before completing his two years of National Service with the RAF in Cologne, Germany.

He then returned to his previous

position at Douglas Park and remained there for another 10 years.

In 1964, Bob gained promotion at Cathkin Braes on the south side of Glasgow as head greenkeeper, a position



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Bob with International trophy





Yeovil Golf Club as Bob knew it in 1988

“There was a growing awareness that as the game was continuing to develop, there was a need for greenkeepers to gain better education.

he held with great distinction for 12 years.

Allan said: “My father joined the SGGA around 1958 while working as an assistant at Douglas Park. His experience, knowledge and organisational skills were soon recognised and following a brief stint on the committee, he was duly appointed association secretary in 1961.”

Once settled into his role as head greenkeeper at Cathkin Braes, Bob formed a friendship with others charged with similar responsibility, including Cecil George, who had been at Lenzie since 1954.

“During the various committee and other meetings where ideas were discussed and exchanged, there was a growing awareness that as the game was continuing to develop, there was a need for greenkeepers to gain better education,” said Allan. “The general consensus was that if there were better educated greenkeepers, we would have better conditioned golf courses. This was the catalyst that led to the approach being made to City & Guilds.”

I asked Allan about his father’s position as the Scottish secretary and he explained: “Although this was more of an honorary

role, my father donated a great deal of his time in co-ordinating and producing a working syllabus for City & Guilds.”

Once instigated and the first intake of students accepted at Woodburn House College in 1967, Bob acted as an early assessor on practical greenkeeping tests; these being mostly carried out at college during the initial years and then latterly at the student’s place of work. While the provision of education was at the forefront of his remit, he also helped to organise many events, including an international greenkeeping competition with Bill Beveridge of Ransomes during the early 1970s.

Allan said: “I remember my father becoming the unofficial taxi driver for those committee members attending various events and golf days, since he rarely drank alcohol. He was always happy to oblige and to ensure everyone enjoyed their day out.

“During these events, he ran a sweepstake, whereby those attending would buy a book of five tickets to sell and each ticket would be drawn against a player in the Open Championship with cash prizes for first, second and third. This

“it is thanks to those early pioneer head greenkeepers who had the vision and foresight in recognising the need to match training and education



John Campbell interviewed Bob (pictured) in 1988 for BIGGA's Golf Course magazine

was a great way for raising funds for the association, but it did involve a great deal of work. His devoted wife Margaret and other family members would spend hours folding up the hundreds of tickets.”

After serving 14 years as Scottish secretary, Bob moved south to Calcot Park in Reading in 1976 to take up the position of head greenkeeper. Here he helped form the BB&O Section of the BGGA, which later became part of BIGGA following the amalgamation of

the three associations in 1987.

Further moves to Yeovil in 1980 and West Middlesex in 1991 followed; the latter to be closer to his family who had settled in the south east.

Bob retired as head greenkeeper in 1999, age 66, but continued to work part time at Berkshire College of Agriculture, helping young apprentices with the practical side of greenkeeping, including the traditional skills that most textbooks did not cover.

Bob passed away in January 2022 following illness in his later years. It is nearly 60 years since he and Cecil took the first steps in producing an educational system, leading to a recognised qualification within the greenkeeping industry. Great strides have since been made and it is thanks to those early pioneer head greenkeepers who had the vision and foresight in recognising the need to match training and education with golf course development.

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# TOP TIPS FOR GOLF CLUBS TO SAVE MONEY



Golf clubs are facing significantly increasing costs, particularly for energy.

Given these challenges, the UK's golfing bodies have collaborated to pool resources with a view to supporting clubs. The following is a guide that features examples of where clubs could look to save money and reduce costs.

Alongside the recommendations, we've provided links to previous Continue to Learn seminars and features that BIGGA members can view for free on the BIGGA website. These will help you proactively approach some of the conversations your club manager or committees will want to have in the near future as they look to save money around the clubhouse.

It may be intimidating to discuss ways in which you can save money and you may have to think creatively when it comes to cutting costs around the course, but by being proactive and putting a plan in place, you can present yourself as a leader in the business and a valued professional.

This guide was compiled on behalf of BIGGA, England Golf, GCMA, Golf Foundation, Golf Ireland, PGA, The R&A and Scottish Golf. With thanks to ATPi and GEO Foundation.

## PART 1: MAKING IT HAPPEN



- HOLD A TEAM MEETING**  
Hold a team meeting with lead staff and heads of departments to agree ways to use energy most efficiently within the clubhouse and maintenance facility. Areas that could be addressed include lighting, heating and appliances on stand-by.

### Useful links:

**Be the best you**  
Mark Doyle, Continue to Learn 2019



**Recognising personality types and using them to get what you want.**  
Phil Helmn MG, Continue to Learn 2020



**Put down your phone, I'm talking to you! The importance of face-to-face communications**  
John Kiger, Continue to Learn 2019



- CHECK HOT WATER THERMOSTATS**  
Check hot water thermostats and seek to reduce water temperatures wherever possible — kitchens, showers etc

### Useful links:

**The importance of understanding that golf is a business**  
Steve Chappell, Continue to Learn 2020



- LOOK FOR WAYS TO REDUCE MOWING**  
Walk the course and explore ways to reduce mowing and associated fuel costs. Try and identify areas that are out of common play, however small, and apply the approach across the entire site.

### Useful links:

**Turf management – thinking outside the box**  
Kevin Ross, Continue to Learn 2020



**Effective communication and influencing decision making using management software**  
Kevin Scarce, Continue to Learn 2022



**Future advancements in mowing technology**  
John Coleman, Continue to Learn 2020



**Plant growth regulator myths busted**  
Glenn Kirby, Syngenta



- REDUCE THE USE OF ENERGY INTENSIVE EQUIPMENT**  
Cut out any non-essential use of strimmers, leaf blowers and other energy intensive equipment.

### Useful links:

**Assessing golfer enjoyment and playing quality for your facility**  
Elliott Dowling, Continue to Learn 2019



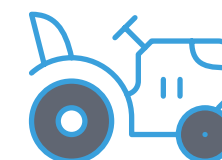
**How you can help nature on your golf course**  
Dr Marie Athorn, Continue to Learn 2022  
[www.bigga.org.uk/resource/](http://www.bigga.org.uk/resource/)



**Fraise mowing applications for playability and weed control on the golf course**  
Dr Frank Rossi, Continue to Learn 2021



- EFFICIENT IRRIGATION**  
Ask the course manager to outline a draft plan for efficient irrigation throughout the year, with specific focus on reducing running time and associated pumping costs.



4

### Useful links:

**Water management and wetting agent use**  
Addison Barden, Continue to Learn 2020



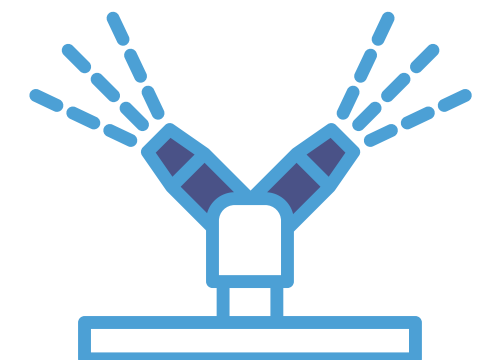
**Continue to Learn Extra Irrigation Series**  
Alistair Higgs and Stuart Tate, Rain Bird



**Understanding your irrigation system**  
Adam Lovejoy and Phil Chadwick, Continue to Learn 2020



**The POGO – moisture measure, record, react**  
Peter Corbett, Continue to Learn 2021





## PART 2: LOW COST SOLUTIONS



- 1 LIGHT BULB PLAN**  
Implement a 'light bulb plan' — each time a bulb goes, consider replacing it with an LED bulb as this will save both money and carbon.

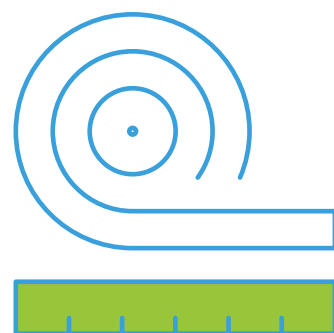


- 2 SMART METERS**  
Get an energy smart meter. Energy suppliers are obligated to rolling these out to households and small businesses, free of charge. Smart meter technology can assist businesses by: saving money on energy bills; identifying energy waste; increasing operational efficiency; increasing awareness of energy use among users; increasing ability to manage and monitor energy use and becoming more environmentally friendly.

- 3 BOILER SERVICE**  
Get your boiler serviced and adjust its flow and temperature settings so it is working in the most efficient way possible.



- 4 MAKE SURE EVERYTHING IS INSULATED**  
Ensure the clubhouse and all buildings are well-insulated. By insulating your roof space, as well as cavity walls, you will reduce heat transfer, saving energy.



- 5 DRAUGHT PROOF WINDOWS AND DOORS**  
Draught proof where you can. Windows — use draught-proofing strips around the frame, brush strips work better for sash windows. Doors — use draught-proofing strips around the edges and brush or hinged-flap draught excluders at the bottom. Chimney and fireplace — if you don't use your fireplace, use an inflatable pillow to block the chimney or fit a cap over the chimney pot. Floorboards and skirting — floorboards need to move, so use a flexible silicone-based filler to fill the gaps. Loft hatches — use draught-proofing foam strips to keep heat in.



## PART 3: BIGGER PROJECTS AND INCOME GENERATION

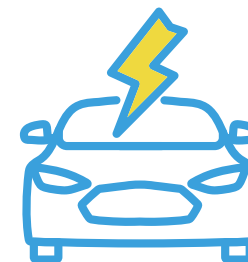
- 1 WIND TURBINES**  
Wind turbines and solar panels could reduce your reliance on 'grid energy'. This will also lower your carbon footprint.



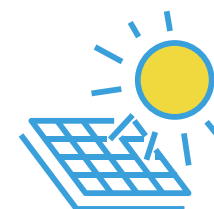
- 2 MOTION DETECTORS**  
Install motion detectors to lights and upgrade outside lights to solar power. This will ensure that lights are only used when necessary and empty rooms are not being lit.



- 3 ELECTRIC VEHICLES**  
Consider installing electric vehicle charging points; some providers offer free installation.



- 4 SOLAR PANELS**  
Consider installing solar panels. There are many providers, such as the Golf Management Group, who will be able to advise on the suitability and nature of these for your site.



- 5 ALLOW NON-MEMBERS IN THE CLUB HOUSE**  
Consider opening the clubhouse to non-members to drive more income.

**ALL ARE WELCOME**

### TIP

The BIGGA website features a library of resources including thousands of hours of Continue to Learn education available for BIGGA members to download and watch for free.

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# SPRING GREEN-UP

## Which nitrogen source to use?

Greg Moore, Plant Food Company

In late winter and early spring, when temperatures are in the 4–10°C range, there are occasions when immediate green up of turf is desired due to winter conditions, but difficult to achieve.

Nitrogen is the first primary nutrient that is utilised. But the last thing you want to do is apply a nitrogen fertiliser in the early spring, not see a response and then reapply.

The turf will green up but then grow too fast, which negatively affects playability and increases disease.

So, what is the most efficient nitrogen combination that is effective when soil and air temperatures are cold — in the 4–10°C range?

Turf, like many plants, can utilise nitrogen only when it is converted down to the ammonium ( $\text{NH}_4^+$ ) or Nitrate ( $\text{NO}_3^-$ ) form. During these cold timeframes, utilising nitrogen sources that are ammonium or nitrate will perform the fastest. Fertilisers that contain a high percentage of nitrogen in these forms will be the most effective during cold weather conditions. This applies to both granular and liquid fertilisers.

### How much to apply?

Typically, only 5–7.5kg/Ha of nitrogen in the 85–100% ammoniacal and nitrate form is needed. This is a low rate, so make sure you spray liquid fertiliser or utilise 50–90 SGN granular fertiliser.

Uniform coverage at these low rates is critical.

Look at the fertiliser label as this will provide valuable insight to guide your nitrogen selection decision.

The fertiliser label will state the total amount of nitrogen that is in the product.

This is listed as Total Nitrogen (N). Directly below this will be a breakdown of the forms of nitrogen utilised in the fertiliser product.

Utilise ammoniacal nitrogen and nitric nitrogen as these are the most effective in cold temperatures. Once they are applied to the turf and receive moisture, they can be utilised at the cold temperatures.



The per cent of the ammoniacal or nitric nitrogen should be as close as possible to the total nitrogen, which is typically 85–100% of the total available nitrogen. In example A, the total nitrogen is 10%. The ammoniacal nitrogen is 4.5% and the nitric nitrogen is 4.5% for a total of 9%. This means 90% of the available nitrogen from this product would be available at cold temperatures, which makes this a great option.

### What about ureic nitrogen?

Due to its high nitrogen analysis, excellent turf safety and high solubility, ureic nitrogen is a very desirable and effective nitrogen source.

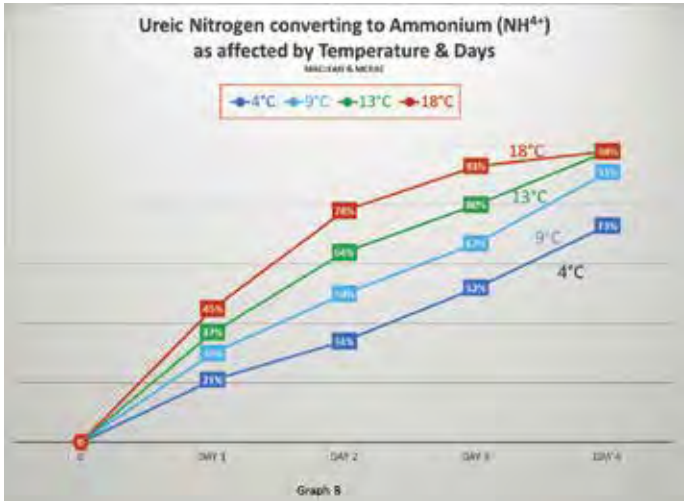
However, ureic nitrogen does have to go through a conversion to be utilised.

Ureic nitrogen will dissolve very quickly in moisture into

the form of ammonium carbonate, but an additional step is involved for ureic nitrogen to be available. The natural urease enzyme will synthesise and release the ammonium from the carbonate. Once in the free ammonium form, the plant will utilise it. At cold temperatures, the urease enzyme works much slower, which can delay the release of ureic nitrogen until temperatures increase (Graph B). This is generally two to seven days slower when temperatures are in the 4–10°C range. In this particular cold weather situation, utilising a non-ureic nitrogen is preferred. Important: ureic nitrogen will become available as temperatures warm, the response is just delayed during the period when temperatures are less than 10°C.

When should you switch to

Graph B: Ureic nitrogen converting to ammonium



the last thing you want to do is apply a nitrogen fertiliser in the early spring, not see a response and then reapply.

ureic and slow-release nitrogen products? Once you start mowing and are removing new leaf tissue, introduce ureic and stabilised organic and slow-release nitrogen sources.

### What about micronutrients for fast colour?

Two micronutrients that provide excellent colour are iron and manganese. They act as an enzyme that enhances chlorophyll. Low rates of iron can help, but make sure to include manganese to produce a vibrant, natural green turf blade.

In general, cool season turf prefers a 3-to-1 ratio of iron to manganese for a natural, deep vibrant green turf blade.

Research has also shown that ammonium nitrogen enhances the leaf uptake of manganese. Adding a little ammonium nitrogen with manganese will provide a slightly faster response. Ureic nitrogen is utilised to expedite iron into the leaf blade.

Finally, to maximise your fertiliser efficiency, make sure you properly manage your soil chemistry. A soil and salinity test will provide this information.

### Summary

- When the temperature is less than 10°C, utilise a nitrogen fertiliser that is 85–100% ammoniacal and/or nitric nitrogen.
- Ureic nitrogen is quick release but will be slow to respond when temperatures are less than 10°C due to slow urease enzyme activity.
- Do not overapply. Generally, only 5–7 kg/Ha of actual nitrogen is needed if the nitrogen source is in the ammonium or nitrate form.
- Don't forget to manage your soil chemistry.

### Continue the conversation

TurfCare is on Twitter at  
@PlantFoodCo  
@TurfCare\_IRL\_UK or  
@turfcarescott



### About the author:

Greg Moore has worked in the turf and fertiliser business for over 35 years, of which 16 years has been with Plant Food Company.

In October 2020, Greg hosted a webinar for BIGGA as part of 'Continue to Learn Extra'. He has developed numerous fertiliser products that have been utilised by turfgrass managers. Greg received a Bachelor of Science from the University of New Hampshire.



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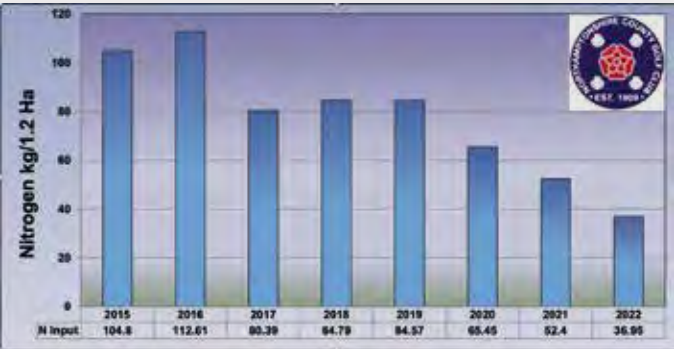
# Improve turf quality with significantly-reduced nitrogen inputs

As a part of the 2023 Continue to Learn programme, the Aquatrols seminar Improving Turf Quality with Significantly Reduced Nitrogen Inputs generated a huge amount of discussion and interest as the turf management sector seeks to reduce nitrogen inputs while producing playing surfaces of the highest quality.

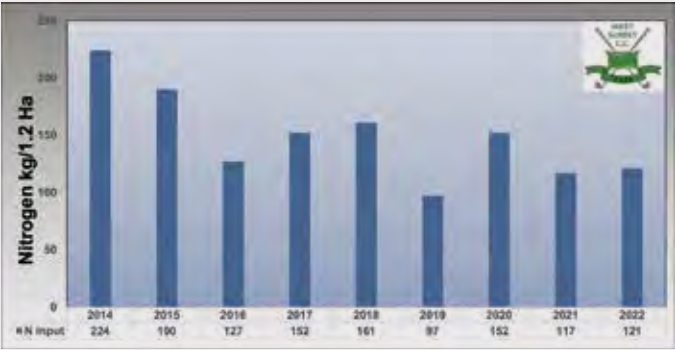
Nitrogen is an essential component of any turf fertiliser programme. However, there are drivers to consider lower nitrogen programmes and these include:

- / Favouring certain grass species
  - / Controlling organic matter production
  - / Managing disease activity with reduced fungicide inputs
  - / Tackling the increased cost of fertilisers
  - / Environmental concerns about nitrogen leachate
  - / Requirements of existing and future legislation
- Consequently, Aquatrols has been applying the technologies contained within the Redox Bio-nutrients TurfRx range to show that it is possible to achieve equivalent

Annual nitrogen inputs at Northamptonshire County Golf Club



Annual nitrogen inputs at West Surrey Golf Club



or improved turf health with a reduction in applied nitrogen.

Real world results

Rob Hay, course manager at Northamptonshire County, and Alec MacIndoe, course manager at West Surrey, presented as a part of this BTME seminar, sharing their experiences of successfully reducing annual nitrogen inputs using Redox TurfRx nutrition products as a part of their turf management programmes.

Why are we witnessing improved performance, with less input?

Part of the answer lies within improving efficiencies and this is where Redox comes in. The key to the Redox TurfRx range is the production process. The formulation of the compounds maximises plant available nutrition using chelation, complexing and micro-encapsulation techniques during manufacture.

The positive experiences reported on golf courses is backed up with independent turfgrass research trials. Research completed at Guelph University confirmed applications of TurfRx C-85 allowed for at least 25% lower nitrogen inputs

These techniques have been refined and developed to produce tank mixable, chemically stable compounds that protect, promote and deliver nutrition efficiently and successfully to the grass plant.

Improved nitrogen efficiency

Traditional synthetic nitrogen fertilisers applied to the soil tend to stabilise in the nitrate-nitrogen form. The nitrate form of nitrogen is extremely mobile in soil and can be lost to the atmosphere as ammonia gas or leaching as water moves down through the soil profile carrying nitrogen with it.

TurfRx C-85 is a multi-extraction humic and fulvic acid that contains short, medium and long-chain soluble carbon molecules.

The availability of soluble carbon across a broad pH range increases soil microbial diversity and soil health.

When combined with synthetic nitrogen, TurfRx C-85 has been shown to increase nitrogen efficiency by at least 25%.

Improved nitrogen metabolism

Nitrate-nitrogen is the primary form of nitrogen taken up by plants but cannot be used until it goes through a

reduction process. Nitrogen metabolism is the rate of nitrate-nitrogen conversion nitrogen needs to reduce to an ammoniacal form to combine with carbon, hydrogen and oxygen for the formation of amino acids, which are the building blocks of the plant.

The combination of plant nutrients and increased sugar alcohols in TurfRx Supreme has been shown to enhance rates of nitrogen metabolism and improve overall turf quality and performance.

Proven by research

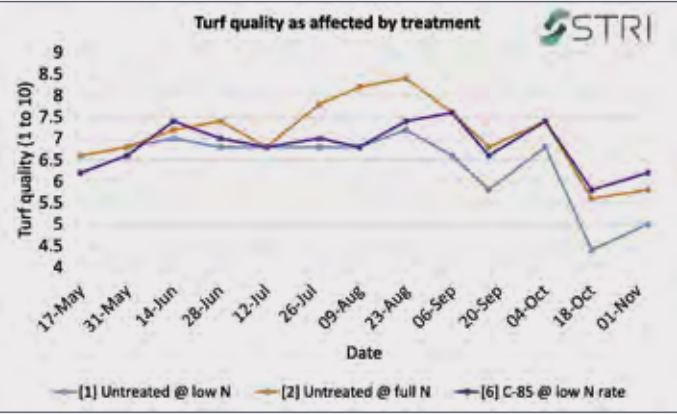
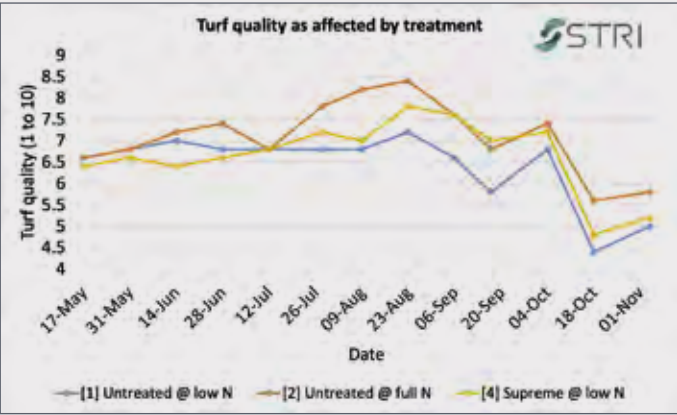
The positive experiences reported on golf courses is backed up with independent turfgrass research trials.

Research completed at Guelph University confirmed applications of TurfRx C-85 allowed for at least 25% lower nitrogen inputs while maintaining equivalent or improved turf quality versus the treated control plots and that the use of TurfRx C-85 resulted in up to a 60% decrease in nitrogen leaching.

STRI research results

In 2021 a trial at STRI looked at the effects of TurfRx C-85 and Supreme on turf performance including sward density, turf colour and turf quality, comparing their use in

STRI Results



both low rate and full rate nitrogen fertiliser programmes.

The full nitrogen programme had 90Kg/N/Ha applied in a six-month span from May to October, while the low nitrogen programme had 30Kg/N/Ha applied during the same six-month period.

Data confirmed that improvements in turf performance, including turf quality as shown in these two graphs, could be achieved at very low N applications during the main growing season when combined with applications of TurfRx C-85 or TurfRx Supreme. With both products there was a cumulative effect observed over the length of the trial.

The performance of TurfRx C-85 low N improved over time to not only record higher turf quality than the low N plots but ultimately the full N plots too.

In conclusion

As we approach the start of a new growing season, consider reducing your nitrogen fertiliser inputs by incorporating Redox TurfRx products into your nutritional programme.

For more information, please contact your local Aquatrols Account Manager.

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# WHY IS LOOKING AT THE TOTAL COST OF OWNERSHIP IMPORTANT WHEN BUYING MACHINERY?

Investing in machinery is a key consideration for greenkeeping professionals.

But choosing the model of mower is only one aspect of the decision as you also need to consider the lifetime costs of your new machinery.

It is vital to consider the total cost of ownership (TCO) when making this decision.

Both new and used machinery needs to be assessed with TCO in mind, helping you to budget for the best possible choice for your long-term needs.

## PRODUCTIVITY

The productivity of your machinery is measured at the rate at which the work is performed. Key variables may include the overall cutting width of the mower, as well as the operating speed. When we talk about operating speed, we mean both the forward speed of the machine, but also if that machine can do all the work that is required. For example, would you have to roll the area after it's been mowed or is there a roller on a mower? Would you need to go around afterwards and blow the cut grass away or does the mower have a collector?

“The total cost of ownership gives you a truer and more reflective picture of the lifetime cost of your machinery,

Speed may also impact the cut quality, depending on the chosen model. The more productive the equipment, the more jobs you can get done, and the more profitable you will be.

Investing in the most up-to-date machinery usually delivers higher productivity levels. However, older machines can still deliver high productivity levels and be the correct choice for your work. To find the most suitable machine, we recommend having a demonstration on your grounds.

## FUEL

Operational costs are another leading contributor to

TCO. Older equipment may be less efficient and may use more fuel, so it is important to consider whether an initially lower price is worth the additional cost over time to keep the equipment operational.

While hybrid and electric technologies are becoming more popular, we are still in the early adoption stage for this machinery. It is also important to consider whether the increased cost is worth the investment.

## MAINTENANCE AND SERVICING

When we talk about maintenance and servicing, we are referring to several things:

### Maintenance

Understanding the machine's maintenance requirements is important as this affects the TCO. How many grease points does it have? How frequently do they need to be greased? How accessible are the grease points?

You may be surprised at the results when you go through all this information. It's not uncommon to see

machines requiring over 200 hours a year of greasing.

That's almost a month in the workshop.

### Spare parts

The accessibility of parts should be a key factor when purchasing new machinery.

Consider how frequently crucial parts and components need to be replaced. How long does each part take to replace? How accessible are the parts?

These are all great questions to ask sellers. If your machine breaks down, can you get next-day delivery to get you back up and running?



Every minute of downtime costs money, so understanding the maintenance and parts costs for your new equipment is vital.

### Support and backup

Is there technical support available for your new equipment? It is worth exploring whether there are useful self-help portals or 24/7 support from specialists in the make and model of your machinery.

To make an informed purchase, you must ask questions about the support available for your new

machinery. Ask as many questions as you need to feel confident as making a good purchase decision relies upon having all relevant information.

## PURCHASE PRICE

The initial cost is the final key component of any machine's total cost of ownership. The purchase price is often the main figure considered before investing in machinery. However, budgeting accordingly is vital to ensure you purchase the right machinery for your needs.

Buying older or

second-hand machinery may be appealing because of the lower purchase price.

However, this equipment often does not offer additional benefits such as warranties, service plans and reliable parts availability.

### Using total cost of ownership to inform your next purchase

Taking a holistic and long-term approach to the total cost of ownership will ensure you choose the right option for your needs.

It is easy to be swayed by an attractive purchase price, but do not forget to look into the

specifications of the machinery, consider its efficiency and the costs that may build up over time in fuel, maintenance and running costs.

The total cost of ownership gives you a truer and more reflective picture of the lifetime cost of your machinery, so measuring and comparing different models of different ages and conditions is a vital part of making your decision.

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# THE COST OF HYBRID MACHINERY

In an article last year, Reesink Turfcare demystified the cost of electric turfcare machinery, considering the comparisons and crunching the figures to see how battery-power could save greenkeepers money. So where does hybrid machinery fit into this equation? Lee Rowbotham from Reesink explains.

What is hybrid technology?

Hybrid technology sees two different power sources — an internal combustion engine and a battery system and generator — working together in a single machine. Energy is stored in the battery and released when needed to supplement the diesel engine and electric generator to provide extra power for the mower's traction system and drive the electric reel motors.

Fuel savings

When it comes to making the most of the fuel, hybrid systems are designed to make every joule of energy count. They're built to collect and store excess energy which can then be reused. Utilising excess energy greatly reduces the number of trips needed to refuel — something all greenkeepers can be pleased about — and providing power through a battery means that machines running on a hybrid system can use smaller engines without compromising performance. The best things really do come in small packages, as a smaller engine conserves more fuel and comes in under Tier 4 mandates.

Reduced hydraulics

The reduction in hydraulics is another cost-saving feature and one that can often be overlooked. On a golf course or sports grounds, a hydraulic leak can make quick work of destroying otherwise pristine turf. By replacing the cylinder-drive circuit functions with electronics like the efficient design of Toro hybrid mowers does, leak potential from the cylinder circuit is virtually eliminated, and spillages avoided. The savings soon add up when considering how reduced hydraulics save

on service costs as well as limiting turf damage. Annual savings in labour costs, hydraulic oil and replacement hoses and filters can top £900 based on a service interval of 1,000 hours. Year on year, these kinds of service costs can make a difference in a businesses' expenses.

Troubleshooting issues

InfoCentre built into a machine will troubleshoot any issues that occur. Generator status and hybrid system voltage are both displayed for easy tracking — at full engine throttle this voltage should be approximately 54.Ovdc. Motor speeds and the current being drawn can also be tracked to ensure efficient operation. If the motors aren't running at the same speed or one is drawing excessive power, that could indicate a reel bearing issue or the need for a bedknife adjustment. Knowing these issues right off the bat can save money and time in fixing the machine.

Return on investment

Ultimately what it comes down to is: are hybrid mowers a good return on investment? The answer has proven to be a resounding yes. A hybrid system has specific design features that require less power. Flocked seals for example reduce drag on the cutting units so less horsepower is needed to turn them. Cylinders that are driven by electronics operate at a constant speed, resulting in a consistent cut quality minute by minute, hour after hour. The absence of hydraulic systems requires more horsepower to operate and fuel to run as

well as accruing higher maintenance costs and time requirements.

The technology

Toro has spearheaded the movement towards sustainable machinery power for the last decade and the result is a range of hybrid and electric machinery options for the greens, tees, fairways, and for maintenance:

Hybrid Drive: The Toro Reelmaster 5010-H

Featuring Toro's PowerMatch technology to match the power required for the vehicle and the cutting units based on the mowing conditions.

All-electric cylinders: Toro Greensmaster TriFlex Hybrid models

These petrol/diesel-powered greens mowers feature an all-electric cylinder circuit that was designed with ample power for the most demanding applications, on and off the green.

HybridDrive cutting decks: Toro Groundsmaster 5900 and 4000

A HybridDrive cutting deck system combines with hydraulic motor to drive one spindle, with the remaining spindles driven by individual B section Kevlar v-belts. These examples demonstrate how Toro delivers a range of hybrid solutions, each of which makes the whole greater than the sum of its parts.

For more information

Contact Reesink, sole Toro distributor in the UK for golf and sports fields equipment and irrigation products, to find out more at 01480 226 800, email info@reesinkturfcare.co.uk.



## ADVERTORIAL Collier Turf Care and Olmix Plant Care: partners to distribute Marathon ALGAE organo-mineral fertiliser in the UK

Both companies announce their partnership to develop the sequential release organo-mineral fertiliser Marathon ALGAE, on sport pitches in United Kingdom.

"Olmix is delighted with the partnership with Collier Turf Care!" enthuses Geert Bakker, Olmix Territory Manager for the Northern European Turf and Amenity markets. "Collier Turf Care is a fast-growing company with highly dedicated teams, strong in service to their clients, technical and market knowledge and has a very good presence on social media. We are more than happy to introduce the Marathon ALGAE range together with them and set up a long-term relationship."

The French company Olmix are a specialist in bio-solutions and nutritional solutions for plant care. They design, produce and market via a network of distributors a range of bio-sourced solutions for agriculture and the sports turf and green spaces market. The company's UK position has been strengthened since the 2018 acquisition of Micromix Plant Health. Based in Langar, Nottinghamshire, they specialise in bio-stimulants and foliar nutrition.

Feeding and preserving turf: the battle of Marathon

In the field of sports turf fertilisation, the French company has built up a certain reputation with its range of sequential-release organo-mineral fertilisers Marathon, which is well known to golf course and sports pitches managers. Thanks to its patented XSER technology, the Marathon range allows gentle management of turf nutrition, with a gradual release of nutrients into the soil solution, up to 12 weeks after application of the product. The advantages of Marathon are that it promotes tillering and grass density rather than excessive or uneven growth, while limiting mineral losses through leaching and the risk of groundwater pollution.

Geert Bakker highlights the relevance of the Marathon ALGAE range to the UK market: "Sports pitch managers in the UK are top professionals, looking for the best solutions to ensure the quality of their grounds. With the Marathon ALGAE range and our partnership with Collier Turf Care, we can meet the growing demand from these professionals for effective and more environmentally friendly solutions. Marathon ALGAE has proven itself on many of Europe's top sports pitches and there is a strong market demand for this range."

Marathon ALGAE SPORT at a glance:

- / NPK 16-4-8 + 2% MgO + 0.3% Fe
- / Quick granule dispersion.
- / Lasts up to 12 weeks.
- / Strengthens the turf's resistance to stress.
- / Contains 3% SEADRY which at an application rate of 30 g/sq.m puts down 9 kg of seaweed per ha.

Managing Director Andrew Harding and his team at Collier Turf Care Ltd are excited about the new Olmix partnership and particularly the opportunity to advise, promote and sell the Marathon brand throughout the UK: "The new improved granulation of Marathon with added algae offers many benefits to UK sports facilities, and our UK trials have highlighted many positives with great results. We are confident once used our customers will keep using."

For more information

For all Marathon enquiries, contact: Collier Turf Care Ltd 01328 700 600 sales@collier-turf-care.co.uk



Article brought to you by





# INDUSTRY NEWS

## GMA hosts GroundsWeek '23

#GroundsWeek, the Grounds Management Association's (GMA) annual campaign to recognise the work of turf care volunteers and professionals in the UK, is returning from 20-26 March.

According to research carried out by the GMA, the industry is facing an impending employment crisis.

Currently, 40% of the workforce is over 50 and, without an influx of new recruits, this could result in a significant employment gap within five years.

Geoff Webb, CEO of the GMA, said: "Our job is to look out for the interests of our members and the wider industry. Part of that means



ensuring new talent is entering the industry. Turf care is an amazing chance for younger people to learn new skills, work in a wide range of sectors and contribute to making sport possible. It offers incredible career opportunities and health

benefits. Connecting with new recruits is what #GroundsWeek is all about."

Neil Stubley, head of courts and horticulture at Wimbledon, added: "I'm looking forward to supporting #GroundsWeek, showcasing our work to a wider audience."

John Paramor remembered



BIGGA was saddened to hear of the death of John Paramor, one of the most respected rules officials in golf.

John's remarkable career spanned six decades, during which time he became one of the most recognisable figures in the game. He joined the European Tour as an administrator in April 1976. At the time, he was the Tour's sixth employee at its original base at The Oval in Surrey.

Scots Turf show launched



A new turf care event in Scotland is being hosted for the first time on 1 March.

The Scots Turf Show at Hamilton Racecourse will feature 17 companies. A trial event in 2019 at Falkirk Tryst saw 118 people turn out.

The organisers say the show is an opportunity for Scottish turf professionals to attend a major exhibition, with existing offerings all taking place in England.

Royal St David's boss wins DLF seed prize

Andy Spetch retires from Topsoil role



Andy Spetch is to retire at the end of April following a career with British Sugar spanning 36 years.

Andy joined as an agricultural trainee in 1987 and worked as an agronomist before starting up British Sugar's TOPSOIL division in 1997. Andy realised the rich arable soil brought into British Sugar factories on sugar beet could become a resource for the construction, landscaping and sports amenity markets.

Andy said: "My time with British Sugar, and particularly heading up TOPSOIL, has been incredibly rewarding.

"Together with the great team at TOPSOIL, I hope I've managed to make a positive contribution to the use and acceptance of quality manufactured topsoils, which



must be the future if we are to protect the earth's soils."

In retirement, Andy will continue to volunteer as a pitch advisor for the RFU and in July this year he will be cycling from his home to Switzerland, following the Rhine for over 700 miles. He will be completing the ride to raise funds for research into Motor Neurone Disease.

You can sponsor Andy on JustGiving.

Rhys Butler, links manager at Royal St Davids, has been announced as the winner of the DLF Sustainability Seed competition held at BTME.

Regional Technical Manager Stuart Yarwood MG recently visited Rhys to present the prize of a Greenstester.

Rhys said: "BTME was a really informative and enjoyable experience and to win this competition is just the icing on the cake."

## RECRUITMENT MEET THE MANAGERS:

# LEE STRUTT MG

Director of Agronomy | Cabot Cape Breton, Nova Scotia



Most greenkeepers know (or have heard of) Lee Strutt MG CGCS MS CSTM. He first set foot on a golf course as a teenager over four decades ago and in that time, he's gained an enviable clutch of turf related qualifications. Indeed, he's the only greenkeeper to achieve all four of the world's turf designations!

Lee has worked extensively in the UK, Europe and now finds himself in Nova Scotia, Canada. He's helped mentor and support students of the FTMI programme and is a regular presenter at regional and national conferences.

Most successful people are successful for a reason and are only too happy to share their insights and advice to help others when given the opportunity. I talk candidly with Lee as he shares his experiences and insights on how he has achieved success and reached the top.

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

**Lee Strutt MG:** Take your time learning the craft of greenkeeping as you'll benefit from this in the future, helping you develop your own gut feeling decision making.

Also, understand that career success is not necessarily working towards a manager's post, as other career paths in the industry could be equally as rewarding.

**Phil Helmn MG:** Totally agree with this Lee, there are many 'lanes' on the turf industry motorway. Find the lane that best suits you and gives you the most personal reward.

**What did you study?**

**Lee:** School was a complete non-starter for me, I only left with five GCE's with minimal grades. In my late teens I was sent to Sparsholt College and



Cabot Cape Breton supers

started studying turf management. From there, I gained a real passion for learning all things turf and, just as importantly, people.

**What skills have you found vital to your job?**

**Lee:** Patience, active listening and ensuring everyone is on board with your strategies.

**Phil:** Patience and the ability to listen are skills that never came naturally to me, I'm sad to say. They take continual effort and a lot of hard work to master.

**What should I be doing to improve my career prospects?**

**Lee:** Network! Reach out to people via social media and or events. Not everyone will respond, but the good ones will. Be honest, ask for help, but make sure you put the effort in!

**Phil:** I admit that early on in my career I never appreciated the power of 'getting involved' in our industry. Reaching out for help, advice, even event volunteering will benefit your career opportunities.

**What is on your mind now regarding our industry?**

**Lee:** The new GCSAA and BIGGA initiative, First Green, could well be key to breaking down the barriers about

negativity towards golf courses and create opportunities for people to see our turf business as a credible career opportunity. With this comes the much-needed recognition greenkeepers and our industry deserves, both professionally and financially.

**Which has been more valuable in your career, your education or your experience?**

**Lee:** Experience gets the job done and supports your reputation.

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

**Lee:** Tell myself to learn and trust my gut feelings as they rarely let you down. I'd also work overseas at a younger age.

**Phil:** Very true Lee. When experience grows, the ability to understand what's right magnifies. I'm reminded of the quote by Albert Einstein, "Information is not knowledge. The only source of knowledge is experience. You need experience to gain wisdom".



Article by  
**Phil Helmn MG.**  
Connect with Phil  
@HelmnPhil



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/ Full time

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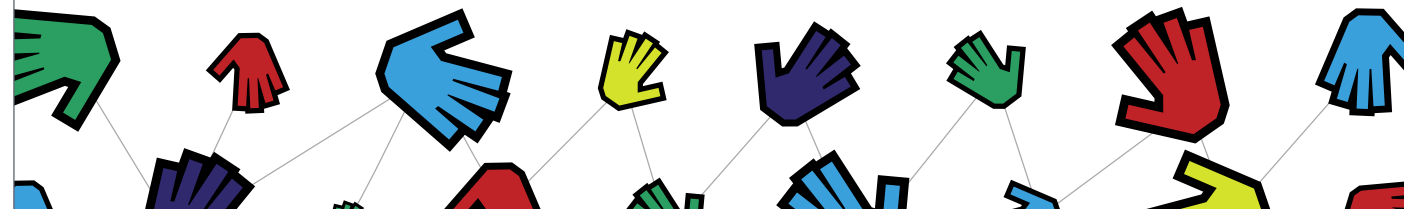
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For more information on how the BIGGA Greenkeepers Benevolent Fund can help please call 01347 833 800 or email [benevolentfund@bigga.co.uk](mailto:benevolentfund@bigga.co.uk)



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1986

# HISTORY OF GREENKEEPERS' ASSOCIATIONS

1986

The steering committee from BGGa, SIGGA, EIGGA were holding regular meetings under the chairmanship of Peter Wilson from the England Golf Union, to develop a constitution suitable for all.

The BGGa sent out prepaid voting cards to all members to give the BGGa executive an idea of the thoughts of its members. Only 28% of members bothered to return the cards, but of these 88% were in favour of amalgamation. However, there was some criticism at the suggested name: BIGGA.

At the AGM in August, Peter Alliss resigned as president after five years in the position. He was thanked for his efforts in trying to get the golfing establishments to recognise problems arising through the lack of training of greenkeepers.

The newly-elected president was J Hamilton Stutt, the well-known golf course architect.

It was also noted that the membership was continuing to grow, with 100 new BGGa members and the EIGGA also saying their membership was growing.

The BGGa balance sheet showed healthy returns, with assets of £240,000 at headquarters and £10,000 in the sections.

In September, the proposed constitution for the new association was sent out to all BGGa members, featuring two resolutions:

1. That this association supports the amalgamation of the BGGa with SIGGA and EIGGA.
2. That the association do empower its executive committee to create a trust fund with the initial sum of £15,000 for the purpose of assisting the training of greenkeepers and any costs that may arise as a result of the proposed amalgamation.

In October the results from the three associations regarding the amalgamation were: BGGa, 80%; SIGGA, unanimous; EIGGA, 90%.

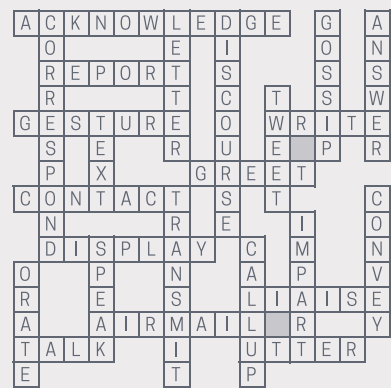
And so the end of the BGGa, SIGGA and EIGGA came at the end of 1986.

Seventy-four years since the BGGa was first formed and through all the trials and tribulations of two world wars, with practically no assistance or support from any of the golfing authorities or even the golf clubs themselves, the BGGa had carried on.

There was reason for optimism as the new association would bring together all the greenkeepers' associations in the UK under the umbrella of the British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association (BIGGA).



## CRISS-CROSS: Keep in Touch



## Word Ladder

FORK                      DIRK  
PORK                     DISK  
PARK                     DISH  
DARK

## Egg Timer

- |            |             |
|------------|-------------|
| 1. Respite | 5. Taper    |
| 2. Priest  | 6. Entrap   |
| 3. Tripe   | 7. Panther. |
| 4. Pert    |             |

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



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