



# Greenkeeper International

## From the Home Office to Ormskirk

Following a 2019 career change, Michael Russell is the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year  
PLUS: Farleigh's Daniel Martin claims the Young category

### ■ From Your Association

Meet John Keenaghan – our new president-elect

### ■ Careers

Bentham's Shaun Conway on almost 25 years in the profession

### ■ Practical Greenkeeping

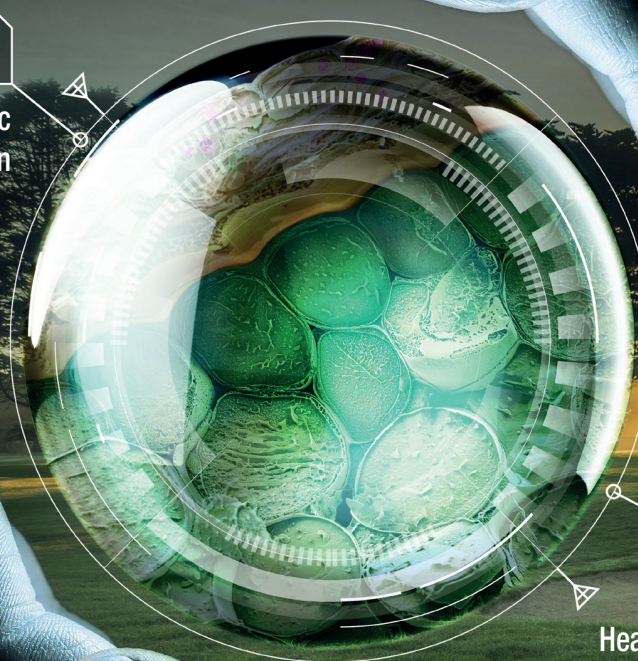
The R&A's Sustainability Team on building new tees

# The **balance** of **power**... ...is in your hands



## Prevention

Balanced systemic protection



## Cure

Healthy stress free turf

## **NEW Ascernity with Solatenol™ and difenoconazole.**

Powerful broad spectrum disease control with balanced systemic movement.  
For the most complete and reliable protection you can get. In the fight against disease,  
get all the power you need.



Syngenta UK Ltd. Registered in England No. 849037. CPC4 Capital Park, Fulbourn, Cambridge CB21 5XE.  
Email: [product.technical\\_enquiries@syngenta.com](mailto:product.technical_enquiries@syngenta.com) Web: [www.syngentaturf.co.uk](http://www.syngentaturf.co.uk)

Ascernity® is a Registered Trademark of a Syngenta Group Company. Ascernity® (MAPP 19544) contains Solatenol™ and difenoconazole.  
All other brand names used are trademarks of other manufacturers in which proprietary rights may exist. Always read the label and product information before use.  
Use plant protection products safely. For more information including warning phrases and symbols refer to [www.syngentaturf.co.uk](http://www.syngentaturf.co.uk) © Syngenta September 2017.



Distributed in the UK and Ireland by ICL Ltd. Tel: 01473 237 100  
Email: [prof.sales@icl-group.com](mailto:prof.sales@icl-group.com) Web: [www.icl-growingolutions.uk](http://www.icl-growingolutions.uk)

TM



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.

**Contact us**  
Email

Membership enquiries, including changes of address  
[membership@bigga.co.uk](mailto:membership@bigga.co.uk)  
 Letters and editorial enquiries  
[info@bigga.co.uk](mailto:info@bigga.co.uk)

**Post**

BIGGA, Coxwold House, Easingwold Business Park, Stillington Road, Easingwold, York YO61 3FB

**Phone**

Membership services 01347 833 800

**Social**

[golfgreenkeepers](https://www.facebook.com/golfgreenkeepers)  
[@BIGGALtd](https://twitter.com/BIGGALtd)  
[@bigga\\_hq](https://www.instagram.com/bigga_hq)

**The BIGGA team**

Chief Executive Officer Jim Croxton  
 Chief Operating Officer Sami Strutt  
 Chief Financial Officer Steve Wragg  
 Head of Communications Karl Hansell  
 Editorial Assistant Lorna Taylor  
 Design and Brand Executive Libbie Waddleton  
 Head of Business Development Lauren Frazer [lauren@bigga.co.uk](mailto:lauren@bigga.co.uk)  
 Business Development Manager Gavin Rees [gavin@bigga.co.uk](mailto:gavin@bigga.co.uk)

**Publishers**

Greenkeeper International is published on BIGGA's behalf by 18Players. For editorial enquiries, email Dan Murphy: [d.murphy@18players.com](mailto:d.murphy@18players.com)

ISSN: 0961-6977

© 2023 British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association Limited

# Welcome

By the time you read this the results of the 2023 Solheim and Ryder Cup matches will be known, hot on the heels of the exciting Walker Cup held at St Andrews last month. I personally hope the Americans' impressive comeback at the Home of Golf was not a sign of things to come. I know that Lara Arias at Marco Simone and Ignacio Soto at Finca Cortesin, alongside their teams, will have had the playing surfaces absolutely spot on for the world's best male and female golfers and it will have made for thrilling viewing and a brilliant advert for our sport.

Similarly the team at Wentworth provided an amazing canvas for the entire Ryder Cup team to battle it out at the BMW PGA. There were some impressive performances from many of them which boded well. Congratulations to the team on the West Course, led by Dan Clarke and Stefan Carter and including a strong BIGGA Volunteer Support Team for the week. I was privileged to attend the BMW, an event which just gets bigger and better each year. A meeting took place of all the key organisations in golf and it was gratifying to hear that £100,000 has been raised to fund a project to focus on workforce issues in the sport in GB&I. This project will

**“ We continue to strive to improve working conditions and respect for our members**

complement and accelerate our own workforce projects, including First Green.

To sit around the boardroom table in the DP World Tour offices with all the CEOs in the sport and have workforce and golf course issues such as water security and pesticide regulations as the key items on the agenda is very encouraging, particularly on the back of a hugely successful Thank a Greenkeeper day earlier in the week.

We continue to strive to improve working conditions and respect for our members and this magazine containing the Continue to Learn programme means the annual opportunity for our members to take their own steps for career development is upon us. I hope to see very many of you during BTME in a few short months.



**Jim Croxton**  
BIGGA Chief Executive

**Here to support you when you need us**

Full Members Personal  
 Accident Helpline 0161 687 2178

Health and Safety Advice  
[advice.support@citation.co.uk](mailto:advice.support@citation.co.uk)

Greenkeepers Legal Assistance  
 0808 181 9194

Lifestyle Counselling 0333 000 2082

Human Resources 0845 646 1332  
[bigga@hrservicescotland.co.uk](mailto:bigga@hrservicescotland.co.uk)

BIGGA Greenkeepers  
 Benevolent Fund  
[benevolentfund@bigga.co.uk](mailto:benevolentfund@bigga.co.uk)



Contents may not be reprinted or otherwise reproduced without written permission. Return postage must accompany all materials submitted if return is requested. No responsibility can be assumed for unsolicited materials. The right is reserved to edit submissions before publication. Although every care will be taken, no responsibility is accepted for loss of manuscripts, photographs or artwork. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Association, and no responsibility is accepted for such content, advertising or product information that may appear. Circulation is by subscription. Subscription rate: UK £60 per year, Europe and Eire £75, Rest of the World £100. The magazine is also distributed to BIGGA members, golf clubs, local authorities, the turf industry, libraries and central government.



24



BIGGA

# Contents

October 2023



41



30



48



42



13

## First Cut

**10 • 1,000 mile challenge smashed**

John Deere employees raise more than £13k

**13 • Newbury & Crookham's 150th**

The club has been celebrating its landmark year

## From Your Association

**18 • BIGGA conferences**

All the details on the largest regional education event for BIGGA members

**20 • Welcome aboard**

A full list of our newest members

**24 • Continue to Learn at BTME 2024**

The education programme is the largest of its kind in Europe and welcomes people from across the world

## Member Interest

**30 • The 34th Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards**

Catching up with the winners at Cheshire's Carden Park

## Careers

**41 • New 'keeper of the green' at St Andrews**

The Old Course welcomes Jon Wood

**42 • My Career**

We talk to Shaun Conway about his greenkeeping journey

**44 • Recruitment**

All the latest job vacancies

## Practical Greenkeeping

**48 • How to build a new tee**

Five considerations for clubs constructing new teeing areas

**56 • Phosphite for turfgrass management**

We explore this plant nutrient's vast range of applications



# TOUGH TURF

AUTUMN/WINTER PACKAGE

**INCREASED PRESENTATION**

**IMPROVED WEAR TOLERANCE**

**TRIED / TESTED / TRUSTED**



## TOUGH TURF XCEL

As we head into autumn and winter, it's time to toughen your turf with Aquatrols' tank mixable Tough Turf package. These proven products work together to prepare your turf for protection against the variable weather conditions and increased disease pressures that come with the changing seasons.

**Talk to your local Aquatrols Europe representative about the Tough Turf package today!**



For more information about our products

[eu.aquatrols.com](http://eu.aquatrols.com) | [info@aquatrols.com](mailto:info@aquatrols.com) | tel: 01233 633 267



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

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



**Individual Contributors:**

Andrew Campbell | Greg Evans | Frank Newberry | Jon Kiger | Richard McGlynn



# BIGGA

Premium Partner



## BERNHARD



# BIGGA

Supporter



agrovista  
amenity



# AITKENS

THE GROWING COMPANY



Wiedenmann

Sports&Turf



Expert Surfaces

# sisis





# MAKES AERATING EFFORTLESS

// The IQ dual-clutch F24/R24 gear box was chosen as it makes manoeuvring the tractor around the course whilst operating the equipment so easy. Another feature we really like is the Auto PTO function or the Headland Management System, it is brilliant for when we get to the end of the run with the aerator, we can lift the implement up, the PTO automatically cuts out, we can turn around then lower again and PTO restarts by itself. Brilliant for safety and avoiding damage or excess wear and tear on the implements themselves."

Daniel Spencer, Letchworth Golf Club

**Contact your  
Local Dealer to book  
a demonstration  
on your site today!**





# First Cut

All you need to know from around our industry

- A greenkeeper's best friend – this month we meet Oscar
- All the dates for your diary in our what's on listings



## FairWays Foundation receives record number of grant applications

A record number of grant applications were made to The FairWays Foundation in 2023.

The organisation was founded in 2019 and is now in its fourth grant cycle, which has attracted applications from 48 projects that qualified for consideration.

"We are extremely happy with this year's grant applications," said Greg Lovell, president of The FairWays Foundation said. "The quality and

variety of projects is amazing. We have a record number of applications from a record number of countries and access to a record dollar amount to award."

The FairWays Foundation completed its third grant cycle in 2022, bringing the total funding to £351,842 since its inception with 29 projects supported across the UK, USA and Canada.

It is anticipated that total funding

will surpass \$600,000 (£477,840) this year.

Nairn Dunbar in Highland and Hever Castle in Kent were both recipients of grant funding last year.

The not-for-profit Fairways Foundation is dedicated to safeguarding the environment by supporting conservation-based projects, as well as educational events for professionals and newcomers to the field. **GI**

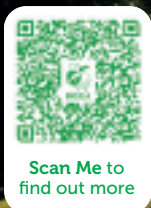


Golf needs nature. There is no great golf without it. And now, perhaps more than ever, nature needs golf" – Roddy Williams, page 14

## The BIGGA Calendar

Above: Picture taken by Josh Smith, Tandridge

Download the desktop calendar by scanning the QR code:



# John Deere employees smash 1,000-mile challenge

John Deere employees have smashed through their distance and fundraising targets in a 1,000-mile charity challenge.

A 41-strong group took on the Peak District Ultra Challenge, tackling 50 kilometres over 24 hours or 100 kilometres in 34 hours with a view to raising £10,000 for Cancer Research UK.

The team collectively walked, jogged and ran an incredible 1,400 miles, receiving donations totalling more than £13,000.

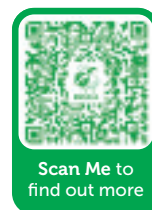


“We wanted to find something to suit varying fitness levels to encourage more participation, in turn helping to raise as much money as possible,” said Chris Meacock, John Deere division

sales manager for golf and turf. “We achieved both and a highly enthused team set about the challenge.

“It was not easy, but the team was spurred on by the cause. The event organisation was superb, and our team was looked after fabulously, with food, water and feet patched up as required.”

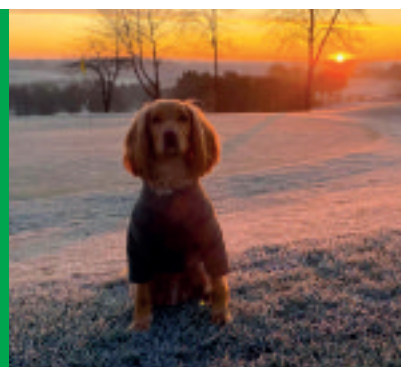
Scan the QR code to donate.



## A greenkeeper's best friend – Oscar

Owner: Jamie Searby  
Club: Low Laithes Golf Club

**Dog's name:** Oscar  
**Breed:** Cocker Spaniel  
**Age:** Two years old  
**Favourite treat:** Yogurt pot from the lads  
**Favourite spot:** On the windowsill  
**Naughtiest moment:** When he mistakes the odd golf ball for his own ball  
**He is happiest when:** Running about on a morning before work or helping the lads finish off their lunches



# What's on this month



## Dates for your diary

**4 October**  
BIGGA North East Section Autumn Golf Day –  
Tyneside GC

BIGGA North Wales Section Autumn Golf Day –  
Conwy GC



Conwy

**11 October**  
BIGGA East of England Golf Day – Seacroft GC

**13 October**  
BIGGA Jersey Education Day – La Moye GC

**19 October**  
BIGGA South West Mechanics Workshop – Tallis  
Amos, Kemble

**25 October**  
BIGGA Scotland L&D Roadshow – Mortonhall GC



Seacroft



Our programme of local and regional events is supported by regional patrons, whose generosity helps create opportunities for BIGGA members.

### GOLD



### SILVER



### PREMIUM



### CONNECT PLUS



### CONNECT



Head to the BIGGA website for more information about local activities near you



# Korda leads tributes to your work on #ThankAGreenkeeper Day

Nelly Korda's words of praise were echoed by fellow golf stars on a record-breaking #ThankAGreenkeeper day.

The annual event returned on September 12 as golf lovers were invited to show their appreciation to the hardworking professionals who make the sport possible.

Major champion Korda, who sealed a wire-to-wire triumph at Centurion Club in July to claim the Aramco Team Series individual title, knew exactly who to thank after her success.

"I just want to say a special thank you to the greenkeepers at Centurion, this one's for you," she said.

Introduced into the UK three years ago, Thank A Greenkeeper Day is hosted by BIGGA and seeks to raise awareness of those working in greenkeeping. Working alongside allied associations in the United States, Australia, Canada and across Europe, it seeks to build bridges between greenkeepers and those who love the game of golf.

The efforts of all those involved have led to courses using less water, employing sustainable management practices and expanding natural wildlife habitats on golf properties.

Utilising the hashtag #ThankAGreenkeeper in the UK and #ThankASuper in the US, the day is a social media movement seen by millions of people far and wide, creating a positive impact on our golf course professionals.

Darren Clarke, the 2011 Open champion, added: "For all the greenkeepers out there, thank you for everything you do. My dad used to be a greenkeeper and some of my best buddies – a guy called Matt DiMase, the course superintendent at The Abaco Club at home in the Bahamas, is a greenkeeper and he's one of my best buddies. I know a lot of greenkeepers and you guys work tirelessly to make the golf courses that we play as good as they are, so thank you very much." GI



Former World No 1 Nelly Korda was among the stars paying tribute to your work

## In numbers: #ThankAGreenkeeper 2023

**14.7 million**

Global impressions – 40% increase on 2022

**11.2 million**

Impressions in the US through Golf Channel

**7 million**

Impressions via broadcast media (BBC) in the UK

More than **4,500 posts**

made using #ThankAGreenkeeper and #ThankASuper – a 30% increase on 2022

Almost **30 million**

total impressions globally across social and broadcast media



## Scots end at Balgownie

The BIGGA Scotland Golf Tour drew to a close with a fantastic final event at Royal Aberdeen's Balgownie Course on 22 August.

All 32 players had to qualify through one of seven competitions held across Scotland throughout the summer.

The qualifying competitions were: Central Caledonian Quaich at The Castle Course, St Andrews; North East Classic at Meldrum House; West of Scotland Open at Cathkin Braes; East of Scotland Masters at Royal Burgess Golfing Society; Highland Cup at Portmahomack (Tarbat); Ayrshire Shield at Prestwick St Nicholas, and The Legacy Golf Championship at Auchterarder.

Competitors ranged in age from 21 through to 75 and represented roles at every level of greenkeeping, with handicaps varying from plus three to 23.

Alistair Morrison (Durness) won the Challenge Trophy with 37 points in the Stableford event, while Euan Bogle (Stirling) was crowned Scottish Champion with a gross 68 in the strokeplay competition.

# Newbury & Crookham's 150<sup>th</sup>

Newbury & Crookham Golf Club has been celebrating a landmark year, with 2023 heralding its 150th anniversary.

The Berkshire club was established in 1873 and the current course dates back to 1923, making this year a significant one on two counts.

Course Manager Chris Ball, who took up the role in 2014, is honoured to be adding his own chapter to the club's proud history.

"This is a club that has always been held in high regard, so it is a big responsibility to be entrusted with maintaining those standards," he said.

"The 150th anniversary is a major

landmark for us and we have been making the most of it, hosting a Festival of Golf in the summer.

"There were numerous events across a two-week period, including a members' gala, which was a wonderful celebration."

The club's milestone coincides with the retirement of its longest-serving member of staff, with greenkeeper Jeff Drake calling time after 27 years.

"It's becoming increasingly rare that people give that kind of loyalty and length of service to a single club," said Ball.

"It's an amazing feat for Jeff and he will be missed." **GI**



## Summer success for Pike in East Anglia

Mark Pike of Ipswich Golf Club triumphed at the East Anglia Section's Summer Golf Day.

The event was held at Royal Worlington and Newmarket Golf Club in August.

Pike prevailed with 40 points on a day when the Suffolk

course was spared the rain that fell so frequently this summer.

The course was in magnificent condition, with all credit to the excellent greenkeeping team.

The East Anglia Section's next golf day will be held at Gog Magog Golf Club on 19 October.



# Reduce, reuse and recycle



**Roddy Williams**  
joined GEO  
Foundation for  
Sustainable Golf in  
2021 after more than  
two decades with the  
European Tour and  
Ryder Cup

Greenkeeping professionals like you have a special role to play in encouraging golfers to care as much as you do about the natural world

Sustainable Golf Week  
tees off for five days  
from 9 October, with  
the focus this year  
firmly on the natural  
world and championing  
how the game is  
#betterwithnature.

It's a chance for people across golf to reflect on the plight of nature around the world, to celebrate golf's contribution and to highlight and find ways to overcome challenges and ensure golf fulfils its potential.

Habitats, species, and biodiversity are under immense pressure. Locally to globally, urbanisation, extraction, deforestation, agricultural expansion and now climate change, are damaging and degrading

ecosystems. Over the past 50 years, more than 70 per cent of global biological diversity has been lost.

Land and greenspace managers worldwide, including greenkeepers, course managers and superintendents, have a special role to play in protecting, restoring and promoting nature. In many ways, this group has done more than any other within golf to act as caring and responsible stewards.

Perhaps some of the bigger and less explored questions relate to how we can get golfers to care just as much and therefore apply less pressure for more intensive management of golfing landscapes? Or how

we look at the golfing products and lifestyles we all consume to see how invisible impacts on nature are embedded into them? Or how golf tournaments and their venues can play their valued part by reducing disturbance, contributing to restoration and promoting the importance of nature to fans and followers.

Please do make the week part of your own communications. It is a chance for the greenkeeping and course management community to champion your commitments, values and practices. And please do constructively contribute your thoughts on how, as a whole sector, golf can play

an even greater positive part in the future.

Golf needs nature. There is no great golf without it. And now, perhaps more than ever, nature needs golf. Golf is truly #betterwithnature.

• Join in by sharing your stories and views on social media using the following handle and hashtags:

[@sustainablegolf](#),  
[#betterwithnature](#),  
[#forsustainablegolf](#)

Get in touch to find out more information and to access the Sustainable Golf Week toolkit via **email:** [rodDY@sustainable.golf](mailto:rodDY@sustainable.golf)  
Create your own Sustainable Golf Highlights at [sustainable.golf/highlights](https://sustainable.golf/highlights)



## Schedule of the week

### Monday 9 October

Teeing off – why this topic is so vital, for golf and society

### Tuesday 10 October

Protecting nature – how golf can ensure no net negative loss of biodiversity

### Wednesday 11 October

Restoring nature – how golf can further enrich the landscapes it manages

### Thursday 12 October

Promoting nature – how golf can play a major part in demonstrating the value of nature across society

### Friday 13 October

Driving further – looking forward and calls to action

# H<sub>2</sub>Pro<sup>®</sup> DewSmart



Round the clock  
dew prevention



H2Pro DewSmart is designed to prevent or reduce the formation of dew on the grass leaf during the period of activity.



[www.icl-growingsolutions.uk](http://www.icl-growingsolutions.uk) | [www.icl-growingsolutions.ie](http://www.icl-growingsolutions.ie)



**Researched, formulated and produced in house by ICL**

# SLF1 ELITE

SUPER-LIGHT FIVE REEL LITHIUM MOWER



## EARN YOUR SLF STRIPES



- PROVEN, POWERFUL, PERFECTED CUT QUALITY
- +5.5 HOURS RUN TIME ON A SINGLE CHARGE
- LIGHT & AGILE FOR UNDULATING TURF
- QUIET, CLEAN HYDRAULIC-FREE DESIGN

### Proven

Samsung Lithium technology with 60 million hours of use on the finest professional turf worldwide.

### Performance

Lighter weight, with no hydraulic oil. Virtually silent operation and minimal vibration.

### Traction

All-wheel drive takes on the most complex manicured areas.

### Range

Jake's leading 508 amp-hour ELITE Li-ion battery. +5.5 hours of operation with each charge.

On-board charger re-powers overnight and fits with most universal electrical infrastructure.

Our most advanced on-board and remote-ready monitoring system lockable speed and frequency of clip controls.

CUT WIDTH  
**82"**  
(2.08M)

CUT HEIGHT  
**0.30" - 0.70"**  
(7.62MM - 17.8MM)

BLADES PER REEL  
**8 OR 11**

CUTTING REELS  
**5X5" (12.7CM) DIAMETER X18 REELS**

LITHIUM POWER SAMSUNG SDI  
**25.5 KWH**  
508AH

SMART ALL-WHEEL DRIVE



SINCERELY

Jake

For information and support:  
[www.jacobsen.com](http://www.jacobsen.com) / +44 (0) 1473 270 000 / +1-888-438-3946



Actual operating power output may vary due to conditions of specific use. Run time will vary based on conditions of specific use, accessories, and terrain. NOTE: Specifications, while correct at time of printing, may change without notice.

© 2023 Textron Specialized Vehicles Inc.





# From your Association

Representing the greenkeeping community

- Steve Lloyd on the benefits of BTME and Continue to Learn
- Welcome to our latest new members

Read our full interview with John in November's issue of the magazine



BIGGA Vice President John Keenaghan with past chairman Scott Reeves

## Keenaghan aims to inspire as BIGGA president role awaits

John Keenaghan hopes to inspire his fellow greenkeepers as he looks forward to becoming the new president of BIGGA next year.

The Chipping Sodbury head greenkeeper has assumed the role of vice president and will make the step up to president at BTME in January, succeeding Shirley Golf Club's course manager Andy Smith.

With more than three decades of experience in the industry, John's enthusiasm remains undimmed and he

plans to carry that into his new role.

"I'm absolutely delighted and honoured – I just hope I do a good job," he said. "If there's one thing I can do in my role as president, it will be to instill some of my passion for greenkeeping into those young people who are just starting out."

As vice president and president, John will act as an ambassador for the association, representing BIGGA at various events throughout the year. He will also be part of the

Board of Management and utilise his experience to guide the board in their decision making.

BIGGA CEO Jim Croxton added: "John's enthusiasm for greenkeeping is infectious and I'm looking forward to working alongside him as the association enters a particularly busy period and seeks to provide a clear vision that helps our members overcome the challenges they face, such as the recruitment and retention of quality staff." **GI**

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



# BIGGA conferences

All you need to know about the largest regional education event for BIGGA members



Scan Me to find out more

Cost per conference:

**£35 + VAT**  
(BIGGA Members);

**£70 + VAT**  
(non-members)

The five BIGGA Regions will host their annual conferences in November, providing attendees with access to high-class speakers in a leading venue. All members are invited and there is no requirement to attend only the conference in your region. Non-members may also attend and get an insight into the learning and networking opportunities on offer to BIGGA members.

## Tuesday 7th November 2023 • Somerset Country Cricket Ground, Taunton

Speaker	Presentation Title
<b>Scott Roberts &amp; Bruce Weller</b> , Basingstoke Golf Club	Basingstoke Golf Club – Relocation and Redevelopment
<b>TBC</b> , Husqvarna	The future of autonomous mowing
<b>Owen James</b> , England Golf	Future Proofing water use, from sourcing to reusing
<b>Matt Draper</b> , England Golf	Educating golf clubs to understand the relationship between strategic and operational roles in club operations
<b>Sami Strutt &amp; Jenny Bledge</b> , BIGGA	Introducing First Green
<b>Dr David Jones</b> , Scientific Associate at the National History Museum London	How to manage earth worms on your golf course

## Wednesday 8th November 2023 • Wentworth Club, Surrey

Speaker	Presentation Title
<b>Dr David Jones</b> , Scientific Associate at the National History Museum London	How to manage earth worms on your golf course
<b>TBC</b> , Husqvarna	The future of autonomous mowing
<b>Owen James</b> , England Golf	Future Proofing water use, from sourcing to reusing
<b>Matt Draper</b> , England Golf	Educating golf clubs to understand the relationship between strategic and operational roles in club operations
<b>Sami Strutt &amp; Jenny Bledge</b> , BIGGA	Introducing First Green
<b>James Bruder &amp; Wes Lenihan</b> , Walton Heath Golf Club	Hosting the AIG Women's Open

## Wednesday 15th November 2023 • Villa Park, Birmingham

Speaker	Presentation Title
<b>Tom Flavell</b> , Copt Heath Golf Club	Copt Heath preparing for climate change
<b>TBC</b> , Husqvana	The future of autonomous mowing
<b>Owen James</b> , England Golf	Future Proofing water use, from sourcing to reusing
<b>Matt Draper</b> , England Golf	Educating golf clubs to understand the relationship between strategic and operational roles in club operations
<b>Sami Strutt &amp; Jenny Bledge</b> , BIGGA	Introducing First Green
<b>Scott Reeves</b> , Leyland Golf Club	From Brew room to Boardroom

## Thursday 16th November 2023 • Bolton Stadium Hotel, Bolton

Speaker	Presentation Title
<b>Michael Sawicki</b> , Royal Birkdale Golf Club	The importance of a good relationship between Club & Course Manager
<b>TBC</b> , Husqvana	The future of autonomous mowing
<b>Owen James</b> , England Golf	Future Proofing water use, from sourcing to reusing
<b>Matt Draper</b> , England Golf	Educating golf clubs to understand the relationship between strategic and operational roles in club operations
<b>Sami Strutt &amp; Jenny Bledge</b> , BIGGA	Introducing First Green
<b>James Bledge</b> , Royal Liverpool Golf Club	The 151st Open Championship

## Wednesday 22nd November 2023 • Carnegie Conference Centre, Dunfermline

Speakers	Presentation Title
<b>Karl Adams</b> , Mortonhall Golf Club	The importance of the team
<b>TBC</b> , Husqvana	The future of autonomous mowing
<b>Andrew Baptie</b> , Scottish Golf	Funding opportunities
<b>TBC</b> , SEPA	TBC
<b>Sami Strutt &amp; Jenny Bledge</b> , BIGGA	Introducing First Green
<b>Craig Boath</b> , Carnoustie Links	Making it your career



Congratulations to the following members who have achieved **CPD Approved status**

Tom Bromfield, Trentham

Stefan Carter, Wentworth Club

Marcus Davies, Wentworth Club

Scott Forrester, Sandyhills

Jason Norwood, Reay

Matthew Plested, Stoneham

Martin Turna, Aldeburgh

Congratulations to the following members who have achieved their **CPD Milestone**

Tom Bromfield, Trentham

Scott Forrester, Sandyhills

Mattias Kolborg, St Andrews Links Trust

Matthew Plested, Stoneham

Andrew Wilson, Whitecraigs

Kimberley Yeldham, Flempton

# Welcome to our new members

## Northern Ireland

**Thomas Peters** GK  
Royal Portrush

## Scotland

**Peter Barker** A  
Reay

**Jamie Gowans** APP  
Stonehaven

**Gareth Rogers** S  
Infinicut

**Adam Victory** GK  
**Michael Walker** GK  
St Andrews Links Trust

## Northern

**Stephen Frost** GK  
Waterton Park

**James MacFarlane** GK  
Pontefract & District

**Henry Pryor** G  
Crow Nest Park

**Christopher Wright** GK  
Heaton Moor

## Central England

**Oliver Badger** AGK  
**Andy Terry** GK  
Stratford-on-Avon

**Dan Brown** AGK  
**Steve Clarke** AGK  
**Andy Naismith** CM  
Heyrose

**Kain Brown** GK  
**Brandon Hay** GK  
Letchworth

**Christopher Cordery** AGK  
**Ben Tait** AGK

Wentworth Club

**David Callaghan** GK  
**James Cribb** AGK

**Dylan Derbyshire** AGK  
Vicars Cross

**Tim Hales** HGK  
Toft House & Golf Course

**William Moore** APP  
Kilworth Springs

**Andrew Stephen** GK  
The South

Buckinghamshire &  
Farnham Park Sports Fields

## South West & South Wales

**Lauren Angell** AGK  
**Benjamin Jacobs** AGK  
Rowlands Castle

**Freddy Banks** AGK  
Stoneham

**Akira Gouyette** AGK  
**Johnny Mcfarlane** AGK  
Royal Jersey

## South East

**Mark Clifford-Kennedy** S  
Infinicut

**Jake Gawn** AGK  
Royal Wimbledon

**Drew Hodsdon** HGK  
Hythe



St George's Hill

<b>Gary Holmes</b>	<b>GK</b>	<b>Sonny Keywood</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>Cris O'Connell</b>	<b>GK</b>	<b>Jesse Wade</b>	<b>AGK</b>
Goodwood Club		Brighton & Hove Albion FC		<b>Jamie Tindall</b>	<b>GK</b>	New Zealand	
.....		.....		<b>Joseph Tindall</b>	<b>AGK</b>	.....	
<b>Liam Hyland</b>	<b>GK</b>	<b>Paul Lawn Snr</b>	<b>GK</b>	<b>Samual Tindall</b>	<b>GK</b>	<b>Ethan Wilson</b>	<b>APP</b>
<b>Luke Skinner</b>	<b>AGK</b>	<b>Jack Spencer-Kelly</b>	<b>AGK</b>	St George's Hill		West London Golf Centre	
North Middlesex		<b>Andrew Whitaker</b>	<b>GK</b>	.....			
.....		Heron Country Club		<b>Richard Smith</b>	<b>AGK</b>		
<b>Tony Jackson</b>	<b>GK</b>			Roehampton			
<b>Ben Tizzard</b>	<b>AGK</b>						
Royal Ascot							

**Key**

<b>A</b>	Affiliate Member	<b>FA</b>	First Assistant	<b>P</b>	Partner
<b>AGK</b>	Assistant Greenkeeper	<b>GK</b>	Greenkeeper	<b>R</b>	Retired Member
<b>APP</b>	Apprentice	<b>G</b>	Groundsperson	<b>RP</b>	Regional Patron
<b>ATP</b>	Approved Training Provider	<b>HGK</b>	Head Greenkeeper	<b>S</b>	Supporter
<b>CA</b>	College Assessor	<b>HG</b>	Head Groundsperson	<b>ST</b>	Student Member
<b>CM</b>	Course Manager	<b>I</b>	International Member	<b>SUP</b>	Superintendent
<b>DCM</b>	Deputy Course Manager	<b>L</b>	Life Member		
<b>DHGK</b>	Deputy Head Greenkeeper	<b>M</b>	Mechanic		

# Education is the key to unlocking a brighter future



Steve Lloyd  
Chairperson

The benefits of BTME and Continue to Learn are vast, from education to mental wellbeing

Greenkeepers have a habit of talking about greenkeeping – any time of day or night, wherever they are, whatever they may be doing, the job is never far from their minds. That's why when we all come together at BTME, there is no shortage of conversation and socialising, and it all runs alongside the benefits of education, with the Continue to Learn programme taking centre stage.

BTME is our flagship event and, as it falls out of season in the third week of January, it's a great opportunity for people who have been working incredibly hard for many months to recharge their batteries and have a catch-up with colleagues and friends, while also learning and improving.

The fact greenkeepers like to talk is in itself a form of education, as people share knowledge and insight from their experiences.

It can be a lonely industry at times, but I've found in my role as course manager, my colleagues out there at other clubs are always willing to talk, to help, and to offer advice and support. Sometimes,



it's just a case of needing to reach out.

That is another thing BTME offers: a more relaxed environment for people to have meaningful conversations and tap into that support that is out there for them. I've spoken to many people who have expressed their relief that talking through an issue has helped them to lighten the load – a problem shared is a problem halved.

There is a growing need for the kind of opportunities that Continue

to Learn provides, as golf faces challenges new and old. We have got much better at anticipating issues and dealing with them in ways that are more cost-effective and environmentally friendly.

Over the past five or six years, we have continually lost chemical products that we considered key to turf management, and each time there has been a sense of doom and people wondering how we'll manage – but we always find a way.

Problem solving is a huge part of the work we do and every challenge presents us with the possibility of learning something new. That is the definition of progress. We are also getting better at educating golfers and helping them understand the work we do, the challenges we face, and the solutions we seek to provide.

I'm very open with my members and have found that communication is key – it gives everyone a better understanding.

One issue we face that extends far beyond the golf course is sustainability. That is a global issue and the whole world is switched on to the idea of protecting the environment, with businesses seeking ways to implement sustainable practices.

There is a requirement now to be proactive rather than reactive, and to really get a handle on situations before they turn into significant problems.

It is perhaps not always understood by those on the outside looking in, but ours is an industry full of complex challenges and, thankfully, full of people with the knowledge and desire to tackle them. **GI**

**“The fact greenkeepers like to talk is in itself a form of education, as people share knowledge and insight from their experiences”**



# ClearWater

## Water Recycling Systems

A division of Acumen Waste Services



## Two years In House Interest Free Credit Now Available

Making compliance that much easier

ClearWater's Unique Advantages:

- **A genuine biological water recycling system**  
Not all washpad solutions recycle
- **Installed safely below ground**  
Away from vandals and it looks good
- **Low operating temperature**  
Well below 20°C and allays fears of Legionella developing
- **Large 5000 litre water capacity**  
More than most offer and allows time for full treatment
- **Annual Investment Allowance (AIA) Available**  
Means great tax advantages available for more savings
- **Only two moving parts**  
Less to go wrong and minimal maintenance
- **Self-install option**  
The only bio-system offering this; means huge savings!
- **Available Across Europe and other Countries**  
Get in touch for Distributor details

**Call now 01977 529580**  
clearwater@acumenwaste.co.uk

## Keeping you ahead of the game.



## L2 Series

Peak performance, in all conditions.

The L2 Series offers an unbeatable combination of robust, reliable technology with a high degree of comfort and efficiency in one machine.

Visit us at:

**SALTEX**  
NOV 1 & 2, STAND: C070  
THE NEC, BIRMINGHAM



Contact your local dealer for more details.

[f](#) [t](#) [v](#) [in](#) [www.kubota.co.uk](http://www.kubota.co.uk)



**Kubota care** | **5** Optional YEARS /3500 HOURS EXTENDED WARRANTY

**For Earth, For Life**  
**Kubota**



Harrogate Convention Centre in North Yorkshire will once again play host to Continue to Learn at the BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition (BTME) in 2024.

Held from Sunday 21 January to Wednesday 24

January, Continue to Learn boasts an array of expert speakers and unrivalled professional development opportunities.

The education programme is the largest of its kind in Europe and welcomes greenkeepers, course managers and turf professionals from across the world.

"The greenkeeping industry, like many others, is developing fast and it is imperative that our members continue to develop their knowledge and skills in order to stay experts in their field," said BIGGA Chief Executive Officer Jim Croxton.

"The Continue to Learn programme at BTME 2024 provides an outstanding opportunity for greenkeepers to progress.

**“The Continue to Learn programme at BTME 2024 provides an outstanding opportunity for greenkeepers to progress”**

– BIGGA CEO, Jim Croxton

"With over 5,000 turf professionals visiting Harrogate during the week, there is an astronomical wealth of knowledge at Continue to Learn and BTME and you never know who you may meet.

"Special guests are found at every turn, telling stories of the hosting of major championships or of overcoming challenges that you may be encountering at your facility."

As well as the two-day conference programme, there are classes held across full or half days from Sunday to Wednesday, covering topics relevant to greenkeepers at all stages of their career journey.

The seminars, held on Tuesday and Wednesday, are offered free to all attendees on a first-come, first-served basis.

BTME itself runs from Tuesday to Thursday, with networking opportunities aplenty, while the winners of the BIGGA Awards 2024 will also be revealed.

For information on how to book tickets and the discounts available to BIGGA members, see the enclosed Continue to Learn brochure.





# Continue to Learn at BTME 2024

The comprehensive educational programme at BTME 2024 represents Europe's largest learning opportunity within sports turf



# Meet the speakers at Continue to Learn



## **Chris Tritabaugh, Hazeltine National Golf Club**

As superintendent at Hazeltine, Chris was responsible for preparing the course for the 2016 Ryder Cup. He has also overseen the hosting of the KPMG Women's PGA Championship and the US Junior Amateur Championship.



## **Dr John Dempsey, Independent Turfgrass Research**

John has 40 years' greenkeeping experience and was superintendent of Ireland's oldest golf course, The Royal Curragh. John has conducted independent research for the past 15 years and since 2019 he has headed Independent Turfgrass Research.



## **Vicky Elliott-Potter, Elliott-Potter International Consultancy**

Vicky's knowledge is drawn from her experience of working her way up to board-level positions in regional and international media corporations and working with business owners in all sectors. This will be the third consecutive year that Vicky has attended and supported Continue to Learn.



## **James Wilkinson, Turf Equipment Technicians Organisation**

James has almost 23 years' experience in mechanics, 18 of which have been spent within the golf industry. An expert in maintaining turf equipment, James is currently workshop and equipment manager for Arora Group, based at the Buckinghamshire Golf Club.



## **Dr Paul Redmond, University of Liverpool**

Paul is the director of student experience and enhancement at the University of Liverpool. He has worked at a number of leading universities and has been responsible for guiding the careers of thousands of students and graduates.



## **Gavin Oattes, Tree of Knowledge**

Gavin is an inspirational keynote speaker, comedian and author of 'Shine, Life Will See You Now' and 'Diary of a Brilliant Kid'. He draws inspiration from his time as a primary school teacher.



## **Chris Minton, Turf Equipment Technicians Organisation**

Chris has been head mechanic and workshop manager for Leicester City Football Club since September 2017. He previously spent 12 years as head mechanic at The Belfry. Prior to that, Chris worked at Ransomes and Toro dealerships and he began his career working at the local mower shop.



## **Dave Cottrell, Mindset by Dave**

With his own history of living with Type 2 Bipolar Disorder, Dave brings a relatable perspective to mental health education. Dave's work has earned him two prestigious awards, including a Points of Light Award from the Prime Minister.



## **Professor Elizabeth Guertal, Kansas State University**

For 28 years, Elizabeth taught at Auburn University in Alabama. She retired in June 2022 and now works for Kansas State University in an international position. Elizabeth works, writes and teaches in the area of turfgrass management.



## **Timmy Sethi, Adrian Mortram Associates**

Timmy has more than 10 years' experience in the greenkeeping industry with a focus on irrigation maintenance, installation and design. Since 2019, Timmy has been working alongside Adrian Mortram on projects including Open venues and international championship courses.

You can listen to an array of world-renowned experts, professional educators and BIGGA members eager to share their learning and experiences. The three delivery streams – Classes, Conferences and Seminars – are designed to cover a broad range of topics, including management, wellbeing, mechanics and agronomy

### Sustainable Agronomy

Sustainability is a key issue in the golf industry as courses, facilities and venues seek ways to boost their green credentials.

The desire to establish environmentally-friendly practices is leading to new and innovative approaches to problem-solving.

In an effort to champion sustainability within the industry around the world, The R&A delivers research, support and services across sustainable agronomy.

This means the provision of expertise and best-practice advice to all levels of golf facilities, aiding in the effective management of courses worldwide.

Included within that is guidance on the delivery of sustainable agronomy, golf course auditing and

benchmarking, management planning, strategic advice, annual maintenance programme planning, project management support and drainage design.

With a vast wealth of knowledge gained from supporting clubs at every level of the game, The R&A's team of specialists has every angle covered.

The R&A is committed to delivering a service that promotes sustainable golf and encourages future development of environmental practices, while supporting facilities all over the world to deliver optimal course conditioning on a year-round basis.

These education sessions provide you with an insight into the range of work being done to support the industry.



### What is Golf Course 2030?

The R&A's Golf Course 2030 initiative encompasses a range of projects focused on the themes of sustainable agronomy, resources, biodiversity and climate.

It is the organisation's way of helping the game of golf to manage the impact of climate change, consider how resources are used, and be proactive in preparing for the impact future regulations may have on course conditioning.

Working with affiliates, industry bodies, academic and research institutes around the world, The R&A aims to identify key sustainability issues and explore opportunities for innovation and practical solutions for the golf industry to adopt.



# BIGGA CONFERENCES 2023

BOOK YOUR TICKET NOW

**SOUTH WEST & SOUTH WALES**

7 November, Somerset County Cricket Ground

**SOUTH EAST**

8 November, Wentworth Club

**CENTRAL ENGLAND**

15 November, Villa Park

**NORTHERN**

16 November, Bolton Stadium Hotel

**SCOTLAND & NORTHERN IRELAND**

22 November, Carnegie Conference Centre



Scan the QR code to book  
your place



# Member Interest

Where we meet your fellow turf professionals and share their stories

## ■ The 34th Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards: We catch up with the winners, Michael Russell and Daniel Martin



### Communication is the key to understanding each other



**Karl Hansell, BIGGA's Head of Marketing and Communications, talks about a subject close to his heart.**

What constitutes good communication?

It's when you can make the transition from a faceless 'thing' and become someone your audience knows and trusts.

We've all seen it and been victims of it. 'The greenkeepers are making a mess again,' they may say. But their mate Gary works really hard and have you seen the machinery they're stuck with?

The American author John Steinbeck wrote: "Try to understand men, if you understand each other you will be kind to each other. Knowing a man

well never leads to hate and nearly always leads to love."

How can you make the golfers at your club understand that you're a person and your team are people, with their own personalities, life stories, injuries, heartbreaks, strengths and weaknesses that define their approach and capabilities at work?

There is no better form of communication than face-to-face conversation, so be a presence in and around the clubhouse. Be present and an active part of the golf club community and encourage your staff to do the same.

Likewise, adjust any social media profiles you may have to include your name and your face; make sure there's an image of you listed on the

key staff page of your club's website and when you send out course reports, stick your name, image and contact details on there. If you get a snotty email or comment on social media, arrange to meet the sender in person – with a third party if you think it'll be a difficult conversation – and see their attitude change.

If you know someone and understand their motivations and challenges, it becomes much more difficult to 'hate' them.

Which leads us on to last month's Thank A Greenkeeper Day. Why do we do it?

For the answer, we return to Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*: "I got you to look after me, and you got me to look after you, and that's why." **GI**



# The 34th Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards



Cheshire's Carden Park played host to a memorable event that recognised excellence from young greenkeepers who represent the future of our industry

Two talented greenkeepers took home prestigious prizes at the 34th Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards.

**Michael Russell**, assistant greenkeeper at Ormskirk Golf Club in West Lancashire, claimed the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award, while **Daniel Martin**, first assistant greenkeeper at Farleigh Golf Club in Surrey, secured the Toro Young Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award.

BIGGA, Toro and Reesink UK partnered to present the awards at a glittering ceremony following a day of judging in the historic surroundings of Cheshire's Carden Park.

With finalists representing eight education providers from across the UK, the awards also provide the finalists with the opportunity to build upon their knowledge by expanding their professional network.

The nomination period for the 2024 Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards will begin at the BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition in January 2024.

The Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year, Toro Young Student Greenkeeper of the Year finalists and the judges: **Front row** – Jake Rose, Jim Croxton (BIGGA), Sam Norman, Ben Murchie, Michael Russell, Daniel Martin, Alastair Rowell (Reesink UK); **Middle row** – Sam Trott, Edoardo Fauro, Caleb Overhill, Craig Jordan, Shawn McBride, Ryan Fiander, Tyler Holmes; **Back row** – David Timms (Reesink UK, young award judge), Andy Smith (BIGGA and main award judge), Jon Cole (Reesink UK, main award judge), Sami Strutt (BIGGA and main award judge), Darren Anderson (MG, young award judge), Steve Dudley-Brown (BIGGA, young award judge), Gillian Haverson (Reesink UK)

**TORO.**

**STUDENT  
GREENKEEPER  
OF THE YEAR  
AWARDS  
2023**



Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year:

**Michael Russell**



**Michael Russell swapped the Home Office for the golf course in 2019 and has enjoyed a tremendous start to his new career.**

The former civil servant, now at Ormskirk Golf Club, took home the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award.

Michael is the first finalist to ever score full marks in the multiple-choice stage of the examination. His nomination was endorsed by Phil Lomas, tutor at Oldham College.

#### **What's your reaction to winning the award?**

It was a little bit of a shock, but I know how much preparation I'd done coming into the finals. I think you can always underestimate yourself, seeing those around you and how much experience they have and their passion for the industry. I was absolutely delighted to win and I know in terms of the rewards that are available as part of the event and just networking has been a brilliant opportunity.

#### **How did your family react to you winning?**

As soon as it got announced, I messaged my wife to tell her I'd won it. She's seen first-hand the amount of time that I've put into this preparation over the last couple of months and she was delighted for me.

After that, I messaged my mum and dad, and my mum was nearly in tears.

I probably bore them to death with talking about greenkeeping when I go and see them, but they know exactly why I've gone through this career change, even if they didn't necessarily four years ago.

**“ I've put myself forward for different initiatives and just tried to gain that little bit of confidence with different things that I've done ”**

#### **What did you learn from being a finalist in 2021?**

I was only two years into greenkeeping at that point, so there was always going to be gaps in my knowledge.

Since then, I've moved on to a different golf club to get a different perspective on golf courses and working with different people.

I also had an inkling of what to expect from the event itself, for example grass and seed identification, which I was able to prepare for.

I've put myself forward for different initiatives and just tried to gain that little bit of confidence with different things that I've done. The knowledge has come in the last couple of years through working with different people, working on different golf courses.

#### **Why did you decide to change careers?**

I was in a career in which I was progressing well, but it was whether I wanted to do that for the next 35 or 40 years. It gave me great opportunities, but I needed to think about what I wanted to do with my life.

Fortunately, I know someone in the industry who was a course manager at the time and they took a shot on me for a couple of morning shifts – four weeks later, I handed my notice in at the Home Office and started there. I haven't looked back since.

## TORO About the awards

The Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award was introduced in 1989, with the 'Young' category added in 2016.

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

The awards offer greenkeepers of all ages, backgrounds and experience levels a chance to excel, with winners afforded once-in-a-lifetime opportunities to further their career and network with influential industry leaders.

"These awards are the springboard for so many greenkeepers' careers, and not just for the winners but the finalists too who have gone on from this experience to be leaders in their fields," said BIGGA CEO Jim Croxton. "We want more leaders and we're grateful to Toro and Reesink for all they do for it."

Jon Cole, divisional business manager at Reesink Turf, added: "It's an incredible platform to boost your career. It's a very well recognised award within the industry and the prize that's on offer with the extra education and the trip to be able to further yourself and network with people who have been there and done it; it really ticks a box and puts you on a pedestal to go to the next level."

The Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year winner's benefits include enrolment in an internationally recognised 10-week turf management remote study course, The Winter Turf School at the University of Massachusetts, and a two-week work placement at a prestigious European golf course.

The Toro Young Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award can look forward to a two-week, all expenses paid work experience placement at the exclusive VIDAUBAN Golf Club in the South of France, plus a trip to Continue to Learn at BTME and a Toro training voucher for a course of their choice.



### What is appealing about greenkeeping?

One of the things I said in the interview was that I had worked at Royal St David's for the Welsh Women's Open, and I was only three months into greenkeeping then.

When you've got Harlech Castle to the right of you and you've got Snowdon in the background and you're hand-cutting greens, it was obviously a massive change.

I think for mental health, outdoor working and being outside in general can be a huge uplift in your mood. I think it's vitally important that, even if you do work in an office, you spend as much time outside as possible.

### How has your course manager at Ormskirk supported you?

I know that I probably frustrate him a little bit when I'm saying, 'I've got this

going on and I've got this coming up,' because he's got to have a balance of managing a golf course, especially over the summertime when it's busy.

But I've had that support from him and especially the deputy over there. My team have been quite interested in what I'm doing and so has my tutor.

Different people within the industry have been supportive as well, like my mentor from FTMI this year, and that network has been really useful.

They all understand it'll be a really busy year ahead, but they also know what I'll bring back to the golf course and how much I want to progress.

### How is BIGGA helping you progress?

I went for my ICL scholarship and having that on my CV and to be able to say that was an initiative I'd gone through has helped.



### Meet the Finalists

**Edoardo Fauro**,  
deputy head greenkeeper,  
Walton Heath Golf Club

**Ryan Fiander** (runner-up),  
deputy course manager,  
Lees Hall Golf Club

**Tyler Holmes**,  
assistant greenkeeper,  
Ganton Golf Club

**Craig Jordan**,  
apprentice,  
Ashley Wood Golf Club

**Shawn McBride**,  
assistant greenkeeper,  
Hillside Golf Club

**Michael Russell** (winner),  
assistant greenkeeper,  
Ormskirk Golf Club

The Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year finalists and judges:

**Front row** – Ryan Fiander (runner-up), Michael Russell (winner), Craig Jordan; **Middle row** – Edoardo Fauro, Shawn McBride, Tyler Holmes; **Back row** – Andy Smith (BIGGA and main award judge), Sami Strutt (BIGGA and main award judge), Jon Cole (Reesink UK, main award judge)

I've attended BTME each year and to be involved in that education and making sure you're keeping up to date with the industry and improving your knowledge where possible, that obviously goes a long way.

Most recently I've gone on to do the Future Turf Managers Initiative, which has been a fantastic opportunity.

It's given me experience with public speaking, going to committees, and aspects you don't necessarily look at until you get into that position of course manager, like budgeting. Being able to go through that stuff at an earlier stage is vitally important.

#### What's next for you?

Winning the award comes with lots of things, but going to the University of Massachusetts and doing winter turf school is a really exciting prospect.

Going to America, seeing the Toro headquarters and furthering my learning and development – that's probably the next year for me.

Looking beyond that, I want to progress my career and it's about balancing that with family life as well.

Having a young one and another little one on the way, it's obviously difficult, so it's about moving forward in my career in the way I want to, but also thinking about family life as well.

I know that I'll get there and I'll keep putting everything into the industry that I have done so far.

#### Will your daughter be a greenkeeper?

I think it's certainly an industry you can get a lot out of.

With the First Green initiative and the focus on STEM education, there's a willingness to utilise golf courses and

show kids the career opportunities on offer. I know she'll choose her own path, whether that be coming into greenkeeping or she goes down a different route.

As long as she's as happy and as passionate in her career as I am, that's perfect for me.

#### What would you say to BIGGA and Reesink UK?

A huge, huge thank you. What they put on here this week – and have done for the last 34 years now – is incredible.

You see some of the people who've won it previously and it has been a platform for their career.

The benefit you get from being able to network with people who've got that same passion for the industry, it's just amazing.

### Daniel Martin was the proud winner of the Toro Young Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award.

The first assistant at Farleigh Golf Club is studying for his level 3 at Hadlow College in Kent. A keen rock climber, Daniel has wasted no time in scaling new heights in his burgeoning greenkeeping career.

His nomination was endorsed by Wayne Syres, tutor at Hadlow College.

#### What is your reaction to winning the award?

It's a really good recognition of all the work that you have put into your career and studying to gain the extra knowledge to differentiate yourself from everyone else, so I felt satisfaction in the recognition of that work. For me, if I've achieved something well, then it's satisfaction of a job well done and on to the next one.

**“ There's a certain perception of the industry that you're just grasscutter – having these events and BIGGA as an institution helps change that perception ”**

#### What was it like having your grandparents present?

They just came up to be able to sit in on the award ceremony. I didn't know that I was going to be the winner of the award, so it was a nice surprise to be able to have them in the room for that moment.

They know how hard I've worked and the hours that we do in this job and it's really good to be able to have something to show for that.

#### What is the significance of these awards?

There's a certain perception of the industry that you're just a grasscutter – having these events and BIGGA as an institution helps change that perception.

It's not just a job where you're going to turn up every day and just sit on a mower; there's so much more that goes on behind the scenes that most people don't get to see.

#### Why did you enter the awards?

My college tutor recommended it to me as being a good opportunity.

Initially, it was just something that potentially I could put into my level 3 or give me some experience moving forwards.

Having an opportunity like this can put you in really good stead, and even if you don't progress further up in the competition, just having that extra bit of interview experience and engaging with some of the more senior members in the greenkeeping community can give you those useful connections.

#### How much effort did you put in to prepare?

I put in a lot, but lots of the stuff that you learn in this job isn't a case of sitting down and studying a textbook; it's going into your job every morning and taking that bit of extra interest in what you're doing.

It's not just going, 'We're going to go out and spray this tank-mix', but actually, looking at what you're mixing up and thinking, 'Why are we doing this? What impact are we trying to have?'. Absorbing all that knowledge puts you in good stead for something like this without having to sit over a textbook and just read pages and pages of information.

#### How does your club support you?

They've been really good in recognising those times where I need to go away or, say in the winter, when the lads might be

out working, I'm going to be sat down on a laptop doing my college work, or doing work outside of that.

It's nice to have the support of the lads and recognising that need. The course manager has been really great in giving us opportunities to be able to come to events like this and go on all the extra events that BIGGA put on – to go to environmental talks and course walks to gain that extra knowledge.

#### How has your tutor helped you prepare?

We had a little bit coming up to the final events where we knew what the itinerary was going to be, so you see grass identification on that sheet and you know you want to brush up on that.

It's nice to have a tutor in college where you can tell them what you need and they can point you to the right resources, like the BIGGA field reference guide for identifying grass species, and then some resources produced by Barenbrug and others in the industry.

#### What would you say to BIGGA and Reesink UK?

Just a massive thanks to them for putting on a great event for us. It's been a fantastic opportunity to learn and expand your knowledge network with greenkeepers at the top and the best of us that have been picked out across the country. I hope they continue to support this event into the future and give others a chance to be able to experience what I have here. **GI**





Toro Young Student Greenkeeper of the Year:

# Daniel Martin



### Toro Young Student Greenkeeper of the Year Finalists

Jake Rose  
(runner-up),  
apprentice,  
Moortown  
Golf Club

Caleb  
Overhill,  
apprentice,  
High Post Golf  
Club

Daniel Martin  
(winner),  
first assistant,  
Farleigh Golf  
Club

Sam Trott,  
apprentice  
Weymouth  
Golf Club

Sam Norman,  
apprentice,  
Abbey Hill  
Golf Club

Ben Murchie,  
apprentice,  
Thorndon  
Park Golf Club



# YOUR FUTURE STARTS HERE

The next step in your career journey arrives this January. Join greenkeepers and industry experts to share knowledge and develop your abilities in a welcoming, inclusive and professional setting.



21-24 January 2024  
Harrogate Convention Centre



# NON-CHEMICAL SOLUTION FOR WORMCASTS

## FLICKER-BRUSH

- Shatters wormcasts without smearing
- Reduces mud build-up on mower rollers
- Saves blunting and regrinding blades
- Lifts nap for a cleaner cut
- Reduces mowing frequency by up to 33%
- Saves time, money, and maintenance
- Ideal for topdressing and dew dispersal



**GreenTek**

Trusted by the best in the game

**0113 267 7000**

**www.greentek.uk.com**



AgriMetal. The best performing blowers on the market.  
Makes keeping the course tidy an absolute breeze.

**AgriMetal**

# SUPERI-AIR PERFORMERS



Engineered better, that's AgriMetal's tough-designed debris blowers and collectors summed up. High cubic feet per minute output, turf-sensitive design, lightweight aluminium impeller for welcomed quieter use on course and can operate on tarmac, too. Just better in every way.

[reesinkturfcare.co.uk](http://reesinkturfcare.co.uk)

Get **MORE** from your turfcare partner this year:

More products . More advice . More training . More finance



Reesink UK LTD is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Images shown for illustration only.

**REESINK**  
Turfcare





# Careers

Jobs, expert advice and peer-to-peer support

- My Career: Bentham's Shaun Conway on why he hasn't looked back
- All the latest greenkeeper vacancies



## Old Course at St Andrews welcomes 10th 'keeper of the green'

The Old Course at St Andrews has welcomed Jon Wood as its 10th 'keeper of the green' since 1864.

He takes over as course manager from Gordon McKie, who served for 16 years, continuing a historic lineage at the Home of Golf that stretches back to Old Tom Morris' tenure. Wood assumes responsibility for the day-to-day maintenance of the Old Course, as well as management of the New and Jubilee courses for St Andrews Links Trust.

"I'm incredibly excited to be given the opportunity to carry on the great work of Gordon and everyone who has gone before him," said Jon.

"The Old Course in particular holds

a special place in the hearts of golfers around the world and to have the responsibility of maintaining something which means so much to so many people is a privilege."

Jon previously served as deputy course manager at the Old Course from 2006-2011 before becoming course manager at the Castle course for St Andrews Links Trust in 2015. He also has previous experience at Trevose, Portmarnock, Doonbeg and Pinehurst.


Gordon – whose tenure included three Open Championships, two Women's Opens and one Senior Open – will remain with St Andrews

Links Trust, undertaking a new role as greenkeeping operations manager.

"It has been the honour of a lifetime to oversee the Old Course for 16 years and I know how fortunate I've been to have been given such a responsibility," he said.

"It is a role which has surpassed all my expectations and to have worked on so many major championships with such a great team has been an incredible experience."

The restructure will also see Graeme Taylor move from course manager of the New and Jubilee courses to take up the same role with the Castle course. **GI**



**“Be a team player, show passion, have a positive attitude and a willingness to learn new skills and knowledge”**

### Master Greenkeeper Phil Helmn's key takeaways

- We are blessed to work in an amazing industry. No other work-based community is quite so collaborative and supportive, with members who share information and experiences so freely.
- Not everyone has an eye for detail. However, unlike passion, it is a skill you can learn.
- You can't teach passion and positiveness. The willingness to learn leads to more than just knowledge and skills. It also transmits our values, attitudes and behaviours of how we choose to live.
- Reading is a key learning tool and BIGGA's Lending Library is a valuable asset. Members can borrow up to two books at a time for up to six weeks. The library has more than 2,500 books covering a vast array of topics.



Palazzo Arzaga in Italy



After leaving school in 2000 with no idea what he wanted to do, Shaun Conway happily found his way into greenkeeping and hasn't looked back

Shaun Conway's journey into greenkeeping began at Bootle, where he enrolled on a youth training scheme. He ended up in a full-time role there, staying on for another four years before taking up a seasonal position at Palazzo Arzaga in Italy.

Despite returning to the UK without a job, he continued his career five months later with an assistant's role at Carden Park. In 2007, he returned to Bootle as a deputy, though redundancy ended his second spell after six years. He moved to Huyton & Prescott, working his way up to first assistant, and moved to his current position as head greenkeeper at Bentham in 2020.

#### What did you study?

I left school without a clue what I wanted to do and ended up enrolling at Bootle to study horticulture.

Through Myerscough College, I completed NVQ 2 and 3 in Sports Turf and I am currently near the end of my Level 5 Golf Course Management course.

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

Ask lots of questions, get stuck in, work hard and try your best. Don't be frightened to ask for advice or try new things. There are plenty of good greenkeepers out there that will help on social media.

#### Is there a quote that motivates you?

"The Road to success is always under construction" – Arnold Palmer. I imagine a road full of potholes as your career path, the potholes being the skills, knowledge and experience you need to 'fill in' for a smooth journey.

#### What skills did you develop early in your career?

Working at Palazzo Arzaga GC truly opened my eyes to a five-star golf course. The team's pace, quality of work and being aware of attention to detail is a skill worth learning.

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

In 2013 I was made redundant. I had just got married and my daughter was soon to be born, panic kicked in!

By luck, a position opened not far away and I started from the bottom again. I didn't mind, I gained my Level 3 in Sports Turf, plus the spraying and chainsaw certificates.

#### What is your guiding ethos for greenkeeping?

Be a team player, show passion, have a positive attitude and a willingness to learn new skills and knowledge.

#### What's the biggest professional mistake you've ever made?

I've had a few during 23 years of greenkeeping!

I'm not perfect and mistakes happen when you lose concentration or are rushing to complete a task.

#### What is the biggest change you have seen in your time in the industry?

I'd have to say it would be moving towards more environmentally friendly practices.

More managers are exploring electric or hybrid vehicles, robotic automation, solar panels and reduced chemical and fertiliser usage. **GI**

**“Ask lots of questions, get stuck in, work hard and try your best. Don't be frightened to ask for advice or try new things”**

Bentham Golf Course

# Latest job vacancies

## Golf Course Mechanic

Rye Golf Club, East Sussex



Rye Golf Club, a World Top 100 Links Course on the South Coast, is looking to recruit a Golf Course Mechanic.

The ideal candidate will be a good team worker, have hands-on mechanical experience and be highly-motivated. You will be passionate about your chosen career, dedicated, possess a flexible approach to work, have good communication skills, be able to prioritise workload and have a keen eye for mechanical detail.

The club offers a very competitive salary, bonuses, healthcare, and pension scheme.

Salary range £27-32k per annum (dependant on experience).

**Interested applicants should email a CV with a covering letter to Garth Grand, Course Manager, at [coursemanager@ryegolfclub.co.uk](mailto:coursemanager@ryegolfclub.co.uk) no later than 30 September, 2023.**

## Greenkeeper

Golf Club Schloss Miel, Swisttal, Germany



The club is family-owned and is amongst the highest-rated golf courses in Germany. We pride ourselves on excellent course conditions and presentation.

The role is to start 1 March, 2024. Responsibilities will include but are not restricted to the day-to-day maintenance and presentation of the course to a high standard, under the direction of the Golf Course Manager.

The post holder will work an average of 42 hours per week.

An attractive salary of €30k-€36K per annum is on offer depending on experience.

Holidays will be 28 days per annum. Experience in greenkeeping is essential.

For more on the club, visit: [www.schlossmiel.de](http://www.schlossmiel.de)

**To apply, please send in your CV and covering email to [bewerbung@schlossmiel.de](mailto:bewerbung@schlossmiel.de)**

## Greenkeeper/Apprentice

Halifax West End Golf Club



Halifax West End Golf Club is seeking to recruit a Greenkeeper/Apprentice.

We are an 18-hole heathland course 1,060 feet above sea level.

We are seeking to increase our staffing levels and this post would be ideal for people wishing to join the best industry in the world.

Greenkeeping is an art and not everyone can make it. If you are enthusiastic, well motivated and not afraid of hard work, then start your apprenticeship here. You will get the best training.

Salary is competitive dependent on qualifications and experience.

**To apply, email your CV and cover letter to**

**Head Greenkeeper, Ian Donaldson:**

**[ian.donaldson@halifaxwestend.golf](mailto:ian.donaldson@halifaxwestend.golf)**

**You can also call to discuss further on 07795 902 900.**

## Course Manager

Chipstead Golf Club, Surrey



An exciting opportunity has arisen for an experienced and highly-motivated Course Manager to lead the team working to maintain and improve our well-respected course at Chipstead Golf Club.

The successful candidate will oversee all aspects of golf course management and operations, ensuring the course is presented in excellent condition for members and guests.

You must have proven experience in a similar role, a thorough knowledge of modern greenkeeping practices, a strong work ethic and dedication to golf course management.

We offer a competitive salary, negotiable staff accommodation, BIGGA membership, golf privileges, full uniform, education and training opportunities.

**Please send a full CV and covering letter to:**

**[Hayley.Petrie@monarchpartnership.co.uk](mailto:Hayley.Petrie@monarchpartnership.co.uk)**

## First Assistant Greenkeeper

Chipstead Golf Club, Surrey



We are seeking an experienced and highly-motivated individual to join our team of five. The successful candidate will work alongside our Course Manager in maintaining the golf course to a high standard, including mowing banks, rough and semi-rough, surrounds and approaches, tees, greens and fairways.

You must have an NVQ Level 2 and have a basic knowledge of health and safety regulations. PA1, 2 & 6 certificates are desirable. You will need to work weekends and bank holidays on a rota system and be a team player with a keen eye for detail.

We offer BIGGA membership, golf privileges, full uniform, education and training opportunities.

Salary: £25,000-£27,000 per annum.

**Please send a full CV and covering letter to:**

**[Hayley.Petrie@monarchpartnership.co.uk](mailto:Hayley.Petrie@monarchpartnership.co.uk)**

## Greenkeepers

Machynys Peninsula Golf & Country Club, Wales



Machynys Peninsula Golf & Country Club is a Nicklaus-designed 7,121-yard modern links Championship course based in South Wales. We are seeking to recruit qualified greenkeepers with the following attributes: A minimum of NVQ level 2 in Sports Turf and Management or equivalent; A minimum of 2 years experience as an Assistant Greenkeeper; Be competent in the use of a wide variety of machinery associated with the job; Must have a positive work ethic.

This is a wonderful opportunity to work on a Championship course with a competitive salary ranging between £24-27k plus overtime, depending on qualifications and experience.

**For full details applicants should apply in writing or email:**

**Marcus Weaver (Course Manager), Machynys Peninsula Golf & Country Club, Llanelli, Carmarthenshire, SA15 2DG.**

**[Marcus.weaver@machynys.com](mailto:Marcus.weaver@machynys.com)**

From trainee vacancies to senior management roles, new greenkeeping job opportunities are added daily to BIGGA's online recruitment pages. Our website receives 1.6m page views per year and 55% of those are to our careers pages. Visit [bigga.org.uk/careers](http://bigga.org.uk/careers) to see our latest opportunities and find out more about advertising your position. Call 01347 833 800 or email [info@bigga.co.uk](mailto:info@bigga.co.uk)

## First Assistant

The Roehampton Club, London



The Roehampton Club is inviting applicants for the position of First Assistant.

The base salary would be £32-£35k. Based on regular weekend work and overtime, the annual package including overtime will be in the region of £37-£40k.

Benefits include: Staff fund of £500 paid twice yearly following probation period; Generous company pension after a qualifying period; Death in service of 4x salary; Meals supplied when on duty; Two days Life Leave per annum; Ongoing training and educational development; Tournament experience, home and abroad opportunities; Association (BIGGA) membership paid for by the club.

**Applications, including cover letter and a CV should be sent by the 20 October 2023 to:**  
[peter.bradburn@roehamptonclub.co.uk](mailto:peter.bradburn@roehamptonclub.co.uk)

## Head Greenkeeper

Southwold Golf Club, Suffolk



Southwold Golf Club seeks a new Head Greenkeeper who will deliver a new irrigation system that is to be installed in early 2024.

Job purpose: To manage the maintenance and development of the golf course and clubhouse grounds as agreed in discussion with the Secretary and Club Executive.

The successful applicant must be a good team worker, highly motivated, able to make decisions and able to operate the full range of equipment associated with the post.

**Please send CV and covering letter to chairman@southwoldgolfclub.co.uk or by post to: The Chairman, Southwold Golf Club, The Common, Southwold, IP18 6TB. Your letter should include the names, addresses and contact details of two referees. Referees will not be contacted prior to interview.**

## Greenkeeper

Olton Golf Club, Solihull



Olton Golf Club now presents a fantastic opportunity and has a vacancy for the position of a qualified greenkeeper of which we invite applications. The candidate will be required to have a minimum of three years experience working in a golf course environment and be able to communicate effectively.

The ideal candidate should have the following; Minimum NVQ Level 2 or equivalent; PA1, 2 & 6 spraying qualifications preferred; CS30 & 31 chainsaw qualifications (preferred but not essential); Safe operation and maintenance of machinery; Have knowledge and understanding of health and safety theory and compliance. A competitive salary will be subject to qualifications and previous experience.

**Applicants should send their CV to Olton Golf Club, Mirfield Rd, B91 1JH or preferably email to:**  
[coursemanager@oltongolfclub.co.uk](mailto:coursemanager@oltongolfclub.co.uk)

## Greenkeeper

The Golf & Country Club Schönenberg, Switzerland



The Golf & Country Club Schönenberg is seeking a dedicated successor for the position of Head Greenkeeper. The ideal candidate will have: Completed training as a Head Greenkeeper with a minimum of five years of practical experience; Competence in handling greenkeeping software and office applications.

Responsibilities: Independent management of course maintenance, including the assessment and implementation of measures to optimize functional areas; Supervision and maintenance of the machinery fleet and submission of investment plans. Benefits include: Competitive salary; Opportunities for further education; Accommodation.

**To apply: Send your CV and cover letter by post to: Yves Grand (Club Manager), Golf & Country Club Schönenberg, Müsli 6, 8824 Schönenberg, or email: [y.grand@gccs.ch](mailto:y.grand@gccs.ch)**

## Senior Greenkeepers

The Leatherhead Club, Surrey



We are searching for Senior Greenkeepers who can bring considerable knowledge and practical ability to the role.

The candidates will ideally have: PA1, PA2 and PA6 spraying certificates; Full clean driving license.

Senior positions to have: A minimum of three years in a management and ability to be compliant with all relevant health and COSHH regulations and all other relevant legislation relating to golf course maintenance; Strong leadership and project management that results in a focused and driven team; Full understanding of and ability to operate an irrigation system; The ability to manage a machinery fleet.

On-going training and career progression will be provided for all successful candidates.

**To apply: Email a current CV with a covering letter to**  
[michael.lowe@theleatherheadclub.com](mailto:michael.lowe@theleatherheadclub.com)

## Course Manager

Oxley Park Golf Club, Wolverhampton



An exciting opportunity has arisen for an experienced, highly motivated, Course Manager to lead the team at Oxley Park Golf Club.

Qualifications and Experience: Proven experience in a similar role as a Head Greenkeeper/Course Manager or deputy management role for a minimum of three years is required; Level 3 qualification or equivalent in Sports Turf Management or a related field is required; Strong, excellent knowledge of turf care (Agronomy), irrigation systems and golf course machinery; Understanding of tree management, course drainage and experience in course renovations such as bunker and tee construction; PA1, PA2 and PA6a chemical application license required and chainsaw certificates (desirable).

**To apply, send your CV to Terry Reynolds – Captain at**  
[office@oxleyparkgolfclub.co.uk](mailto:office@oxleyparkgolfclub.co.uk). Kindly indicate your salary expectations and notice period in your application.



# BIGGA TURF MANAGEMENT EXHIBITION

## PROUD TO HOST #BTME2024

REGISTER NOW



HARROGATE  
CONVENTION CENTRE  
23-25 JANUARY 2024



# Practical Greenkeeping

Refine your skillset and expand your knowledge

- The R&A's Gordon Howat on how to construct new teeing areas over winter
- Apprentice Corner: Inflorescence – flower structure of a grass plant



## Safety first: Surveying trees – assessing risk



**Tree management is a vital part of golf course maintenance that should not be overlooked – Ged M Collins, Global Tree Vision.**

They are part of the furniture on many of our courses, sometimes beloved, occasionally maligned, but trees are almost always there.

While opinions will vary on their aesthetic appeal and the various challenges they may pose to golfers, there is one thing that is not up for debate: safety comes first.

My IOSH-certified course, 'Surveying Trees – Assessing Risk', puts safety at the heart of tree management, which is precisely where it belongs.

It is my aim to provide golf course managers and greenkeepers with the knowledge they need to identify potential problems and give them the tools and the confidence to know how to tackle them.

This is not a seasonal issue; tree safety is a year-round concern and it's important to know the signs to look out for when it comes to assessing risk. The consequences of poor tree management are potentially grave and can in fact be deadly. Things like weak bifurcations, deadwood, ash dieback and fungal activity are warning signs that need to be heeded.

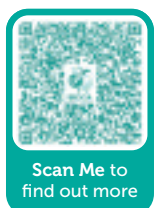
For example, beech trees are prone to weak bifurcation and they are a common sight on golf courses. In the arboricultural world, beech trees are

known as 'widow-makers', which tells you all you need to know.

Willow trees are another type that can suffer similar weaknesses, while varieties such as oak and birch are generally more stable, but of course still need to be surveyed.

I understand that golf course managers are in the unenviable position of having potentially hundreds of members who all think they know best, but tree management is not an area where opinions carry any weight.

That is why I put all the emphasis on teaching people how to spot problems and how to solve them. **GI**



A delightfully natural-looking tee  
that fits into its links surroundings  
at Hunstanton, in Norfolk

# How to build a new tee



Gordon Howat, Senior Agronomist & Project Manager at The R&A,  
outlines five key considerations for clubs constructing new teeing areas





**Golf courses are always evolving. Course managers and committees continue to see opportunities to improve and strengthen their courses.**

This evolution can take many forms. Infrastructure investment in irrigation systems and drainage networks is popular these days, hastened by increasing threats from climate change. There is also an increase in remedial works to overcome poor historical decisions such as inappropriate tree planting and design decisions. There are certainly plenty of golf courses that look back regretfully at some of the construction decisions made in years gone by. And sometimes golf courses make improvements just to keep up with the neighbours.

Money is often a concern and mistakes can be costly. The engagement of a qualified golf course architect is generally money well spent – certainly on larger or contentious course alterations.

Not only do these skilled individuals provide a degree of surety that the project is well designed, it often adds credibility and can reassure any disgruntled members of the club whose opinion is perhaps well intended but nevertheless uninformed.

The construction of tees requires careful analysis and planning. As greenkeepers and agronomists, we can make life easy – or hard – for ourselves. Here are five of the main points to consider within and around the tee.

### 1 Consider the location, form and elevation

Consider existing utilities. This may seem an obvious point, but sometimes even the obvious can be missed. Is there a water pipe or gas pipe that may be impacted by a new tee construction? An online services search should be able to give you the answers, and if something is red flagged, then further investigation can be undertaken.

The protection of existing irrigation and drainage infrastructure should also be considered. There is usually a way of working around any existing golf course infrastructure, but if it can be avoided in the first place, then all the better.

For elevation, avoiding blind tee shots should be a consideration, as well as the ability for the greens crew to maintain the tee bankings. Golfer access should also be a part of your thinking. What slope should a banking be at, and will step access be required?

The World Handicapping System has thrown up a new consideration. Long, thin tees are constrained by the new system, so look to have shorter but wider tees that can retain the same teeing area yet remain within the new distance constraints.

Ecological stewardship is now at the forefront of our thinking. We must safeguard the flora and fauna that live on our golf courses. Don't risk negatively impacting vital habitats with new construction. If needed, seek professional guidance to protect both nature and the golf club.

### 2 What are the irrigation and drainage requirements?

We must first understand if irrigation and/or drainage is required. Looking at irrigation in the first instance, the need

may be obvious. If the existing golf course has full irrigation to the tees, then there is a clear requirement for irrigation within any new tee. But what about on a golf course with only limited or no tee irrigation? On golf courses with limited irrigation infrastructure, it is probable that a change may be required. If the existing tees are soil based and better able to retain moisture than a new rootzone constructed tee, the new tee will be susceptible to increased drought stress due to the free-draining nature of the sand profile. The ability to get water and power to any irrigation installation is also important.

With regards to drainage, a lot depends on the construction. Tees are generally elevated and not particularly large. A tee that is built elevated and with a standard sand-based rootzone may well be sufficiently drained by using a 75 to 100mm deep gravel layer and single drain on the lowest side. Larger tees may need a more compressive drainage arrangement, typically at 5 to 6m centres and using 80mm perforated drainage pipe.

### 3 How does the tee set up for golfers?

Of course, a key concern is the ability to play from the tee. Avoid excessive carries on tees that are not designed as specific golf course features. On a similar theme, tree overhangs are best avoided or will need to be attended to.

### 4 What are the agronomical factors?

The environment that we create must support good turf vigour and resilience to biotic and abiotic stresses. Good air movement can make a huge difference to turf quality. All



At The R&A's GolfIt facility in Glasgow, the 6th tee is open to both early and late sun as well as the prevailing wind to reduce disease pressure and the need for fungicide use

turfgrass disease pathogens need moisture to survive and thrive, and the benefit of having air moving over the surface and drying the leaf cannot be overstated. While there is benefit in having a surface open from all sides, try to ensure the prevailing wind is not impeded by buildings or vegetation.

Similarly, shade can be hugely detrimental to turf grass quality. Not only does turf weaken and thin out as a result, but spring recovery is also curtailed as air and soil temperatures remain low for an extended period.

Grass species need to be considered. If the tee endures high wear and year-round use, then ultra-fine ryegrass, perhaps with some fescue within the blend, is a sensible choice. If, on the other hand, a tee is exposed to the sea and there are no restrictions on light and air movement, then a traditional fescue mix is clearly more appropriate.

Choosing a combination of seed cultivars that are well adapted to the local environment will help mitigate many other stress factors. Shade and salt tolerant cultivars, or ones with good drought or cold tolerance, can give an agronomic edge that makes a greenkeeper's life just that little bit easier.

### 5 How should the tee be constructed?

If you compare tee and green constructions across the country, there is undoubtedly a greater range of what could be classed as a 'good construction' when it comes to tees. For a green construction to be successful, there really is only the USGA specification or a links-style construction that includes a significant depth of sand overlaid by an amended dune sand topsoil – or slight variations of either strategy. Tee profiles that can perform adequately do vary a lot more.

Sand-dominated constructions in the USGA style undoubtedly have a place. Often, a slightly reduced grit and/or rootzone depth compared to the typical 100 to 300mm works perfectly well. Hydraulic performance is reduced, but the construction aligns better for ryegrass surfaces. Do keep an eye out, however, for anaerobic conditions such as black layer presenting. An alternative is a modified soil that is created from organic waste and blended with sand. This is a more sustainable option, but inconsistencies can occur. Lab testing at an approved test house such as ETL Ltd or STRI Ltd is recommended. Even a free-draining indigenous soil can have a place in tee construction in some circumstances.

We know that using a heavier growing medium will help retain both moisture and nutrients, which can be desirable as we look to become more sustainable and align with GC2030 research outcomes. Ryegrass is both thirsty and hungry, so a heavier growing profile may be well suited to requirements, provided physical performance is satisfactory.

### Conclusion

While this article has perhaps not given answers to questions specific to your golf course, hopefully there are some ideas here to stimulate thinking and discussion – and in plenty of time to be a part of this winter's work programme. **GI**

• **Contact R&A Sustainable Agronomy Services at [sustainableagronomy@randa.org](mailto:sustainableagronomy@randa.org) for assistance with agronomy, water security, drainage design and project management. They operate across GB&I and continental Europe.**

“If a tee is exposed to the sea and there are no restrictions on light and air movement, then a traditional fescue mix is clearly more appropriate”



# Aim to clean up greens early

Actions to reduce early season disease pressure will pay serious dividends in preventing damaging outbreaks occurring over the winter



Well timed fungicide applications in autumn to lower disease pressure gives the chance to protect clean turf through the winter



Preventing microdochium patches establishing cuts off the spore production that spreads disease



Working in partnership with  
**syngenta**<sup>®</sup>

Find further insights at  
[www.syngentaturf.co.uk](http://www.syngentaturf.co.uk)

Loss of turf quality in the autumn or early winter has severe implications, with limited opportunity for recovery and visible scars or surface imperfections affecting playability right through to the spring.

The greatest threat this season is that wet weather through the summer will have enhanced spore survival of microdochium patch and the potential for early attacks. Reports have already identified active disease, albeit masked by continued growth in good conditions.

Targeting disease earlier prevents damage to the leaf, reduces stress on the plant and effectively breaks the disease cycle – enabling fungicide programmes to maintain playing

surface quality and longer lasting results throughout the season.

Disease management in the autumn is essentially a numbers game. The potential for disease outbreaks is dependent on both the number of pathogens present and the conditions for it to multiply rapidly. Reducing the initial turf disease pathogen population gives the opportunity for cultural controls to be more effective.

#### Read this for:

- Autumn microdochium
- New fungicide available
- ISTI trials results

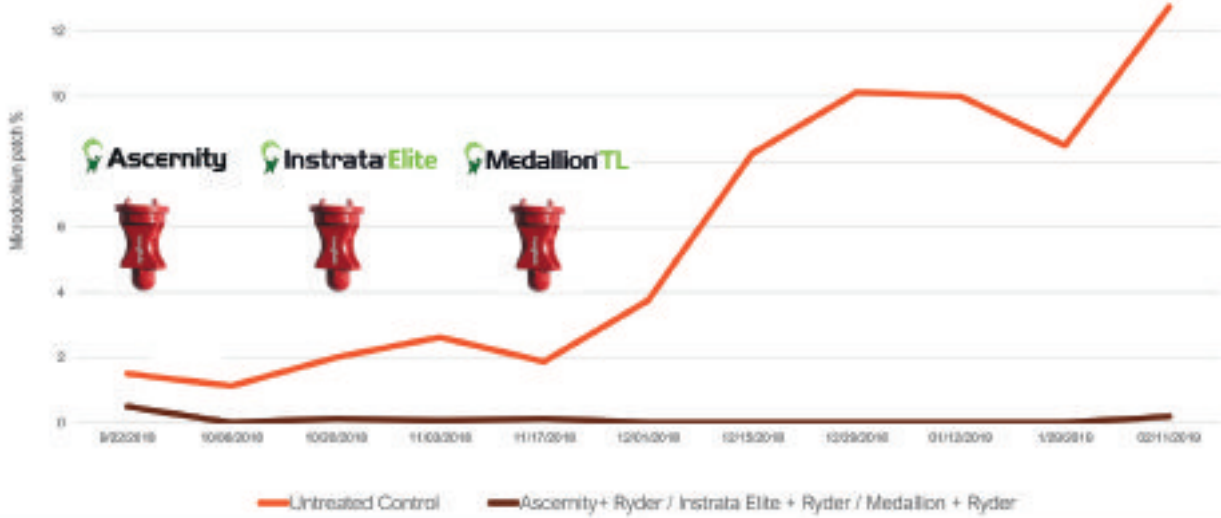
#### ITM strategy

Adapting the environment for disease to develop through Integrated Turf Management (ITM) cultural controls is an essential step. Reducing thatch deprives disease spores of a resting stage, or removing surface moisture eliminates an essential element to disease development, for example.

The intention is to slow any build up of the pathogen numbers. If you can extend the time taken for a population to double from 10 to 20 days, for example, that hugely reduces the pressure.

Furthermore, ITM actions can enhance turf health that makes plants more resilient to disease infection and better able to naturally withstand or

Fig 1: Early clean up prevents later problems



recover from low levels of pathogen activity. Measures such as ensuring appropriate nutrition, biostimulant treatment or alleviating stress all help maintain plant health.

**New fungicide**

But while the ITM strategy is an essential part of overall disease management, when the pressure does build up too high, the pathogen can quite literally overwhelm the plant and damaging disease symptoms break out.

It's at those times of high pressure that fungicides have an all important role, to both protect the plant and, where possible, to knock back the pathogen numbers and allow the ITM strategies to perform effectively.

Repeated trials over recent seasons, by the STRI in Yorkshire and the Irish Sports Turf Institute (ISTI), as well as many on-course trials, have shown the value in targeting disease pathogens when numbers were rising in early autumn, with benefits running right through the winter.

Application of Ascernity – the new Syngenta fungicide now available for use on golf greens and tees – in late September effectively cleared up microdochium patch symptoms, when disease risk was rising and disease was beginning to be seen.

From that point forward, the follow up treatments with Instrata Elite and Medallion TL kept the greens completely clean through to February, when untreated plots hit disease levels of 10 to 13% of surface area affected in December, January and February (Fig 1).

An infection level of 10% area affected equates to over 50 square meters of disease damage on an average green, which for most courses would be completely unacceptable.

With Ryder also applied in each application, the use of Ascernity in the disease management programme was the only option to consistently achieve complete microdochium control of the approaches in the ISTI trials.

**Well-timed fungicide applications support ITM actions**

In the poa annua dominant trial sward, the strategy effectively maintained turf quality right through the winter, when the scores for untreated plots declined by more than 50%.

Further trials across the UK this season have reported how Ascernity applications targeted at the high incidence of dollar spot have also contributed to very effective reduction in visible effects of microdochium patch and anthracnose, leading to visibly cleaner surfaces.

**Decision support**

These early target approaches achieve optimum results if applications can be timed for when disease pressure is rising, but before symptoms have broken out.

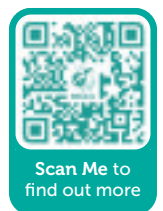
The new Syngenta Turf Advisor app had been developed to provide greenkeepers and agronomists with forecasts of disease risks and local weather information of all the factors that could influence its development.

Using these data sources, coupled with forecasts of spray window opportunities, could be instrumental in making proactive fungicide applications and adapting ITM strategies to better prevent disease outbreaks and turf damage.

Turf Advisor also includes a Growing Degree Day calculation tailored to your site, along with a Growth potential model.

That can prove invaluable and support a decision of when to switch from a systemic Ascernity application – which could be as late as November or December in some areas where growth can now continue later in the season – to a contact Medallion treatment when growth has effectively slowed.

Preventing disease outbreaks from the outset gives the best chance to go into the winter clean and come out green in the spring. **GI**



Author: Sean Loakes, Syngenta Turf Technical Manager UK & Ireland

# Apprentice CORNER

## Inflorescence: Flower structure of a grass plant

### Grass identification

All grasses have certain characteristics in common (these are the botanical features that define them as grasses) but there are also a number of differences that enable them to be identified as individual species.

There are approximately 160 grass species found in the UK and Ireland, but only five or six of these have a value and use in turf management. These include the Fescues (botanical name 'Festuca') the Bents (Agrostis) the Meadow Grasses (Poa) Perennial Ryegrass (Lolium) and one or two weed grasses including Yorkshire Fog (Holcus).

When trying to identify individual grasses it is worth considering the situation in which the grass was found eg. in a green, tee, or fairway, or in shade – this will give some clues as to what it is, as well as eliminating other possibilities. Observe the actual grass plant to identify the characteristics, eg. leaf shape, leaf markings, presence or absence of hairs, shiny or dull surfaces, or stem colouration. Experience will develop over time and this will enable a greenkeeper to study and identify different grass plants. Use of a reference source eg. the BIGGA Field Guide which is available to BIGGA members on the website, is also helpful.

The photographs that follow demonstrate some of the variations between grasses of different species.



### Fescue (Festuca)

This shows the characteristic 'needle point' leaf of the fescues (Festuca) which gives fine texture in any sward where it is found. Fescues are highly prized, as they are quite fussy about where they grow, preferring sandy soils, especially when the height of cut is low and there is a lot of foot traffic.



### Bentgrass (Agrostis)

This has a broader and darker coloured leaf than the Fescue, and it tapers to a point. Bentgrass is also highly valued for the colour, density, and texture that it brings to fine turf.

This photograph also shows the parallel veins on the upper surface of the leaf which can help to identify it. Bentgrass is found in a wider soil range than the Fescues.



### Annual Meadow Grass (Poa annua)

This can produce a fine and dense turf, but it is regarded as less desirable than Fescues and Bents for various reasons, including its poorer colour and the way it loses colour and condition when under stress. This shows the leaf flat and folded and the 'yellow-green' colour as well as the yellowing of dead leaves.

Annual Meadow Grass (Poa annua) produces characteristic seed heads, even under height of cut in greens, which make identification more straightforward.



### Smooth Stalked Meadow Grass (Poa pratensis)

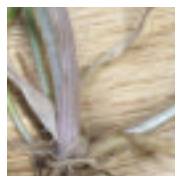
This shares some characteristics with Poa annua, however it is a deeper green colour, has rhizomes, and does not produce a flower under the height of cut.



### Perennial Ryegrass (Lolium perenne)

This is most easily identified by the red base to the stem. You sometimes need to remove old, dead leaves to see it, but it is always there.

Auricles are present at the junction of the leaf blade and sheath. It also has a very glossy underside to the leaf, visible in the leaf on the right hand side of this photo.



### Yorkshire Fog (Holcus lanatus)

This is considered a weed of fine turf, as it has a coarse texture and poor density, however it will survive in close mown turf.

It is a silvery-green colour, has hairy leaves, and faint red stripes on the lower leaves. **GI**

# Marathon ALGAE SPORT

The original Marathon.  
Available again in the UK.



SCAN ME TO FIND  
OUT MORE



EXCLUSIVELY DISTRIBUTED BY

## COLLIER<sup>®</sup> TURF CARE

Follow us on social media



Why should you buy from...

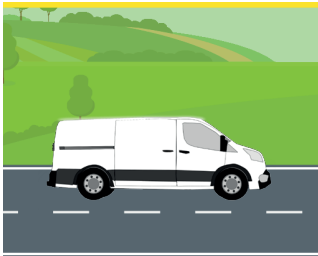
**COLLIER<sup>®</sup>  
TURF CARE**



We have **30,000+** square feet of warehouse space filled to the max.



We have **6 months** worth of stock on selected lines.



We dispatch same day on a **2 - 3 day service**. Next Day delivery available.



**96%** of customers recommended us based on our reviews.io page.



We believe we are the **biggest** stockist of specialist branded products.



**99.9%** of our deliveries arrive safely due to our careful packaging policy.



# BCA LAND-BASED TRAINING

Providing a range of approved courses for Land-based Industries.

- Safe Use and Application of Pesticides e.g. PA1, PA2, PA6A (AW)
- Chainsaw Maintenance and Crosscutting
- Aerial Cutting
- Felling up to and over 380mm
- Tree Climbing and Aerial Rescue
- Emergency First Aid at Work + Forestry

Both refresher and bespoke training courses can be tailored to suit your needs. For a full list please visit; [www.bca.ac.uk/subjects/land-based-training](http://www.bca.ac.uk/subjects/land-based-training)

For more information or to book please contact us on

E: [landbasedtraining@bca.ac.uk](mailto:landbasedtraining@bca.ac.uk)  
T: 01628 827317

BCA Landbased Training, Hall Place,  
Burchetts Green, Maidenhead SL6 6QR.



## ULTRA WIDE. ULTRA TOUGH.

### TOURNAMENT XL 7000 ULTRA WIDE GREENS ROLLER

Smithco's Tournament XL 7000 delivers tournament-ready greens with three rolling heads that cover an ultra-wide surface area

- **Better Traction**  
Equipped with triple hydraulic direct drive to rollers for better traction.
- **Easy Maintenance**  
Direct drive eliminates time-consuming chain maintenance.
- **Tournament-ready Greens**  
Greensrollers keeps greens at peak playing condition.



**MAKE YOUR  
COURSE LEGENDARY!**

**Call John Moore  
on 07512 909792**



# Phosphite for turfgrass management

Dr John Dempsey explores this plant nutrient's vast range of applications, from fighting disease to promoting overall turfgrass health



If you had mentioned the word phosphite to turfgrass managers maybe 10 years ago, you would probably have been met with a blank stare.

However, much has changed in the past decade and phosphite has now become a buzzword, with many claims made about its effects.

#### **Phosphite: A major plant nutrient**

Phosphite is a form of phosphorus, which is a major plant nutrient vital for optimal growth and development required in amounts second only to nitrogen. As a nutrient source, phosphorus is only available as phosphate.

Phosphite is chemically similar to phosphate, however the slight difference means phosphite cannot participate in the same plant biochemical reactions as phosphate.

Since the early 2000s, potassium hydroxide has been used to neutralise phosphorous acid. This produces potassium phosphite, which is the basis of numerous turfgrass products sold to help control disease, as biostimulants and nutrient sources, and defence activators.

#### **Phosphite as a means of combatting diseases**

The ability of phosphite to suppress certain diseases is well documented. Phosphite has been shown to suppress diseases such as Dollar spot, Anthracnose, and Fusarium patch (*Microdochium nivale*).

Numerous field trials in Europe and the US have determined there were significant *Microdochium nivale* disease reductions on phosphite-treated trial plots when compared with untreated controls, and that the addition of phosphite significantly enhanced fungicide efficacy.

#### **Phosphite's two-fold disease suppression**

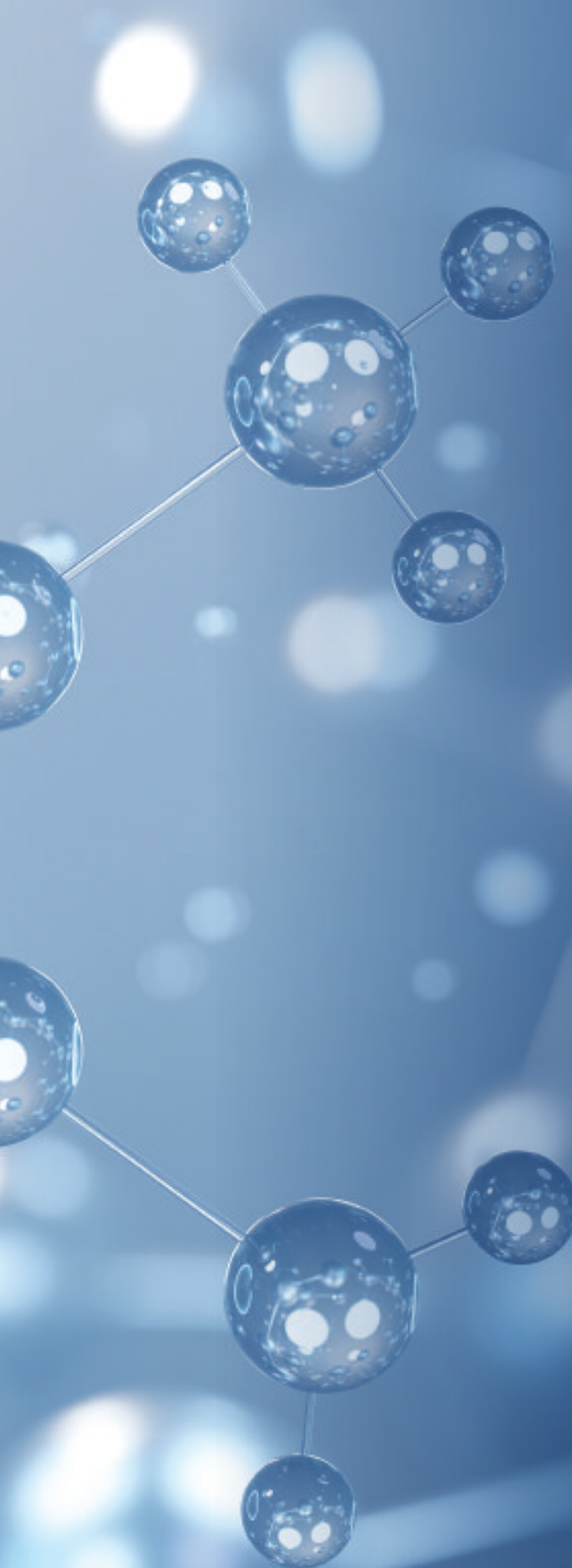
The means by which phosphite suppresses disease is two-fold.

It can achieve it directly by way of inhibiting fungal growth and reproduction, slowing the infection process and allowing the turfgrass time to respond with defences.

There is also an indirect impact, as infected turfgrasses produce numerous antimicrobial compounds leading to induction of systemic acquired resistance.

Phosphite treatment primes and stimulates these defence compounds and subsequently reduces disease incidence.

To achieve optimum disease control, phosphite treatments need to be applied prior to onset of infection and must be absorbed into the plant.





### The impact of phosphite when it is applied to turfgrass

Published research shows that foliar-applied phosphite is rapidly taken up with maximum accumulations in the leaf within 48 hours post-treatment.

Phosphite also translocates throughout the plant via the xylem and phloem, giving it symplastic ambimobility.

Over six weeks post-treatment, phosphite levels in the plant will progressively decline.

This is of significance to turfgrass managers who apply phosphite as part of a disease control programme, as sequential applications need to be made at regular intervals to maintain phosphite levels in the plant necessary for effective disease control.

### Effectiveness as a nutrient source or biostimulant

Research conducted at the University of the West of England studied the effects of foliar-applied phosphite on the growth and quality of turfgrass and the fate of phosphite in the plant and soil.

The results showed that in a phosphorus-sufficient rootzone (P greater than 35ppm), phosphite increased growth.

Conversely, in phosphorus-deficient rootzones (P less than 6ppm), phosphite treatment significantly reduced growth compared with phosphate and untreated control plants.

The enhanced growth in the P-sufficient rootzones was attributed to phosphite inhibiting pathogenic soil microorganisms that have an adverse effect on turfgrass development and to a growth-regulatory or phytohormonal factor, effecting sugar metabolism leading to internal hormonal and chemical changes.

The reduction in growth in the P-deficient rootzones was because phosphite suppresses turfgrass responses to P limitation, such as enhanced root architecture used to mine for phosphorus.

In addition, phosphite also competes with phosphate for uptake via the same plant transport system – and that leads to further phosphate depletion.

Other results from this research concluded that phosphite does not convert into phosphate within turfgrass plants, and that long-term sequential applications of phosphite significantly increased soil phosphorus levels.



### Future trends: Areas for further study in the area of phosphite

There are several specific areas in this subject that should be further explored.

The mode by which phosphite can stimulate turfgrass growth and development requires further study, and how the ratio of phosphite to phosphate influences this beneficial effect.

The longevity of phosphite in the soil is of interest. Soil microorganisms convert phosphite to phosphate, but what factors are involved in this and how do they effect the speed of conversion?

As most phosphite products used in the turfgrass industry are applied as foliar treatments with phosphite accumulating in the leaf, the in-plant conversion of phosphite to phosphate requires study.

Regarding stimulation of turfgrass defense mechanisms, more detailed research is required to determine which specific pathways are affected, not only in regard to biotic challenge but also with abiotic challenges.

Research in the turfgrass industry, especially regarding phosphite, is quite limited. Oregon State University in the USA and the Scandinavian Turfgrass and Environmental Research Foundation have produced significant research data over the past few years and will hopefully continue in this area.

### In summary – why phosphite matters in turfgrass management

The take-home message from this is that it is important to maintain phosphorus amounts in the rootzone at sufficient levels because phosphite alone will not provide usable forms of phosphorus to the plant. So applications of phosphate may still be required.

Furthermore, the increase of soil phosphorus levels may be problematic as the movement of phosphorus out of a turfgrass system is not desirable.

That is due to its impact on water bodies, and also because higher levels of soil phosphorus are often correlated with increased populations of *Poa Annua*, a species that is widely regarded by many as an undesirable weed. **GI**

**“ It is important to maintain phosphorus amounts in the rootzone at sufficient levels because phosphite alone will not provide usable forms of phosphorus to the plant”**



**Dr John Dempsey**  
drjrdempsey@gmail.com

### About Dr. John Dempsey

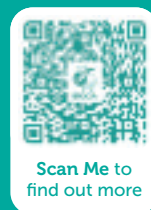
John began greenkeeping in the 1980's and was superintendent of Ireland's oldest golf course – The Royal Curragh – from 1993 to 2019.

He has undertaken courses beginning with basic greenkeeping at the Botanic gardens in Dublin to a first-class honours degree in turfgrass science at Myerscough College in the UK.

In 2016, he completed a PhD in Turfgrass pathology in the Centre for Research in Biosciences at the University of the West of England, Bristol.

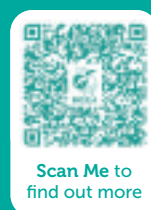
John has conducted independent research on turfgrass disease management for the past 10 years, covering *Microdochium nivale* infection of turfgrasses, turfgrass responses to infection and the effect of phosphite treatments on disease suppression, turfgrass growth and quality.

John was speaking at Continue to Learn at BTME. BIGGA members can rewatch this session and other highlights from the education programme by heading to the Members' Area of the BIGGA website.



### Continue to Learn 2023

Videos are available to watch on the BIGGA website for members. Scan the QR code to find them.





# Enhancing sustainability on golf courses

## Using the innovative mycorrhizal fungi for tree and hedgerow planting

Our golf courses already make a significant contribution to environmental conservation and sustainability but as concerns about these areas continue to grow, there is still more we can do.

One such promising practice is the use of mycorrhizal fungi in tree and hedgerow planting. This is an innovative technique that can lead to improved survival rates, accelerated growth and establishment, reduced reliance on fertilisers, improved water uptake and enhanced overall plant health.

Here, we delve into the benefits of incorporating mycorrhizal fungi, specifically through use of OAS Symbio MycoForce Transplanter and Whip Dip, on golf courses to foster a greener and more environmentally



Cornus, trees on the left inoculated with Mycorrhizae

friendly approach to landscaping and provides an excellent opportunity to support the ecosystem.

### What are mycorrhizal fungi?

The word mycorrhiza means “myco” (fungi) and “rhiza” (root). It refers to the symbiotic relationship between fungi and plant roots, aiding absorption of nutrients and helping them grow. The plant produces carbohydrates through photosynthesis and exchanges these

in the form of sugars for water and nutrients sourced from the soil by the network of mycorrhizal hyphae.

This mutually beneficial relationship forms when mycorrhizae is introduced to tree planting practices. Mycorrhizae will grow through soil, expanding the root system of the plant by up to one hundred times, enabling it to take up nutrients and water more efficiently.

Mycorrhizal fungi offer a host of benefits beyond improved survival and accelerated growth. The development of a robust root system through mycorrhizal association enables plants to withstand environmental stressors, such as drought or poor soil conditions. This natural resilience decreases the need for chemical interventions, leading to a healthier and more biodiverse



“Mycorrhizal fungi offer a host of benefits beyond improved survival and accelerated growth. The development of a robust root system enables plants to withstand environmental stressors.”



Mycorrhizae will grow through soil, expanding the root system of the plant by up to one hundred times

ecosystem on the golf course.

By integrating mycorrhizal fungi into the golf course landscape and actively encouraging the growth of trees and hedgerows, course managers are promoting sustainable plant growth and environmental stewardship. The creation of boundary definition and shelter belts will help to create wildlife corridors and encourage biodiversity through the enriching of habitats.

#### Mycorrhizae and carbon capture

Mycorrhizae can have a positive impact on carbon capture and mitigating climate change. These fungi enhance plant growth and productivity, leading to increased carbon sequestration. By improving nutrient availability mycorrhizae help plants to grow more vigorously, increasing their ability to capture and store carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) from the atmosphere.

Mycorrhizae contribute to soil organic matter formation, which further aids in carbon capture. The hyphae can help stabilise soil aggregates, increasing the soil's ability to retain organic matter and store carbon. Overall, mycorrhizae play a crucial role in plant nutrition, ecosystem sustainability and carbon

capture. Consequently, promoting these symbiotic associations can have implications for mitigating climate change.

#### OAS Symbio mycorrhizal products for trees

MycoForce Transplanter is a specialised mycorrhizal powder designed for use with rootballs. A simple to use, economical product which just needs to be applied to root balls before planting. MycoForce Transplanter ensures the establishment of a beneficial fungal network around the roots. This strengthens the plant's ability to absorb nutrients and water which in turn significantly improves the survival rates of newly-planted trees. Moreover, this symbiotic relationship accelerates growth, allowing for faster establishment and fewer losses.

MycoForce Whip Dip for bare roots works by dipping the whip roots in the mycorrhizal paste, the young tree saplings receive a boost in nutrient uptake capabilities. As a result, the trees require less external input, such as fertilisers, to maintain their health. Furthermore, the enhanced

nutrient and water uptake capacity of the plants through mycorrhizal association reduces overall water consumption which all help to make the golf course more sustainable and improve the surrounding environment.

Introducing mycorrhizal fungi through products like OAS Symbio MycoForce Transplanter and Whip Dip is a game-changer for golf courses striving to embrace sustainable practices. By harnessing the power of mycorrhizal associations, golf course managers can witness improved tree survival rates, faster growth and reduced dependence on fertilisers and water. Ultimately, these measures enhance the overall health and environmental impact of the golf course. **GI**

**For more information or to speak to a technical advisor please call us on 0800 138 7222.**



**Author:** Polly Gearing, Biological Product Manager, Origin Amenity Solutions



# Maximise uptime in the spring with effective servicing this winter

While we may all be embracing the last of the summer sunshine and managing any flushes of late-season growth, it won't be long before thoughts turn to planned activities for the winter months. Equipment such as utility vehicles and tractors will work on, likely put to task differently during the colder and wetter period. Meanwhile, demand for mowers will reduce or even cease – depending on the temperatures – making it an ideal time to factor in some annual machinery maintenance. Tom Lockwood, Field Service Manager for Kubota UK Aftersales, provides some advice on the key winter servicing tasks to maximise your uptime come the spring.

While the 'off-season' is arguably shorter than it once was for most, machinery maintenance should still be high on the agenda in autumn. A combined approach of in-house

checks and the expert servicing delivered by your local approved Kubota dealership can help to pre-empt and prevent problems and unexpected downtime when the grass begins to grow once again.

Vehicles operating throughout this period will often return to the shed wet and muddy, in turn demanding more TLC when it comes to cleaning. No equipment will thank you for extended periods spent in damp or dirty conditions! Invest time at the end of each day thoroughly washing kit down to prevent accumulations which can lead to blockages or sub-standard performance.

Equipment going into an extended period of storage, such as mowers (conditions dependant), require greater consideration. The daily checks and tasks outlined above would remain applicable to ride-on mowers, with a wash and dry down

even more important here. A nice bed of dry, warm clippings on top of a mower deck makes for an ideal habitat for unwanted furry friends, who would delight in converting your wiring harness into their cosy winter residence!

Use a blower or airline to remove clippings and give the mower a thorough wash to prevent creating an environment suited to pests. An application of a rust preventative, particularly on mower blades, would also be considered good practice.

Another thing to bear in mind when placing machinery into storage is the shelf-life of any fuel left in the tank. While quality issues relating to diesel are less common, some larger diesel engine tractors which require a diesel exhaust fluid additive to clean up emissions, can expect a reduction in maximum shelf life. Diesel fuel filters equipped with traps to catch water



For tractors or RTV's which will commonly be utilised for ongoing maintenance and/or construction works over the winter, in-house maintenance and general good practice should comprise of:

- Continuing with standard daily checks – maintaining optimum levels of oil, water etc. Check that your radiator is clean and clear any debris from cooling fins.
- Checking that anti-freeze is at a suitable level to provide protection.
- Keeping on top of regular greasing – not only does greasing provide all-important lubrication, it can also prevent/displace any contaminants from places it shouldn't be.
- Monitoring tyre pressures to avoid causing unnecessary damage to any softer areas of turf and prevent tyre vulnerability from wear/perish.

and sediment should also be emptied/cleaned as part of the maintenance programme. Diesel tanks should then be filled to capacity for prolonged storage which helps to prevent moisture build up from condensation and stops diesel bacteria.

Issues will more commonly be associated with petrol-engine products, particularly following the introduction of E10 unleaded in September 2021. General guidance states that E10 fuel should be consumed within a 30-day period to minimise the risk of ethanol binding, leading to acidification which can then threaten the health of certain system components and/or contribute to poor overall engine performance.

Ideally, petrol mowers that are to be placed into storage would have fuel tanks drained to limit these risks. Alternatively, try to run down the amount of fuel left in the tank, or switch to E5 or an alkylate fuel in the

lead-up to planned storage to reduce ethanol residue in the tank and lines.

Also plan ahead, contacting your local Kubota dealership to book annual servicing – don't wait to get caught up in the springtime rush! Diesel and petrol equipment will vary in recommended servicing intervals so be sure to ask the dealership and heed the recommended guidance to prevent bigger, more costly issues in the longer-term.

Dealers will conduct a full or interim service depending on hours, which will typically involve changing filters, checking/changing oil and replacing any worn bearings or parts etc. Any parts replaced and fitted by an authorised Kubota dealer come with the peace of mind of their own 18-month parts and labour warranty. Mowers would also benefit from a full dealer service – typically including deck removal for a thorough check and

clean and blades sharpened, replaced and balanced as required for optimal performance come the spring.

Storage by definition should ideally be 'under cover'. While most features and components of machinery are designed to be waterproof or water resistant, moisture ingress from extended time spent outdoors will undoubtedly lead to issues.

Keeping machinery dry is the key, so if you don't have a shed or facility to store it in, then something as simple as a tarpaulin cover can provide a protective barrier to the elements.

Ease of upkeep and regular maintenance is a core part of the Kubota design philosophy. Basic daily checks together with the support and servicing from the experts in the Kubota dealer network should be sufficient in protecting your investment, ensuring it performs as it should when you really need it. **GI**



Husqvarna®



**Robotic mowing  
with a cutting edge**



**Designed for professional turf care no matter the weather, Husqvarna's advanced robotic solutions, including CEORA™ and Automower® 550 EPOS™, are an ideal solution for greenkeepers who would like the latest in robotic mowing technology for fairway and semi-rough maintenance. Husqvarna are the pioneer and market leaders in autonomous robotic mowing solutions.**

Husqvarna recently took professional turf care into the next era with CEORA™ helping to effectively manage more areas of the golf course autonomously, cost-save and improve the playing experience. Husqvarna's large-scale robotic solutions increase the quality of turf while reducing costs by approximately 30 per cent compared with conventional commercial mowers.

Husqvarna offer a range of robotic mowers designed specifically for professional use within sports and golf, with users able to keep control of all mowers in the fleet through the Husqvarna Fleet Services application, perfect for greenkeepers who need to manage and maintain large fairways and intricate areas of a course. Both CEORA™ and Automower® 550 EPOS™ are fully-equipped with Husqvarna's EPOS™ boundary wire free guidance which allows the models to calculate the most efficient route to and from the charging station's docking point and create varied routes. With virtual boundaries, greenkeepers can define several work areas on the course with different settings as well as set temporary stay-out zones.

Husqvarna robotics can handle all types of landscapes, navigate narrow passages and manage slopes with perfect cutting results – even in cold and rainy conditions. The performance and quality of the cut are optimal with improved efficiency due to cutting little and often resulting in less maintenance during the season, which is limited to changing blades and cleaning.

CEORA™ has a capacity of 20,000–25,000m<sup>2</sup> per day, while Husqvarna Automower® 550 EPOS™ is perfect for smaller, more complex areas up to 10,000m<sup>2</sup> using systematic cutting patterns, such as around the clubhouse or practice areas. Both are carefully engineered to create healthier and more dense turf thanks to their unique cutting technology, low weight reducing compaction and opportunity to mow more frequently no matter the weather. Instead of manually operating the mower, professionals can simply use their smartphones to control how, when and where their Husqvarna

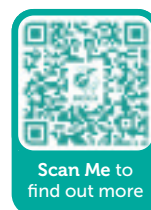
robotic lawn mower mows, ideal for those days when it's cold and raining. The appDrive feature on both models also makes the products easy to steer by using a smartphone or gaming controller, providing innovative support when defining an EPOS map, or when driving the product between areas, eliminating the need to carry it.

Husqvarna robotics are the perfect companion for winter maintenance, with a low overall weight the machines will produce less compaction enabling them to continue cutting in the rain and typical winter conditions. The greenkeeper will also be able to set customised working schedules to optimise the quality of their turf during the difficult off-season.

Thanks to Husqvarna's satellite navigation system, EPOS, greenkeepers can expect CEORA™ to navigate with a precision of 2-3 cm. It can also now be equipped with a new 43L cutting deck, which will be able to mow an area of up to three regular-sized fairways every day and night in all weather conditions. However, the new cutting deck is not limited to mowing fairways. With an electric cutting height adjustment system, the same robotic mower can operate fairways, semi-rough and rough, as well as other golf areas, at cutting heights from 10 to 60mm.

In addition to the cutting benefits, CEORA™ is able to minimise noise pollution and reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by as much as 83 per cent during the machine's lifecycle compared to an equivalent diesel Husqvarna P 525DX ride-on mower. It is also backed by Husqvarna's maintenance and support program, UpCare, which provides fast repair and replacement services all year round.

Husqvarna Professional Robotic Mowers have been tried and tested and are currently operating on a number of courses worldwide. One greenkeeper described the new solutions as a "no-brainer". For CEORA™ in particular, one team mentioned that "the pressure is even greater in the winter when we can't get out with big machinery to even keep on top of the cut. CEORA™ can cut the grass little and often, day and night and no matter the weather, meaning there is no downtime needed and we aren't on the back foot at any point". **GI**



Scan Me to find out more

**Husqvarna's advanced robotic solutions, including CEORA™ and Automower® 550 EPOS™ are available through the authorised Husqvarna dealer network. Scan the QR code for more.**

# Welcome to the season of leaf wetness



Dr Simon Watson works in the R&A Sustainable Agronomy Service as Senior Agronomist

Employing an integrated disease management system will help your course to cope with the changing and challenging conditions of autumn

In September we enjoyed some warmer temperatures after what was largely a cool, wet summer in the UK. Now, air temperatures are dropping and day length is also shortening as autumn progresses. With that, the presence of dew and occurrence of heavy rainfall events will mean that the turf is exposed to prolonged periods of leaf wetness.

Throw into the mix late greens renovation and inappropriate nutrition, and you have a combination of conditions that make the turf vulnerable to fungal infection, particularly *Microdochium* patch caused by the pathogen *Microdochium nivale*. The deteriorating growing conditions also mean that the grass plant has a lesser capacity to recover from fungal infection. It is important, therefore, to employ all options available to minimise disease risk.

Managing leaf wetness can positively contribute to an integrated disease management strategy for turf during the autumn. Minimising leaf wetness can significantly reduce disease incidence. In the first instance, the brief could be to look at the

wider environment. Can the growing environment be manipulated to effectively maximise the growing season and minimise disease risk? Tree management might be one such area to improve. Trees, while often spectacular on golf courses, can be an issue if they are so dense that they impair the growing environment of the turf.

**“Managing leaf wetness can positively contribute to an integrated disease management strategy for turf during the autumn”**

That could be through shade, shelter from prevailing winds or falling leaves and needles. A turf shaded by trees will cool down more quickly in autumn, warm up more slowly in spring, and lie wetter for longer.

These conditions, combined with the lack of light to fuel photosynthesis, essentially shorten the growing season for the turf. The turf will also be more vulnerable to disease attack, and recovery from infection will be slow. Thinning or removal of trees to expose

a turf to more light and air movement will create a warmer, drier growing environment and reduce disease risk, leading to an overall improvement in turf health and playing quality.

Physical methods of managing leaf wetness on the playing surfaces during the autumn are also important irrespective of shade. Minimising the period of leaf wetness

through switching or brushing greens to remove morning dew and/or guttation should be common practice on most courses. This is typically carried out before mowing, and it is important to take the time to remove dew properly.

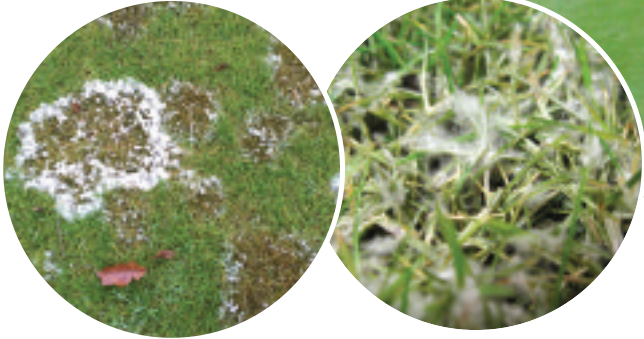
Not only will this reduce disease infection by reducing leaf wetness but it will also

affect a cleaner cut with the mower, which can also help minimise disease infection. During particularly dewy days, there may be a need to return to switch or brush the surfaces multiple times to keep them as dry as possible.

Surfactant technology has also improved in recent years. Dew dispersants and penetrant-type wetting agents can be useful to control dew and thereby reduce leaf wetness. It is important, however, to apply these products correctly to achieve optimum longevity. Don't be ashamed to seek advice on how best to apply these products. Ensure your spray rig is correctly calibrated in terms of pressure, water volume, and speed, and is fitted with the correct nozzles. You should also take care to avoid periods of frost. Application of the right product in the right conditions, using a properly set up spray rig, will ensure you get best bang for your buck **GI**



Our monthly column from The R&A's Sustainable Golf team shares news and insights on agronomy and sustainability themes. For more information on The R&A's Sustainable Agronomy Service please contact [sustainablegolf@randa.org](mailto:sustainablegolf@randa.org)



# Manage turf disease the OAS way!

With our non-pesticidal 20-20-30 Tank Mix *Microdochium nivale* management strategy

Over the past few years, management of *Microdochium nivale* has changed radically with two key drivers; a changing climate and legislation removing effective pesticides. Along with aeration and changing the sward composition, application of products which are non-pesticidal is proving to be an effective management tool.

OAS research and trials work to minimise *Microdochium nivale* has resulted in a strategy featuring OAS' non-pesticidal 20-20-30 Tank Mix. This mix of **Turfite® Elite**, **Liquid Turf Hardener** and **Seamac® Proturf Fe**, with the recent addition of **Mantle®**, is an extremely effective solution to preventing disease.

## Our 20-20-30 Tank Mix strategy works by:

- Changing the leaf surface environment to make it harder for the pathogen to grow on and into the leaf surface.
- Stimulating the plant's natural defence mechanism.
- Improving plant health/growth by stimulating root and shoot development and chlorophyll production.

To find out more or to place an order, please call **0800 138 7222** or email [sales@originamenity.com](mailto:sales@originamenity.com)

Our brands:



# First in Turf



**Harmonix® Turf Defense**  
The **first registered** Bio-Control Fungicide

## Working together for more sustainable golf courses

**NEW**

For more  
information please  
visit our website

