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## A guide to who's who at BIGGA

President  
Sir Michael  
Bonalack, OBE

**BIGGA Board of Management**  
Chairman - Clive Osgood  
Vice Chairman - Richard Barker  
Past Chairman - Elliott Small

**Board Members**  
Ian Semple  
Paul Jenkins  
Jim Paton  
Ian Holoran  
David Walden

**Executive Director**  
Neil Thomas  
Email: neil@bigga.co.uk

**Administration Manager**  
John Pemberton  
Email: john@bigga.co.uk

**Editorial/Media**  
Scott MacCallum  
Email: scott@bigga.co.uk

**Education & Training Manager**  
Ken Richardson  
Email: ken@bigga.co.uk

**Membership Services Officer**  
Tracey Maddison  
Email: tracey@bigga.co.uk

## Contact us

You can contact The British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association in any number of ways:

**Post:** BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Alne, York, YO61 1UF

**Email:** reception@bigga.co.uk

**Internet:** www.bigga.org.uk

**Tel:** 01347 833800

**Fax:** 01347 833801



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

# Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

The official monthly magazine of the British & International Golf Greenkeepers Association

**Editorial**  
Editor: Scott MacCallum  
Tel: 01347 833800 Fax: 01347 833801  
Email: scott@bigga.co.uk

**Advertising**  
Sales & Marketing Department:  
Jennifer Whichello, jennifer@bigga.co.uk  
Cheryl Broomhead, cheryl@bigga.co.uk  
Meredith Foster, meredith@bigga.co.uk  
Tel: 01347 833800 Fax: 01347 833802  
Email: sales@bigga.co.uk

**Design**  
Design & Production Editor: David Emery  
Tel: 01347 833800 ISDN: 01347 830020  
Email: david@bigga.co.uk

**Printing**  
Hi-Tec Print, Units 9-10, Houghton Road, North Anston Trading Estate, North Anston, Sheffield S25 4JJ ISDN: 01909 550561  
Tel: 01909 568533 Fax: 01909 568206

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## You've got m@il!

If you've got an email account, and want to keep up to date with the latest news and events from the turfcare industry, drop us an email, and we'll add you to our ever increasing list of online subscribers. We'll then inform you of any forthcoming features and events via email.

Simply send an email to:

**updates@bigga.co.uk**

quoting your name and Membership number, and we'll do the rest!



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20 Sharp Practice

# November 2001

Your next issue of Greenkeeper International will be with you by December 8, 2001

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**TIME TO TALK**  
www.bigga.org.uk

**HAVE YOU CLICKED ON YET?**  
Visit [www.bigga.org.uk](http://www.bigga.org.uk) and check out the latest chat from the greenkeeping industry

FOR GREENKEEPERS BY GREENKEEPERS CHAT GREENKEEPERS

## Features

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The results of the most comprehensive survey ever undertaken by the Association have now been digested. Mike Williamson, who undertook the survey, explains the work that went into it while Neil Thomas reveals what happens next

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### 16 Environmental Concerns

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Details of a brand new membership benefit which could save £££'s off your next holiday



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Meet the four finalists for the Toro Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping



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16 Environmental Concerns



## A Memorable Year

As we edge towards the end of a year which will be memorable for a great many reasons - record flooding in many parts of the UK; the first Foot and Mouth Outbreak since 1967; the horrific atrocities in the United States and what has subsequently followed - there are still a number of reasons for we in BIGGA to feel positive.

The BIGGA National Championship was probably one of the best in the time I have been with the Association. Two outstanding golf courses in Royal Birkdale and Southport and Ainsdale and a strong field featuring some of the finest golfers this Association is lucky enough to boast.

Chris Ball showed that there is no substitute for local knowledge. He played superb golf over Birkdale, where he was once a junior member, and at SS&A, which overlooks Hillside, where he earns his living as an Assistant, to be crowned the Association's Champion Golfer.

The desire to do well on his home patch was there for all to see and it is great that the BIGGA National Championship can produce that sort of passion and commitment.

Tribute must also be paid to Ian Semple who produced the round of the Championship in gales gusting up to 50mph. Ian, who plays off 1, was shot better than anyone else with his score of 74 round Birkdale. He couldn't reproduce it the next day but hung on for a very well deserved win in the the Scratch competition.

Around about the same time as Chris and Ian were lifting trophies in Southport, Dr Keith Duff, Principal Judge in the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition, supported by the R&A, was concluding his deliberations.

His decision, and as ever it was a close run thing, was to award the title to Broadstone Golf Club, in Poole, a club which has been edging closer to the top prize over the last few years. It also marks another triumph for the south as Broadstone, which is managed by Adrian Archer, succeeds The Dyke Golf Club, from Brighton, as BIGGA's environmental Champion.

The STRI's Lee Penrose has written a report on this year's competition on page 16 of this month's magazine, while you can read about The Dyke on page 24.

The BIGGA Golf Environment Competition is one of the most important events run by the Association as it showcases, to the wider golfing community and indeed the general public, what a great job is done by golf clubs up and down the country to maintain and enhance the flora and fauna which everyone, golfers and non-golfers alike, can enjoy.

While those two BIGGA events have come to a conclusion for 2001, as I write, we still await the final of two other extremely prestigious competitions - the Toro Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping and the Toro Student of the Year Award. Knowing the quality of the finalists in both we

are guaranteed two more outstanding Champions and at the end of the year BIGGA will be able to look back with satisfaction at some wonderful competitions which will have produced excellent winners and ambassadors for the Association.

**Scott MacCallum**  
Editor

## Dublin the venue for Sportsturf Ireland

'Sportsturf Ireland' staged by The Golf Course Superintendents Association of Ireland (GCSAI) will be the largest turf management and groundcare exhibition ever to be held in Ireland. This bi-annual Trade Show is being held at the RDS in Dublin on November 14 and 15 and due to the increased demand for space is for the first time being run over two major exhibition halls at this prestigious venue, the Main Hall and the new modern Shelbourne Hall.

Sportsturf Ireland will act as an important shop window for all major machinery manufacturers, dealers, the supply industry and

many ancillary exhibitors of interest to those involved in fine turf maintenance. It presents an ideal opportunity to discuss at first hand both the problems and the developments of the trade between the supplier and the end user.

In addition to those connected with the golf market it will interest a wide section of the fine turf industry including sports clubs, parks, local authorities, education, landscapers, contractors and leisure complexes.

There should be something to interest everyone from secretary/managers, golf course superintendents to assistant

greenkeepers and grounds people to students.

The GCSAI is a non-profit making organisation set up for the education and improvement of those involved in Irish golf greenkeeping. It has now expanded into sports clubs and landscaping and other areas of fine turf management covering the whole of Ireland. As this is a bi-annual event a large attendance is expected from every corner of the country over the two days.

Admission is free.  
Wednesday 14 November, 10am - 6pm  
Thursday 15 November 10am - 5pm

## Hair today...

Master Greenkeeper Anthony Davies, Course Manager at Prestbury Golf Club near Manchester, will be hoping for a mild winter having had his head shaved in the name of a cancer charity.

"I decided that because October is Breast Cancer Awareness month I would have my golden locks shaved for charity and hopefully raise funds at the same time," explained Anthony.

No shrinking violet, Anthony opened the doors to his friends and supporters on the evening of the big snip.

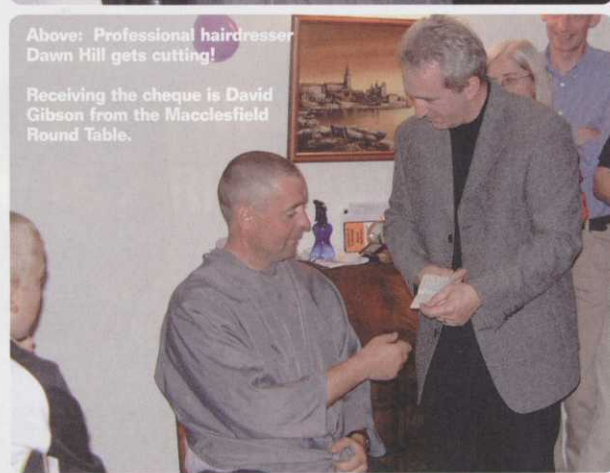
"Over 50 people attended, either to gloat or to make sure I didn't do a runner!" joked the by now follically challenged Anthony.

On the night of the 'BIG CUT' £500 was raised and since that evening the amount has reached £1,100. All the proceeds are heading for an early detection Ultrasound scanner for the Breast Screening unit at the Macclesfield District General Hospital.

Anyone wishing to support Anthony's fund raising exploits can send a donation to BIGGA HOUSE where we shall make sure any money is forwarded to Anthony.



Above: Professional hairdresser Dawn Hill gets cutting!



Receiving the cheque is David Gibson from the Macclesfield Round Table.

## Cumbria Cup goes to Graham Forbes

Graham Forbes, Head Greenkeeper of Maryport Golf Club, emerged as winner of the Course Care Cumbria Cup which was finally played at Penrith Golf Club having been postponed due to the Foot and Mouth epidemic earlier in the year.

Graham lifted the prestigious Whitelaw Bowl with a score of 37 Stableford points winning on a better back nine.

Graham is pictured with the Whitelaw Bowl between BIGGA Chairman Clive Osgood and Penrith Captain, Donald Birkett.





# Textron Managing Director resigns

Harold Pinto (right), Managing Director of Textron Golf, Turf & Specialty Products - International, has resigned and left the company at the beginning of this month.

His decision is purely voluntary and he is returning to the USA to head up one of the subsidiaries of the Boston-based Goldman Industrial group reporting directly to their Chairman and CEO, Greg Goldman.

"We are all really sorry to see Harold go and wish him the very best in his new career opportunity. He has done a tremendous job in the past four years where he has successfully managed the integration of Jacobsen and Ransomes, bringing together the two organisations under the Textron umbrella and creating a distinct identity for the two major brands in their respective market sectors," said Peter Bell, Marketing Director.

"He leaves behind a superb team of people in a stable and progressive business with high expectations of continued growth in their respective markets.

"We all echo the thoughts of Greg Hyland, the President of Textron Golf and Turf in the States who, in thanking Harold for his outstanding contribution said that he will miss his business insight, his leadership and his efforts to consistently move the business forward, while wishing him great success in his future endeavours."

Following his departure Textron announced a series of temporary organisational changes until the reorganisation of the International division is finalised. This will result in the senior management team at Ipswich reporting directly to Greg Hyland, the President of Textron Golf and Turf in the USA.



# Scotland North take Norrie Whytock Trophy

The Norrie Whytock Team Trophy, sponsored by Aventis, was once again held at Auchterarder GC by kind permission of the Captain and Committee.

The Sections were all represented and the players were looking forward to taking part in what has become a regular fixture in the Region's golfing calendar. The weather was kind but prior to the day, the Course Manager, Archie Dunn, was not hopeful as the rain had made conditions pretty awful. Thankfully they cleared up on the day.

The event consists of teams of four from each Section within the Scottish Region taking part on a Stableford basis with the best three scores counting. Conditions were ideal and with the European Tour event taking place next door at Gleneagles the players were in good company. Some of the scores returned would not have disgraced that field.

At the end of the day the North Section again emerged as winners with an aggregate of 104 points. The winning team comprised of Iain MacLeod, Steve Sullivan, David Marnoch and Stuart Hogg. Runners-up were the West Section on a countback from the Ayrshire Section.



Mention should be made of young John Mair, Beith GC, of the Ayrshire Section who amassed 40 points but unfortunately missed out on the team prizes.

Our thanks go once again to Aventis and David Drummond, the Regional Manager Scotland, for hosting this event and providing such excellent prizes. Their support of this tourna-

ment is appreciated by the players who wish to pass on their thanks and appreciation to Aventis and David for the day.

Our thanks to Archie Dunn and his staff at Auchterarder GC for preparing the course for our visit. Thanks are also due to the club for the use of the clubhouse.

Peter Boyd

## Membership Subscription Rates for 2002

Please note that from January 1, 2002, BIGGA Membership Subscription Rates will be as follows:

Job title	2002 rates
Course Manager/ Head Greenkeeper	£85
Deputy Course Manager/ Deputy Head Greenkeeper	£67
All other Greenkeeping staff aged 21 years and over	£54
Greens staff aged 20 years and under	£33
International Greenkeeping Member	£63
Full-time Students	£18
Associate Member	£60
Corporate Membership (up to 4 trade members)	£180

## Myerscough College Annual Turf Conference postponed

This year's Myerscough College Annual Turf Conference 'In Pursuit of Excellence' has been postponed due to the events that occurred in the United States of America on September 11th. The continuing unstable situation affects all overseas visitors adversely and was seen to be an unnecessary journey at this difficult time.

The Conference was due to be held at The Norbreck Castle Hotel in Blackpool on the 12th to 15th November 2001.

Myerscough College will endeavour to re-arrange the Annual Turf Conference in the spring of 2002.

For further information, please contact Myerscough College on 01995 642222 or via email: turfconference@myerscough.ac.uk

## BIGGA on the move at Scotsturf

In the October edition of Greenkeeper International, it was stated that the BIGGA stand at the Scotsturf Exhibition, 6-7 November, would be situated on the East Balcony. This is not the case and visitors to the exhibition will be welcome at the stand's new location of C28, where Cheryl and Susannah from BIGGA will be promoting the benefits of membership, BTME, The Golf Club Show and Greenkeeper International.

## Royal Inverdivot GC...

Strip Cartoonist of the Year [www.tonyhusband.co.uk](http://www.tonyhusband.co.uk)





A LOOK BACK TO A DECADE AGO

## Back Lapping

FROM GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

Take a time-honoured look back through the pages of Greenkeeper International from a decade ago



NOVEMBER 1991

### Greenkeepers and Superintendents Tournament

Fulford Golf Club in York was the location for the seventh Ransomes International Greenkeepers and Superintendents Tournament, when Canada snatched victory by one point from the United States with England third, two further points away. Remember the players? The Canadian squad comprised Tom Charters, Bob Heron, Doug Meyer and Robbie Robinson with manager Ken Olsvik. Representing the USA were Ed Walsh, Roger Null and Frank Moswell. England's team, managed by Past BIGGA Chairman Ivor Scoones, included Mike Hughes, David Wood and Mark Diment. Scotland, as did Wales, finished joint 7th, and Elliott Small commented 'we seemed to be seeing borrows which weren't there and lipped a lot of holes'.

### ICI Premier Greenkeeper of the Year Award

Five well-known BIGGA members were competing for the prestigious ICI Premier Greenkeeper of the Year Award - Richard Barker, Laurence Pithie, Timothy McCreadie, David Whitaker and Arne Van Amerongen. And the winner ... David Whitaker. Meanwhile the Toro/PGA European Tour Student Greenkeeper of the Year was named - Brian Story from Silloth on Solway Golf Club.

### Night time golf at Aldwark

Night time golf came to Aldwark Manor when an invited audience saw the chemically illuminated golf balls struck, with various plastic covered lights of a similar nature used to aid the golfers sight. Greenkeepers were reported as far from happy with twelve or more hours of golf during the summer and the problems of overplaying and compaction. Added to this was the problem of footprinting on delicate and perhaps frosted greens and, of course, divot replacement. Overall impression? A bit gimmicky and not for the serious golfer.

## Key appointment for CWC

Complete Weed Control has appointed Richard Minton as Business Development Manager.

Richard is a well known face to many greenkeepers up and down the country from his attendance at the Greenkeeper of the Year competition and National Tournaments when they were supported by his company.

This new post involves provision of technical and practical support for the 40 plus national franchise network including advertising and promotional activities, development of new market areas and the formulation of training initiatives aimed at enhancing overall business performance.

Richard, who joins the company with a sound background of over 12 years in the industry and has professional credentials of BASIS, BAA part 3, FACTS and NPTC, is looking forward to the challenge this new role will offer. Formerly UK Sales Manager for Scotts Turf and Amenity, Richard brings with him an impressive portfolio of business achievements.

"I am joining Complete Weed Control at an exciting time for contracting. Due to the imposition of legislative restraints, the need for professionally qualified contractors is vast and offers tremendous market potential for our company. Complete Weed Control has always set the highest standards and my aim is to ensure that quality remains a key focus for our service provision," said Richard.

A key area for business development will be promotion of CWC's WeedIT machine. Launched in 1997 and winner of 'The Best New Landscape Product' at SALTEX 97, WeedIT offers major environmental benefits through targeting only the weed for treatment, thus ensuring the minimum use of chemicals.

Managing Director, Roger Turner, said of the new appointment:

"We are exceptionally fortunate that Richard has joined our ranks and are confident that his professional knowledge and expertise will complement our successful weed control business."

## Carnoustie renews Toro partnership



Carnoustie has renewed its three-year partnership with Toro in a deal which has seen Course Superintendent John Philp replacing his entire Toro fleet, apart from nine of his Greensmaster greensmowers. The new kit was put to good use straight away in preparation for, and during, the recent Dunhill Links event. "Overall Toro still has the machines with the right pedigree and has offered us another excellent deal with the right support so I am delighted to continue our relationship," said John. Pictured are: John Philp centre right, with from the right Gordon Skea, of Toro dealer Allan Gammie, distributor Lely's George Macdonald and Les Gammie with Carnoustie greenkeepers.

## Portugal venue for EGD annual meeting

The European Golf Distributors held their 8th Annual Meeting in Porto, Portugal during October, with members from eight different countries present. Principals of Amenity distributors from throughout Europe make up the group, whose objective is to share information, market trends and product development.

A wide range of topics were discussed, including the adverse weather conditions last winter and how it affected the amenity market throughout Europe and as a group how they can further the excellent technical service offered to the benefit of customers throughout Europe.

For further details contact Rod Feltham, Secretary, European Golf Distributors 01934 820868.

## Scotsraig appoint George to new role

Scotsraig Golf Club has appointed George Paterson as its first Course Manager. George, who takes up the post in December having fulfilled his notice from his position of Course Manager of Sligo Golf Club in north-west Ireland, was previously Head Greenkeeper at Fortrose and Rosemarkie GC in the north of Scotland.

"We are confident that George will be an excellent addition to the management team at Scotsraig. He is very ambitious and dedicated to his work," said Club Secretary Barrie Liddle.

He will inherit a new full irrigation system which has recently been installed on the Final Open Qualifying Course.

George, 34, is a one handicap golfer and is married to Annie with two children Leah, 6, and Gregor, 2.

## Conference set to be resounding success

Textron, principal sponsors of the inaugural Turf Care Conference to be held at the Gleneagles Hotel from November 18-20, has reported that the event is now fully booked and looks set to be a resounding success.

Over 120 delegates will be attending the conference, which is the brainchild of Jimmy Kidd, Golf Courses and Estates Director at the world-renowned resort complex. The format has been designed to appeal to, and address issues, facing both business entrepreneurs who wish to build a golf course as well as those already involved in the industry.

"This three-day conference is the ideal forum for representatives from all areas of the course construction and maintenance sectors to meet and expend their knowledge and understanding of each other's role. We are absolutely delighted that demand for places has outstripped supply and this bodes well for the future of the event," said Jimmy.

Peter Bell, Marketing Director of Textron was equally delighted with the Conference's impending success.

"As principal sponsor we are equally thrilled with the response from delegates. Through the hard work of Jimmy and his staff, this inaugural conference looks set to become an annual event with delegates and speakers attending from all parts of the globe. This international perspective will ensure that all participants can exchange views and discuss issues that affect this burgeoning industry," said Peter.

## New title for Gordon

Following a decision by the Links Management Committee Gordon Moir, who oversees the management of all six St Andrews Links courses, has had his job title changed to Links Superintendent.



Previously Head Greenkeeper of the Eden Course, Gordon, a past Chairman of the Scottish Region and National Board of Management member, took up the post last October inheriting the all-encompassing title of Links Manager but it is hoped that the new title will highlight the focus of his responsibility which is the management and maintenance of the courses.

"With his background and ability, Gordon is ideally suited to his role," said Alan McGregor, General Manager of St Andrews Links Trust.

"The job is one of the most significant in greenkeeping worldwide and I am confident that Gordon will help ensure that St Andrews Links raises its reputation as a world centre of excellence."



# Grade A Club benefits for Dartmouth G&CC

Membership of an innovative club is helping Dartmouth Golf and Country Club Course Manager Terry Farkins supplement his annual staff training budget. Soon his in-house training library will boast the full range of BIGGA greenkeeper training videos. Terry employs eight full time staff and one casual worker at the 27-hole golf and hotel complex situated at Blackawarton, near Totnes in Devon. Investment in training has always been a priority for both Terry and his employer BBC Director General, Greg Dyke, who owns Dartmouth G&CC.

"We are constantly looking to move our greenkeepers up the NVQ qualification scale. At the moment, half our staff are qualified and the rest are keen to progress right up to NVQ level three. We run regular in-house training days and attend short courses where appropriate," said Terry. In fact, Terry is so committed to continued career education that he plans to set up his own library within the course



workshop area, and introduce a personal computer so that staff can regularly access the Internet for information.

"Ultimately, I'd like to undertake 90% of the training in-house and this means investing in educational materials. The British Seed Houses training credit scheme is an excellent idea has been well received by

both the staff and the company. We've redeemed our first batch of points and will be using the money to build up a library of BIGGA training videos," he revealed.

As a member of the British Seed Houses Grade A Club, Terry has built up his points as a loyalty bonus based on the on-going seed business he has done with the company.

## Estimated £60k damage caused by vandals

Five greens were decimated overnight in an act of mindless vandalism at Llanymynech Golf Club when weed-killer was thrown over them.

The greens will now need to be rebuilt and new turf laid at a cost of approximately £10,000 to £12,000 per green.

Course Manager Allen Lewis could not believe his eyes on the morning of September 18 when he was alerted by a member of his staff to a white powder on the greens. This is now thought to have been Sodium Chlorate.

In the following three weeks the greens changed to yellow then white and finally brown as the grass covered died off over 60% to 70% of each green.

Officials at the club can think of no reason why anyone should want to do such a mindless act. The golf course is situated on the top of Llanymynech Hill with three greens in England and 15 in Wales.

## Turfgrass Seed 2

TURFGRASS SEED 2002  
SECOND EDITION

STRI

Published by STRI, BINGLEY, WEST YORKSHIRE, BT18 3AU, ENGLAND

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STRI has produced a second edition of Turfgrass Seed 2002.

The new booklet has revised information describing the performance of perennial ryegrass cultivars for use in winter games pitches.

For further details telephone: 01274 565131.

## Top marks given to Thiefbeaters

Thiefbeaters has launched the Thatcham Permanent Security Marking and Database registration system.

Designed to protect valuable vehicles and equipment, Thiefbeaters acts as a theft deterrent. The new system can be applied to a wide range of landscaping and amenity items, including mowers, chippers, tractors and hand tools.

It works by applying unique alphanumeric numbers, electronic

tags and microdots to the structure and fabric of an item. This identification put in numerous overt and hidden locations, make it impossible for the thief to conceal, or remove the identity and legal ownership of the property.

Full details of the property and its unique markings are held on a national database which the police can access in the event of a theft.

Further information can be obtained Tel: 0870 794 0111.

## Latest brochure now available from Tonick

The new, full colour brochure from Tonick Watering features a comprehensive range of irrigation control products and accessories for golf course, sports grounds, garden centres and landscapes.

The range includes decoders with programmer/testers, irrigation controllers, lightning protection modules, field-wiring connection and fault-finding kits.

The text provides useful technical information for both greenkeepers and installers.

All of the products described are designed and made in the UK by Tonick Watering and most items are available from stock.

The brochure is available free, on request, telephone: 01269 832325.

## Andrew joins Advanta Seeds UK



Andrew Hodgskiss has joined the Advanta Seeds UK amenity sales team, to support the Advanta "MM" and "Designer" distributors, and their customers, in East Anglia and the South East.

Based in Ely, Cambridgeshire, Andrew has many years experience working in the grass seed business, selling to local authorities, major turf growers, architects and other landscape specifiers, as well as private sports and golf clubs.

## High flotation tyres from Nokia

New Nokia high flotation tyres - yes that's Nokia - are helping to reduce the round pressure of the Carraro TRX 8400 tractor, which is a 74hp machine weighing 2100 kg, to 6 psi. The Nokia tyres, which fit comfortably into the Carraro tractor's frame, boast a lifespan which is typically equal to or greater than the vehicle to which they are fitted.

"Even when the TRX is working with one of the larger Verti-Drain deep aeration machines mounted on the back, it still creates less disturbance to the grass than an empty turf utility vehicle moving personnel around," said Dustin Houghton,

Head Greenkeeper, at Seaford Head Golf Club, who purchased a Nokia shod machine recently.

Like other Carraro tractors, the driving position and controls are fully reversible. This means that attachments can be fitted at both front and rear, and the operator can switch from using one to the other almost instantly.

This saves time and boosts productivity, with various tasks being carried out quickly and efficiently, without damaging the turf.

Carraro tractors are distributed in the UK by Charterhouse Turf Machinery Ltd.







# BIGGA market research study: The story to date...

As readers will know from reports in Greenkeeper International earlier this year, BIGGA commissioned specialist golf consultancy MW Associates in March to carry out a detailed market research study on behalf of the Association. Funding for the research was provided by the R&A, whose financial support is gratefully acknowledged. Many people also assisted with the study, either by completing questionnaires or by taking part in telephone interviews, and a good number expressed interest in hearing about the findings of the research – and how BIGGA planned to follow up the study. So, in the first part of this article, Mike Williamson, the Director of MW Associates responsible for the study, describes how the research was carried out and summarises his main findings and conclusions. BIGGA's Board has discussed these findings, both with Mike Williamson and at its own meetings, and, in the second part of the article, BIGGA's Executive Director Neil Thomas highlights the priorities the Board has identified for more detailed assessment and follow-up action.

Mike Williamson takes up the story...

The general aim of the study was to establish how BIGGA, and its current policies and activities, are regarded by its members and the major companies and organisations in the golf industry that it has dealings with. A further specific aim was to identify ways of tackling problems, and exploiting opportunities, in the areas of marketing and revenue generation.

A key element of our survey work was a detailed questionnaire sent to a sample of just over 2,000 BIGGA members, representing all membership categories and all regions of the country. 574 completed questionnaires were returned – a response rate of 28%.

In addition, we carried out about 150 telephone interviews, which covered:

32 potential BIGGA members, ie greenkeepers who have not joined BIGGA;

31 lapsed BIGGA members, ie greenkeepers who had previously been, but were no longer, BIGGA members;

BIGGA Board Members, senior staff, and regional administrators;

32 commercial contacts, ie representatives of Golden and Silver Key company members of BIGGA, companies advertising in Greenkeeper International, golf operating companies, media etc;

14 representatives of golf organisations, ie golf unions, the colleges, professional associations, GTC, STRI, etc;

23 representatives of golf clubs, ie representatives of Association of Golf Club Secretaries and individual golf clubs.

The completed questionnaires and telephone interviews yielded a great deal of information and opinion – some of a strategic nature and some at a very detailed level – and this is reflected in the structure of our report. We highlight a number of general, and common, themes that emerged from many of the questionnaires and interviews, but also list the many detailed comments and suggestions – often made by only one or two people, but well worth considering nonetheless – relating to specific BIGGA services or aspects of Greenkeeper International or BTME.

The 'big issues' that emerged from the research can be summarised as:

## The Way Forward?

A feeling came across in many of the interviews – perhaps prompted by the very fact that the research was being carried out – that, having come a long way in its first 14 years, BIGGA had reached a point where important decisions had to be made about its future direction, and at a time when finances are tight in the golf industry generally.

## Membership – quality or quantity?

On balance, the research supports the direction BIGGA is already taking, ie introducing a minimum qualification for full membership and focussing on education and training as the core membership service, with the aim of positioning BIGGA clearly as a professional association for greenkeepers at all levels and stages who want to pursue greenkeeping as a professional career. This could enable BIGGA to play a key role in co-ordinating the design and delivery of all levels of education and training, and strengthen the Association's relationship with the commercial sector.

## Policy priorities

Two BIGGA services clearly emerged from the research as the top priorities in terms of spending any extra money that becomes available, and being protected against any cuts if savings have to be made. These were education and training – locally delivered so far as possible – and working to improve the professional status, and the pay and conditions, of members.

## A centralised or devolved organisation?

BIGGA now has a large and very dispersed membership, who are looking for membership services (as well as recruitment efforts and liaison with employers) to be as locally based as possible. Having smaller (and therefore more) regions each with its own administrator could help, while members need more information about 'who does what' in BIGGA HOUSE, and how all the work done there contributes to member benefits.

## Funding and the relationship with the commercial sector

Much more of BIGGA's funding now comes from BTME and Greenkeeper International than from members' subscriptions. With financial pressures in the commercial sector, businesses looking for more commercial return on the money they spend with BIGGA, and some unease among members about potential over-dependence on commercial funding – but all combined with an expectation that BIGGA will continue to expand its services to members – there are clearly financial challenges to be faced. Efforts should therefore be redoubled to obtain more funding for greenkeeper training in particular from the people who ultimately benefit most from it – professional and amateur golfers.

## Working links and public relations

The research suggests BIGGA should strengthen its working links with colleges and the GTC on education and training, and with the PGA and the Association of Golf Club Secretaries as the other two associations representing the professionals in golf management. The evidence also suggests BIGGA needs to devote more resources to professional PR to raise the profile of the Association and get its messages across more effectively to members, golfers, and companies and organisations in the golf industry.

## Greenkeeper International and BTME

While these are both clear success stories, there was a strong body of opinion in favour of the magazine having more technical, research, educational, and business management content – and with more of this being related to 'ordinary' golf courses.

BTME is seen as providing excellent service to the industry and good commercial opportunities for companies. While Harrogate is generally accepted at present as the most appropriate location for the BTME, this needs to be regularly reassessed while there needs to be a focus on attracting members from further afield to Harrogate as well as ensuring that fresh faces and as many potential buyers as possible appear from year to year.

## A final word from Mike Williamson

This brief summary has had to leave out most of what is in our 40-page report, but hopefully it will give a flavour of the broad findings. Again, my thanks on behalf of MW Associates to everyone who completed questionnaires or took time to speak to us.

## Neil Thomas continues the story...

BIGGA's Board of Management has given detailed consideration to the market research study and has identified the following as priority areas for more detailed assessment and follow-up action as a result of the market research.

More effective communications and public relations, including the possible use of professional PR services to "get the Association's message across" to its various target audiences, closer working relationships with other bodies where mutual interests could be clearly identified, and more use of techniques like roadshows and contact with employers at the County Golf Union level to promote membership recruitment, services and general support for BIGGA.

A review of BIGGA's current three-tier structure, particularly with the aim of identifying cost-effective ways of strengthening the Association's local "identity" and service delivery.

A review of the commercial funding generated by the Association, including a review of the concept of Golden and Silver Key company membership, in terms of features like the number of companies involved, the level of payment to BIGGA and the services offered in return.

Further strengthening of BIGGA's key service of education and training, including the funding of this service and the role of the Association in relation to the colleges and the GTC.

For the Board's next meeting in December I have a brief to make recommendations as to how the Association should proceed with the assessment and any follow-up action. There is no doubt that this will involve, as it should, members at all levels when we will need to look back at BIGGA's operation over the last 14 years and then decide on how best to take the Association forward in the years that lie ahead.

The work involved will be significant and while there will be expectations, there also needs to be a degree of realism. There will be no quick fixes and we are certainly looking at a medium/long term process whereby we can envisage coming to decisions, and implementing them, over a period which may be in excess of two years. It also needs to be said at the outset that there will undoubtedly be resource implications to consider and this will be a major factor in determining the timing for implementation of recommendations once approved by the Board of Management.

This should, therefore, be an exciting period when, far from resting on its laurels, BIGGA will examine its progress and development since 1987 and look to move forward progressively for the benefit of its membership in this new century.



# Should we lead or should we be led?

**Duncan McGilvray, Course Manager at Potters Bar GC, has some concerns involving the profession. Do you share his views?**

I have become extremely concerned about our profession of late – there appears to be a kind of complacency which I do not wish to be a part of – an “acceptance of our lot” attitude which serves no-one – least of all our industry.

We have come too far in the last 15 years or so to now sit back and not gain strength and confidence from the advances made already in the acceptance of responsibility in managing golf courses.

So why am I so concerned?

I believe there is a serious omission in the management of golf courses – I see it in the average private members golf club, which make up approximately 90% of the golf played in this country.

There appears to be few who have the necessary confidence to stamp their authority and ensure that the right things are carried out on golf courses and therefore ensure the best conditions are available to players.

At this point I do not want people to misinterpret me – I am not a power hungry autocrat! – I just want wonderful golf courses – is that not what we all want?

My argument is that we can only achieve this if the course is managed efficiently and that is not achieved by reactive management, which I come across whenever I hear of problems on golf courses.

Proactive management demonstrated by properly empowered Course Managers is an absolute necessity if golf course management as a profession has any chance of survival or even taken seriously in future.

Alarmist? – I don't think so.

A conversation heard recently at a prominent college – “We are looking at management courses specifically targeting managers both inside and outside the golfing industry to train to ensure that golf courses in the future are managed properly.”

And then the bit that hurts the most – “We are looking at attracting golf professionals and interested club officials, because greenkeepers do not appear to want to take on this demanding role.”

I hope there are now greenkeepers who are fuming at the previously stated comments – if there are not then I see no hope for us in the future.

I have lived through a time when so called experts tried to manage golf courses and had unbelievable catastrophic affects on golf course conditions.

I believe this will happen again but maybe this time they will use us as their technicians and make it work this time – unless of course we do something about it!



Duncan McGilvray

BIGGA have heavily subsidised management courses to fill this gap in training only to find that when offered to our membership these opportunities are not taken up – or certainly not taken up to any extent that would make any appreciable difference.

The excuses given are not worth repeating – it would only infuriate my like minded colleagues.

For a time I was very confident in our future but I am not so sure now.

I recently, by chance, met two colleagues from the past whom I believed to be two forceful young potential future proactive Course Managers – they have now sadly left the industry, and when pushed for a reason, had been let down by ineffective reactive management from above.

“Don't rock the boat” – “Take the salary and do as you're told” – “Blame the green committee when things go wrong”... etc, etc.

These may appear to be easy actions (or non-actions) but as every successful manager knows it is a very short-term view.

At the moment I have a very pessimistic view of our profession – am I wrong?

My intention through this article is to get some sort of reaction from our profession – tell me and other concerned colleagues through Greenkeeper International whether I am right and what we should do about it.

Am I worrying unduly? – unfortunately I do not think so.

Please respond in your hundreds and show the “powers that be” within the golfing world that we are ready and willing to take on the responsibility necessary to ensure not only the efficient management of our golf courses but our own futures.

Duncan McGilvray, Course Manager  
Potters Bar Golf Club, 26.09.01



**Address your letters to The Editor, Greenkeeper International, BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Aine, York YO61 1UF, or email them to [reception@bigga.co.uk](mailto:reception@bigga.co.uk)**

## Phosphate Clarification

Since my recent article was published in Greenkeeper International entitled “Soil Analysis: Unravelling the Mystery” (September 2001) I have received a number of enquiries regarding the role of phosphates in soil. The article states that phosphates have a negative charge and thus cannot be held by soil clay organic matter thus leaching quickly through the soil.

Phosphates do indeed have a negative electrostatic charge, in fact, in sandy soil, with relatively little organic matter, certain forms of fertiliser phosphate eg phosphoric acid and ammonium phosphate are relatively soluble. Such products can be leached readily into the rootzone. They provide an ideal method of getting phosphate to bentgrass roots without building up the surface phosphate concentrations which would lead to a promotion of poa annua establishment.

Despite this, soluble phosphate gradually becomes immobile in most soils. When an application of phosphate is applied, a chemical reaction takes place in the soil which creates other forms of phosphate that are relatively insoluble. In acid soils phosphate tends to react with iron or aluminium to form iron phosphate or aluminium phosphate. In alkaline soil phosphate reacts with calcium to form calcium phosphate. These chemical reactions create the insoluble forms of phosphate that we associate with as managers of turfgrass.

The article was certainly not intended to encourage excess phosphate application but to clarify the confusing issue of soil analysis. I hope this has cleared up any confusion that the article may have caused.

Daniel Binns, STRI, Turfgrass Agronomist

## National Championship thanks

Having just returned from the National Championship at Royal Birkdale and Southport & Ainsdale, I would like to congratulate the organisers at HQ for a superb week. I played with various people over the two days and thoroughly enjoyed the company of these guys. Hopefully I can meet them sometime in the future and play their courses as they can come and play mine.

The courses, the championship dinner, the organisation, the friendship of all the competitors there was second to none. This was my first National Championship and it certainly won't be my last and that goes

for all the competitors from Scotland, and all of our members from wherever they came from across the UK and Europe.

The friendliness of everyone there that week shows that there are no individuals in this Association. We are all equals and that is what BIGGA is all about. So once again thanks for a great week and keep up the good work.

PS. You can put my name down for next year as I will certainly be there. Thanks also from Craig Pennyquick and Gary Rodgers.

Chris Yeaman, Course Manager, West Linton GC

## A thank you from Denmark

In the beginning of October, six of us from Denmark decided to go and visit my good friend Matt over in Bristol and play some golf.

We would all like to thank Matt Hawker, Head Greenkeeper Bristol & Clifton GC, and Gary Hawley, Head Greenkeeper Filton GC, their Pro shop and their

members for the warm welcome we all got.

For some of us it was the first time in England, and the weather was with us.

Hope to see you all in Denmark next year.

Mick Steele, Head Greenkeeper Morse Golf Club, Denmark

**You've got m@il!**

If you've got an email account why not send an email to us here at BIGGA, where we can place you into our exclusive email address book. We can then keep you up-to-date with news and event information as soon as it happens.

Send an email to: [reception@bigga.co.uk](mailto:reception@bigga.co.uk)

Remember to include the word 'updates' in your subject field



This month, Ken Richardson, BIGGA's Education and Training Manager, gives details of the latest Health and Safety regulations which could impact on your daily working practices ...

# Get the most from your education

## Don't lose out

Following an extensive consultation process between the Education and Training Department and BIGGA Regions and Sections on the content of training courses, their location, their cost and when they should run, approximately 50% of Sections requested that we run a range of one and two day courses. Details of courses and application forms were sent out with the October edition of Greenkeeper International with the first course, Abrasive Wheels, due to be run, in Bristol on 25 October. Unfortunately, the response has been so poor that we have had to cancel this course. Further courses may have to be cancelled if sufficient delegates have not registered by the deadline dates which are:

Location Bristol  
 Course Health & Safety Awareness  
 Date 3 & 4 December  
 Deadline 9 November

Location Pencoed College  
 Course Health & Safety Awareness  
 Date 5 & 6 December  
 Deadline 9 November

Location Staffordshire  
 Course Soil Science  
 Date 22 November  
 Deadline 8 November

Fortunately, some courses are full and others are almost full allowing greenkeepers to attend quality training at minimum cost thanks to a massive subsidy from the BIGGA Education and Development Fund.

Remember, all courses need a minimum of 6 delegates to run. Any course with less than 6 delegates will be cancelled

## You've got m@il!

If you've got an email account why not send an email to the education department, where we can place you into our exclusive education email address book. We can then keep you up-to-date with education news and events as they happen.

Send an email to:  
 ken@bigga.co.uk  
 sami@bigga.co.uk

## Golf Course Health and Safety

Changes to the Health and Safety at Work Act continue to have an impact on golf greenkeepers. The Government and the Health and Safety Commission have recently announced a series of targets that are designed to reduce work related deaths, accidents and illnesses in the biggest shake up of health and safety for 25 years.

The initiative comes soon after Home Office proposals to introduce a new offence of corporate killing.

The targets are:

To reduce the number of working days lost from work related injury and ill health by 30% by the year 2010 (a decrease of 7.5 million working days)

To reduce the incidence of people suffering from work related ill health by 20% by the year 2010 (80 000 fewer cases)

To reduce the rate of fatal and major injury accidents by 10% by the year 2010

To achieve half of each improvement by 2004

To achieve these targets, the Government has introduced a 10 point strategy supported by a 44 point action plan which will provide incentives and practical support to employers, together with a range of measures to tackle employers who do not meet their health and safety responsibilities.

The plan will include:

Tougher penalties to deter health and safety offences, including imprisonment to be available for most health and safety crimes and the increased maximum fine available to the lower court (£20 000) to be extended to most health and safety offences.

An examination of innovative penalties such as fines linked to turnover and suspension of managers without pay.

A directors Code of Practice that will make a named person responsible for health and safety matters within every company (golf Course).

New help for small businesses, including sector specific health and safety guidance.

Exploring, with the Insurance Industry, incentives to reward good health and safety performers at the expense of the bad.

Copies of 'Revitalising Health and Safety Strategy Statement' are available from 'DETR Free Literature, PO Box 236, Wetherby, LS23 7NB (tel 0870 1226236).

Many greenkeepers suffer from the effects of hand arm vibration and managers needing help with understanding the risks can acquire a new electronic product to assist them.

The CD ROM The Successful management of Hand Arm Vibration uses video clips, sound and animation to illustrate how to identify and reduce the risks. The CD ROM can be obtained from HSE books [www.hsebooks.co.uk](http://www.hsebooks.co.uk) (tel 01787 881165) priced at £95 +VAT).

A new standard test to validate training for fork lift truck operators has been developed by accrediting bodies and the Joint Industry Council for Lift Truck Operators. Advice on training of lift truck operators and details of accrediting bodies is contained in Rider Operated Trucks: Operator Training is available from HSE Books.

## Local Environment Risk Assessment for Pesticides

The Local Environment Risk Assessment for Pesticides regulations (LERAP) state that where drift from pesticides which could affect water quality or be harmful to birds or aquatic life, you should limit the use of such pesticides near watercourses. A buffer zone of 6 metres must be left unsprayed unless sprayer equipment is used which reduces the risk of drift. Equipment is given a 1, 2 or 3 Star rating depending on how much the buffer zone can be reduced with 3 Star equipment giving a reduction to 1 metre.

## British Standard EN907

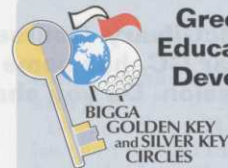
BS EN 907 require that all new sprayers must be fitted with a chemical induction hopper. Where this is not possible, the height from the ground or platform to the filling hole should not be more than 1500 mm and the horizontal reach between the rim of the tank and the hole should not be more than 300 mm. In addition, BS EN907 require that all sprayers be fitted with a clean water tank of at least 15 litres capacity.

## Groundwater

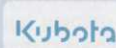
The latest regulations on groundwater state that sprayer operators are not allowed to flush spray washings down drains or onto waste ground. Unless a washing system is fitted, the tank must be fully filled and the washing disposed of either into purpose built tanks or by spraying over the previously sprayed area.

To reduce the time needed to carry out these operations, some manufacturers fit tank flushing nozzles, which mean that only 10% of tank capacity is needed for flushing.

## Greenkeeper Education and Development Fund



The Fund provides the key to the future for greenkeeper, golf club and game. Individuals and companies can join the Golden Key Circle and Silver Key Circle. For details, please contact Neil Thomas, Executive Director on 01347 833800 or via [admin@bigga.co.uk](mailto:admin@bigga.co.uk)

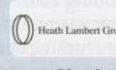


### Golden Key Circle Company Members

Company	Tel: Head Office
Amazon Ground Care	01579 351155
Bernhard and Company Ltd	01788 811600
Charterhouse Turf Machinery Ltd	01428 661222
Gem Professional	01254 356611
John Deere Ltd	01949 860491
Hayter Ltd	01279 723444
Kubota UK Ltd	01844 214500
Massey Ferguson (AGCO Ltd)	02476 851292
PGA European Tour	01344 842881
Rain Bird	01273 891326
Rigby Taylor Ltd	01204 377777
Scotts UK Professional	01473 830492
Stoke Park Club	01753 717171
Textron Turf Care	01473 270000
The Toro Company/Lely UK	01202 319967

### Individual Members

Mike Eastwood, J H Fry, J H Greasley, WJ Rogers, David S Robinson, Stuart Townsend, Douglas Smith



### Silver Key Circle Company Members

Company	Tel: Head Office
Ernest Doe & Sons	01254 380311
Heath Lambert Group	0113 246 1313
Ocmis Irrigation	01460 241939
Sisis Equipment Ltd	01625 503030

### Individual Members

Clive A Archer, John Crawford, Bruce Cruickshank, Douglas G Duguid, Alan Holmes, Kenneth Jones, Iain A MacLeod, Robert Malbusch MG, Richard S Mullen, Elliott R Small, Steven Tierney, CJ Yeaman

Keep checking [www.btme.org.uk](http://www.btme.org.uk) for the latest news on the various education and training options available at BTME2002