



Above: The Association's Golden and Silver Key Supporters were presented with their momentos at the Chairman's Lunch by Sir Michael Bonallack and Clive Osgood.



### BIGGA Master Greenkeepers receive their awards at Harrogate

BIGGA President Sir Michael Bonallack presented three of the four attending new Master Greenkeepers with their plaques and blazers.



### MASTER GREENKEEPER CERTIFICATE

Lee Strutt, of Richmond Golf Club; Philip Helmn, of Overstone Park GC, and David Leach, of Lancaster Golf and Country Club. Steven Cook, of Oakland Hills Country Club, in Michigan, will receive his plaque and blazer in Orlando at the GCSAA Conference and Show.



### The write stuff

Stefan Antolik, of Cooden Beach Golf Club, was also presented with his cheque as winner of the Head Greenkeeper/ Course Manager and Deputies



### BIGGA ESSAY COMPETITION

category in the BIGGA Essay Competition; Richard Clarke, Royal Eastbourne GC, was the winner of the Assistants Over 25 category and David Gillon, Tulliallan GC, was the winner of the Assistant Under 25 category - His boss, Elliott Small, (not pictured) collected the prize on David's behalf.



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This superb and unusual aerial picture of the exhibition shows just how busy the three-day marathon has become. With a head for heights, the BIGGA Sales Team, ably led by Sherpa Whichello, captured the action from the gantry 40 feet above Hall M!



### Banquet which leaves us all Brahms and Liszt!

Brahms and Liszt provided the unique, not to say, off the wall, cabaret on the Thursday night. An occasion when can have 50 Scots highland dancing during a dinner; Welshmen, including your Executive Director, jumping over candles; a Rest of the World Riverdance troupe; a brass band comprising many well known greenkeepers and the first recorded instance of stage diving at a BTME Banquet will be remembered for many years to come.

### Vitax winner

The annual Vitax prize draw was conducted by Richard Barker ably assisted Clive Williams. The lucky winner was Nigel Weller, of North Downs GC, Surrey, who won a BTME voucher which he was presented with in the week following the Show.



### The worm has turned for Sportsworld Amenity

Sportsworld Amenity used the show to launch Wormaway, a totally organic worm repellent. Developed over several seasons in an effort to fine a naturally occurring substance that will help reduce worm casts it reduces casting on the surface but does not affect the benefits of naturally occurring aeration. It is available in liquid form and can be applied through an conventional sprayer. Wormaway boasts a long lasting formula, non irritant formula; a blend of 40 active organic compounds and includes wetting agent. The Sportsworld team is pictured on their stand.

## A TOTAL GOLF EXPERIENCE

### Thursday, January 24th

Down to the halls. Slow start to the day in the first hour. Too many late nights I surmise. Make mental note to consider readjusting the opening times on the Thursday next year. Steady build up follows and my guess is that Thursday's attendance will match Tuesday's with Wednesday being the busiest day. Press briefing is followed by a well-attended FEGGA AGM. Busy afternoon - unless I take a secret short-cut, it can take a long time indeed for me to progress from Hall A to Q and return! Response to the Golf Club Show seems favourable. Back at the Majestic I check on final preparations for the Exhibition Banquet, quick change and then onto the VIP Reception.

The Banquet was certainly going to be different this year. Our new Chairman and myself speak for a couple of minutes and I am delighted to announce an all time record attendance of 8,629 visitors. Then we are underway. The entertainment commences immediately and continues through the meal. Did we ever have a better night than the one we enjoyed with Brahms and Liszt? These two guys were excellent musicians with a wide repertoire and masters of ensuring audience participation. They built up to a grand climax in a performance which was hugely enjoyed by all. Then followed the popular local group, The Nightjars, and Fun Time Music disco. Great to see everyone enjoying themselves after a busy week. This was indeed a night to remember.

### Friday, January 25th

There's a hint of snow in the air and goodbyes are said for another year. No Friday morning session this time. Breakdown has gone well at the halls. Brief meeting with a group of bleary eyed but happy staff who can reflect on a job well done. Away at 11am with a host of thoughts circulating in my mind for next year. How quickly that will come around!

Neil Thomas reports on a fantastic week in Harrogate, picking out some of the selected highlights from a very hectic schedule indeed





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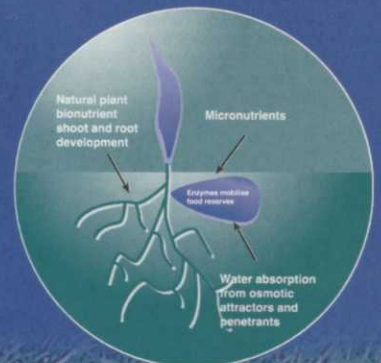
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## New Golf Club Show smashes all expectations



The inaugural Golf Club Show enjoyed an extremely successful first year with a variety of exhibitors ranging from legal protection, golf course photography, health and safety to the English Golf Union and the Association of Golf Club Owners.

Indeed a new Association was formed during the Show - the European Golf Course Owners Association (EGCOA) - by the national Associations in Great Britain, Holland, Germany and Ireland.

The aims of the new Association include lobbying for tax and VAT changes for golf course owners across Europe, inter country communication, the development of increased revenues through travel packages and inter club communications for owners. The handicapping system across Europe will also be looked at in depth.

The European Association will be operated initially from Great Britain, but with 300 proprietary golf courses across Europe represented by the new European Association the influence will be great in the market place across the continent.



## "Anyone in the golf industry, should make time and funds available for BTME 2003"

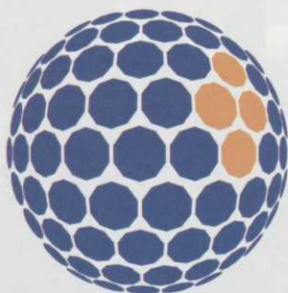
"Golf Course News International have been exhibiting at BTME since 1995 with just one break, in 2001. On all levels BTME 2002 worked for us; from the point of view of meeting our readers and advertisers 'face to face' Harrogate is an ideal showcase. From our standpoint BTME 2002 was an essential marketplace that has, no doubt, gone a long way to strengthening our position in the golf industry publications market. Anyone in the golf industry, particularly in the service sector, should make time and funds available for BTME 2003; we have and are already planning for yet another successful show." **Trevor Ledger, Editor, GCNI**

## BIGGA's Golf Club Show – The safe bet

"Being represented at BIGGA's Golf Club Show 2002 helped our company. Safety Measures, promote our Safety Club initiative and help make golf clubs safer places to work and play." **Sandy Geddes, Safety Measures**

## "GCS is set to go from strength to strength"

"Like any first time it was a memorable experience. I made superb contacts and spread the word about the International Pairs Golf Tournament. The Exhibition can only go on from strength to strength." **Peter Richardson, WLM Public Relations**



**THE GOLF CLUB SHOW 2002**



GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL TAKES A LOOK AT THE VERY LATEST PRODUCTS AND SERVICES LAUNCHED AT THIS YEAR'S PREMIER TURFCARE EXHIBITION IN HARROGATE

# Quality finish from new Deere

John Deere's new B Series family of durable greens mowers have been developed through the successful customer feedback initiative, which helps frame Deere's product development and improvement programmes.

The 46cm 180B, 56cm 22DB and 66cm 26DB walk-behind greens mowers are designed to provide a quality finish on golf courses, tennis courts, bowling greens and other fine turf areas, giving greenkeepers and groundsmen a true choice of machines for all applications.

All three mowers feature a 4hp air cooled Honda engine, cutting height up to 22mm, and an 11 blade, 127mm (Sin) diameter reel as standard (seven blade optional on the 260B), delivering a high quality cut at up to 5.2mph.

The smaller 18DB reduces the overall weight of the mower and allows the operator to follow cut lines and overlap more easily and with more accuracy. The larger 260B provides a higher capacity machine for all sports turf applications, and incorporates a dimpled drum for increased traction.



New features include lower noise levels, a redesigned height adjustable handlebar, an improved grassbox and easier bedknife-to-reel adjustment. The grassbox design improves the operator's vision of the mowing path, as well as the cut line marker, which increases productivity by reducing overlaps and misses.

Key options include detachable

transport wheels, to make it easier to move the mower from trailer to green, a Greens Tender™ conditioner and a pull-back clutch that allows the mower to be reversed while the reels are engaged.

The new John Deere 180B and 260B walk-behind greens mowers will be available from April 2002, with the 220B following in June.

## Product range Xtended

Sports-pitches, outfields and other course turf areas stand to benefit from a new range of granular fertilisers from Headland Amenity Products. Headland Xtend features a slow release form of soluble nitrogen, which is safe to apply, and lasts for up to 12 weeks. Utilising UMAXX and UFLEXX stabilised nitrogen technology, each urea prill is treated with two soluble chemical coatings which prevent loss of nitrogen to the atmosphere, while slowing down its conversion in the soil. The product is less prone to leaching and will respond even under cool conditions. Available in three formulations, 46+0+0, 25+5+10+2MgO and 15+5+20+2MgO, Headland Xtend can be applied as a granule directly after cutting to allow maximum time for the product to penetrate the turf between cuts. Pickup is minimal as Xtend is fully soluble, and breaks down rapidly in the soil. "In addition, the 46+0+0 formulation can be dissolved and applied as a liquid spray. When tank mixed with Headland's Relay Turf Herbicide, this provides a labour saving, cost effective "weed and feed" application," said Headland's Andy Russell.

## New Sisis Javelin gets straight to the point



The new SISIS Javelin 1500 has been developed following eight successful years with the SISIS Technicore. The new machine retains all the popular features of the Technicore including full 5" operating depth, but offers a wider working width, faster forward speed, quick, single lever depth setting and minimal maintenance. Nine different interchangeable tines are available including Microcore, Multiline, Needle, and Jumbo Hollow. Turf retainers are available and a wide range of hole patterns can be selected as desired.

## Best of both worlds with Express Dual 1000

The Express Dual from Bernhard and Company, now comes in a most cost-effective format. The Show saw the launch of new Express Dual 1000 - a compact, but robust spin grinder for cylinder mowers with heavy duty chassis in mild steel plate. This allows greenkeepers and groundsmen with more modest budgets to create a highly profitable in-house grinding facility. Giving excellent results, ED 1000 has many key components common to the higher specification models in the Express Dual range, and is supplied with a 10 year warranty.

The machine can spin grind blades in-frame up to 36" long and is launched with three optional configurations; bench mounted with manual traverse; manual traverse supplied with a stable support frame; machine with automatic traverse and support frame; Overload protected, the mainshaft drive motor rotates at 3400rpm and is fan cooled and brushless. Mower support systems have fully adjustable front roller mounting brackets with quick adjustment in one plane - without the necessity of tools.

## Barenbrug take grass species to a higher level with Bargold

Perennial ryegrass, the most important grass species for sport and amenity applications in the UK, has been taken to an unprecedented level of performance in the shape of Bargold, the aptly named new variety bred by Barenbrug UK. This exciting cultivar is unique because it can be used as a key component in swards for fine turf, such as golf greens, as well as for heavy wear situations like soccer pitches. Recognised as having superb wear tolerance characteristics combined with rapid establishment and persistence, perennial ryegrass is invariably chosen for winter games pitches and other heavily used grassed areas. But the species typically has broad, coarse leaves, a factor previously making it unsuitable for fine turf applications. Barenbrug UK, however, has led the drive to develop a fine-leaved variety. Bargold is the latest in a series of cultivars bred by the seed specialists to offer what was once thought impossible: a perennial ryegrass with the characteristics of finer species, like fescues and bents, but without their vulnerability to wear and disease. It has a fineness of leaf similar to that of red fescues, and has outstanding tolerance of close mowing, down to 5-6mm. This makes Bargold suitable for use across the turf management spectrum, including golf greens, tees, fairways and surrounds, bowling greens, cricket wickets and tennis courts, as well as the traditional applications of soccer and rugby pitches.

## Further advances for Blazon

Adding an effective drift control agent to the Blazon formulation as a single, ready to use product, has made a further advance.

Blazon LoDrift offers spray operators the best of both worlds. Maximum application accuracy, uniformity and target coverage, with minimum off-target application, reduced environmental contamination and wasted chemical.

In addition to the visual spray pattern providing the spray operator with a visual guide so that the spray swath can easily be seen and matched up on each return pass, Blazon LoDrift, ensures more of the very small spray droplets ('fines'), are contained and a greater proportion of the spray reaches its intended target ensuring increased product coverage, reduced off-target application and improved product performance.

Blazon-LoDrift has been developed to reduce the environmental impact of chemical and other spray treatments. Each product also features the Multiple Release Format™ technology.

Nutri-Rational Foliars are specifically formulated to bypass the root system and provide an efficient and reliable intake of nutrients through the leaf tissue. Over 95% of the nutrient intake is directly through the leaf. In addition, as the plant is obtaining its nutrition through the leaf, it is not wasting its energy reserves and therefore more able



Marketing Link's MD, Richard Fry, who markets the blazon range of products and Dr David Drahos at BTME

to tolerate stress more effectively.

The Nutri-Rational range includes N, P & K formulations (19.1.6, 6.12.6 & 2.0.16) combined with turf micronutrients and two more specialised products (6.0.4 plus 6% Ca, 0.2% B & 3.0.10 plus 1% Si) offering calcium and silica.

Also on the Green Relief stand was Dr David Drahos, of Novozymes Biologicals, the group research leader in the development of Green Reliefs range of microbial products, who in addition spoke on the BTME Seminar programme.

**Please send your latest product release notes or press releases to; The Editor, Greenkeeper International, BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Alne, York YO61 1UF**

*The right is reserved to edit submissions before publication. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Association. No responsibility is accepted for such content, advertising or product information which may appear*

## Allen Power shows its latest range of hovers

On the Allen stand could be seen the new generation of hover mowers powered by the Honda four stroke petrol engine. These new power units provide easier starting, quieter, smoother running and reliable cutting without the need for mixing two stroke fuel. They will cut slopes up to 45 degrees and three variations are available with engine capacities ranging from 50cc to 160cc with nylon or traditional metal cutting blades depending on the model.



### The three models are:

440 Hover trim featuring 16in cutting width with swinging nylon blades and 2.5 hp, 50cc four stroke Honda engine.

446 Hover Trim with 18in cutting width with nylon blades and a 4.8hp 135cc four stroke engine. Designed for steep banks and undulating ground.

450 Hover Professional. A 21in cutting blade is powered by a 5.8hp, 160cc four stroke Honda engine. Designed for more heavy duty hover mowing.

## The grass is always greener. Always ...?

The grass that stays green all year round was formally unveiled at BTME 2002, giving turfgrass professionals across the amenity industry the opportunity to sow a hard-wearing seed mixture based on a newly-bred ryegrass that never goes yellow. According to ex-IGER1 scientist and British Seed Houses' Technical Consultant Dai Hides, the new Grade A26 SO-GREEN mixture represents a quantum leap in plant breeding. Speaking at the Show he said that the new seed offers unparalleled opportunities to keep lawns and other amenity grassed areas looking good, even under summer drought and other stress conditions. "Grade A26 SO-GREEN2 is the result of many years development, starting in 1969 after scientists at IGER noticed that leaves on one grass plant in a population failed to turn yellow over winter or during drought," he pointed out. "Now thanks to the IGER1 turfgrass programme - funded by British Seed Houses since 1987 and already credited with the development of AberElf and AberImp - a new 'stay green' perennial ryegrass called AberNile has been produced. AberNile is unique because it combines the 'stay green' benefit with all the other desirable characteristics required in an amenity ryegrass, such as high shoot density and an ability to withstand high levels of wear," explained Dai.

## Toro's Groundmaster receives an added punch

Toro unveiled the latest addition to its range of Groundmaster rotary mowers. The GM 4500-D has been specially developed for operators seeking a better quality of cut from a rotary mower.

The mower is fitted with five rotary cutting decks, which produce a consistent height of cut by accurately following undulating ground contours over a cutting width of 2.8 metres. Efficient operator manoeuvring and excellent visibility results from the balanced placement of three cutting decks out-front and two underneath.

Another feature of the new Groundmaster is its superb traction and hill-climbing ability, provided by full-time, bi-directional four-wheel drive that operates while the unit is mowing.

Toro also unveiled its revolutionary Greensmaster Flex 21 - which shaves greens closer than anything before.

The Flex 21, which has a 21 in cutting unit that not only flexes from side to side, but backwards and forwards too. It means the unit can hug the contours of the most undulating greens,



shaving the turf right down to one-sixteenth of an inch, with virtually no scalping.

The new greens mower has been developed in collaboration with greenkeepers and follows the move by the golf industry towards designing more-undulating, faster greens that take

advantage of new plant cultivars that can be clipped right down.

The Flex 21 is simple and easy to operate, with all controls easily reached via two handle-mounted levers. For quick and easy maintenance, removing just two bolts separates the cutting unit from the traction unit.

## Is Lindum's latest ryegrass, a turf for all seasons?

Lindum launched Ryegreen, their first fine-leaved ryegrass turf for golf greens, available to the industry from spring this year. Seeded in May 2001, and cultivated at the company's specialist turf nursery near York, this new sward containing 30% exceptionally fine ryegrass, 50% creeping red and 20% chewing fescue, is hardwearing, with a good recovery rate and the capacity to with-

stand mowing down to 7mms. Lindum's Managing Director Stephen Fell, who has been following STRI trials of the latest fine-leaved ryegrasses closely, says the Ryegreen is a welcome addition to the company's range.

"As growers, we are always willing to experiment, and following the successfully established cultivation of Ryegreen, we will be closely monitoring the emergence

of new ryegrasses with a view to subsequent sowings. Judging by the amount of enquiries we have received from course managers, these new varieties are already creating a great deal of interest."

Ryegreen, which is suitable for all fine turf areas and particularly applicable to pay and play courses, can also, due to its robust nature, be laid on tees, cricket wickets and tennis courts.

## Lastec unveil new addition



A new version of the world's only practical articulator rotary mowers will be launched in the Spring, revealed inventor and manufacturer, Lastec, at the BTME show. The company also announced that it will unveil a new flat pan mower around the same time. The new articulating mower will have a cutting width of 77 inches and will feature a deck that folds for ease of transport. It will be powered by a Kubota 33hp turbo charged engine which has Lastec's patent-pending automatic radiator cleaning system. The new flat pan mower will include several new features such as cast iron spindles, Marbain steel blades and an updated hinge design between its decks for long life.

## High-power helps to achieve low-costs

The use of higher horsepower tractors of 50hp plus can help cut golf course operating costs by up to 20%, according to Renault, but also enable valuable staff to have the time to complete more jobs around the course.

"The output benefits that a higher powered tractor provides is considerable," comments Ian Thomson, Renault's Groundcare Product Manager.

"With the even distribution of weight and the correct choice of tyres, course managers are finding that with larger tractors such as the Renault PALES and CERES ranges can do up to 80% of the jobs previously done with a smaller tractor, but far quicker and more efficiently."

Consistently courses have been reporting that this has helped them trim their operating costs by between 15% and 20%. Just as importantly, by getting more mundane jobs done faster, greens staff have additional time to pay more attention to detail and fine tune course presentation. In addition to helping cut costs, there are also Health and Safety benefits. Many courses have found that one of the biggest benefits of operating a larger tractor fitted with a loader, is the materials handling capability it provides, so enabling one person to quickly and safely off load materials on pallets, that previously might have required three people to off-load by hand.

GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL TAKES A LOOK AT THE VERY LATEST PRODUCTS AND SERVICES LAUNCHED AT THIS YEARS' PREMIER TURFCARE EXHIBITION IN HARROGATE

## Textron had something for everyone at show

Making its UK debut at BTME was the Iseki TK538 compact tractor complete with hydrostatic transmission, the latest addition to the TK range of compact tractors that combines power, strength and top performance to provide machines that are ideal for a variety of professional grounds care operations.

Powered by a water-cooled 3-cylinder turbo diesel engine developing 38hp, the TK538 hydrostatic offers smooth-changing, infinitely variable speed within three gear ranges.

With a lifting capacity of 1,300 kgs there's enough muscle to handle heavy, trailed or mounted implements with ease and the independent electro-hydraulic PTO system offers engagement and disengagement at the flick of a switch.

Also appearing for the first time at BTME, the Workhorse ST480 is the most powerful turf utility vehicle in the E-Z-GO Workhorse range.

With its 16hp Vanguard V-twin air cooled petrol engine and payload of 363.2kg, including operator, it has the power and performance required for a host of applications on golf courses, parks, leisure complexes, smallholdings, farms, woodland and amenity areas.

Robustly constructed to meet every eventuality, the front axle is articulated to ensure that the front wheels stay in contact with the ground, especially in steep approach and exit conditions.

Following the success of last year's No Pay 'Til May finance plan, Textron Total Care Finance has launched an innovative finance package for their complete range of golf and turf products - Pay-as-you-Play.

"This is a three year plan, tailored



to the income stream of any particular golf club. When a club purchases any item or package of equipment from our golf and turf range, the repayments are tailored for their maximum periods of income," explained Sales Director, Glynn Patrick.

"In reality this means that payments are made from May to October in the first season, followed by a six-month repayment holiday, then further payments begin in May the following season with this pattern repeated in year three to complete the purchase.

"We believe that this new package



offers excellent value and enables golf course owners and managers to procure quality equipment at an affordable price with a repayment structure tailored to their income stream."

## Aiming to make worm casts a thing of the past

Worm management is an increasing problem in the turf grass industry. Legislation is removing effective chemicals from use, leaving the turf grass manager with only mild alternatives with which to seek short-term solutions. The seaweed people introduced a new product that is the solution to worm cast problems.

Devised as a means of water purification, the Greensaver successfully treats algae, Escherichia coli, coliform germs and Clostridium. Knowing that numerous golf courses are irrigated from their own ponds and lakes, field trials were carried out and it was discovered that the solution produced by the Greensaver, known as Biodyozon, demonstrated an excellent expellant effect on earthworms.

Biodyozon is the liquid product processed by the Greensaver. Needing only a power supply, a water supply and salt tablets the electrolytic process of the Greensaver converts the water to Biodyozon. The solution being a short lived chlorine/oxygen combina-

tion is in a metastable state eventually returning back to water.

The Seaweed People stand at Harrogate had a constant stream of curious visitors eager to see a demonstration of Biodyozon in action.

Vino Pankhania, Managing director of Seaweed People says, "We have been looking for an environmentally friendly means of treating worms for some time, the results of Biodyozon have been outstanding, and interest from golf clubs is exceptional. We look forward to providing golf clubs with a real solution to what has become an annual problem."

The Seaweed People supplies over 600 golf clubs throughout the UK with Sea Nymph liquid fertilisers, in numerous formulations, seaweed meal products and compound fertilisers.



## Waste2Water smash expectations with latest product launch

Waste2Water Recycling Wash-Off System created a tremendous amount of interest at BTME. Orders were received from a number of golf courses for installation as soon as possible, including; Woburn Golf & Country Club, The Forest of Arden, Sunningdale Golf Club, and Lilley Brooke Golf Club. Most interesting was that more than one of the clubs chose to defer other expenditure to provide for this expenditure, which they viewed as essential. We are delighted as this confirms the increasing importance of environmental awareness, and recognition that it is within our reach to do something positive to assist nature.

## Richard Campey launch recycling attachment at show



Everyone appreciates the benefits of recycling, and now the same principle can be applied to sports turf, thanks to the latest attachment introduced at BTME 2002 by Campey Turf Care Systems. The new, heavy-duty Koro Recycling Dresser features two sets of different blades. These break up compacted soil to depths of up to 20cm and then recycle material from below the surface as a fine top-dressing. Two models were launched. The RD1650 has a working width of 165cm and can be powered by a tractor of 70hp or more. The RD2000 has a 200cm working width and requires a tractor of 85hp. Both machines are seen as ideal for the speedy renovation of heavily used, larger sports turf areas, such as soccer grounds, multi-pitch complexes and golf fairways. A major plus-point is that, as the machines 'recycle' the existing soil, less material has to be imported to site for turf renovation projects, saving time, effort and money.

## New image: New services

BTME 2002 was a significant show for seed company Cebeco Seeds, as it unveiled a new image and range of services to its customers that will combine technical support, new varieties and mixtures. Cebeco Seeds - previously known as Cebeco Oliver Seeds - supplies amenity seeds to the golf, sport and landscape industries and its new brand and name reinforces the integrated approach of the Cebeco group.

"The changes unveiled at BTME extend beyond the new brand image to include a change of strategy in our customer service and support," said the company's Amenity Product Manager, Roger Peacock.

"In particular, we are expanding the technical support available to customers, agronomists and specifiers, which will enable them to take full advantage of our superior technical knowledge and experience in grass seed varieties and mixtures."

# A FAMILIAR FACE

**Scott MacCallum  
meets a National  
Chairman who  
needs little or  
no introduction**



Above. Leicestershire County Second Team Captain meets the 1999 European Ryder Cup Team Captain, Mark James

Below. Richard gets some last minute pointers from outgoing Chairman Clive Osgood, just before taking over the reins



Richard Barker is one of BIGGA's best known members. Since the Association was formed in 1987 he has rarely missed a national event while he has been a regular at most Midland Regional functions and a stalwart of the East Midland Section having served continuously on the Committee for the past 15 years. He perhaps shouldn't shout about it but he was also on the interview panel which appointed the current Editor!

It would be fair to say that he will have met many of the people reading this piece during that time, but if you haven't had the pleasure of meeting the 2002 BIGGA

National Chairman yet the chances are that by the end of his year in office that situation will have been rectified.

"If anybody would like me to attend an event at Region or Section level

they should contact me or Head office - my clubs are always in the back of the car and I'm more than willing to come along to present prizes and say a few words," said Richard, as we sat in the Majestic Hotel foyer, a couple of days before he donned the famous red blazer.

"I want to be seen and I want to be approachable. It is my aim to visit as many Sections as I can and really make the most of my year," said Richard, who could never be accused of being anything other than "approachable".

Although a youthful 37 - he is the youngest BIGGA National Chairman beating Dean Cleaver's record by around five months - he has the distinction of being the longest serving National Board of Management member having sat continuously on the Board since 1994. When it comes to the business of the Association, he has a wealth of experience.

"I do believe that BIGGA has done a tremendous amount of good within the industry and I'm sure the trade also realises what the Association has achieved and through donating into the Education and Development Fund they have assisted us in producing better trained greenkeepers and Course Managers," he said.

There can be no doubt that Richard was destined to become involved in golf.

"My father is an Past Captain of Longcliffe Golf Club, in Loughborough, and they rang a bell in the club when I was born," said Richard, whose general love of the game turned to a love of greenkeeping when he was in his early teens. "When I was 13 or 14 I used to work part-time in the summer holidays for Walter Cole at Longcliffe in the summer, fly mowing ditch banks, edging bunkers and divoting tees for three to four days a week.

His skill as a player - he has reached 2 and currently plays off 3 - offered up the opportunity of becoming an assistant pro when he was 18, when

he was playing off 5, but the poor wages and long hours put him off. Instead he was taken on as an assistant greenkeeper as part of the Youth Opportunities Scheme. When the year was up he was taken on full time and embarked on the first stages of his formal greenkeeping education at Brooksby College. He did Phase 1 the first year and Phase 2 City and Guilds the following year.

**"I do feel that as a profession, we aren't really recognised for the work that we do - that's where I'd like to see BIGGA doing more."**

**I want BIGGA to become more of a force within the golf club and for clubs to come to BIGGA if they have a problem they wished solved."**

Richard Barker  
2002 BIGGA Chairman

"From hating school I found myself getting distinctions and credits in my greenkeeping studies. I'd found my niche. I wasn't interested in school and didn't apply myself but in greenkeeping I was getting grades I wouldn't have believed were possible," he revealed.

"A year after that I was one of the guinea pigs who did Phase 3," he recalled.

The next quantum leap in his career came when he left Longcliffe to become Head Greenkeeper at Kirby Muxloe Golf Club at the age of 24, a position he held for 13 years. He continued his formal education through a Supervisory Management distance learning course at Elmwood College.

In addition to the formal education Richard has taken much from the opportunities BIGGA has afforded him.





"I've travelled to many different places, including going on the GCSAA Conference and Show with the Association on four or five occasions and I've played golf courses in National Championships and other events I'd never have had the chance to play otherwise.

"I've even done a public speaking course and when I started out in greenkeeping I would never have dreamt that I'd end up doing a public speaking course. The marvellous thing about BIGGA is that the Association can put on any course you want to do - Ken will organise it for you. There can't be any other profession which organises a course around your needs in such a way," said Richard.

The realisation that he would be BIGGA Chairman for 2002 came when Clive Osgood, then Vice Chairman to Elliott Small, asked him at the 2000 Open Championship at St Andrews.

"I was honoured, believe you me I was honoured. I certainly didn't think I would be asked just because I'd been on the Board and I was honoured that I was considered suitable to be Chairman.

"Many of my friends have said they always knew I would be Chairman

one day but I don't consider myself to be any different from anyone else.

"I remember, once, when a group of students visited my club and I took them round and showed them what we were doing. To be frank some of them were looking less than enthusiastic so I told them that they probably thought I'd never been one of them and that I'd always been destined to be a Head Greenkeeper. In fact, I'd been just the same as them at their age and had just the same opportunities that they would have and that it was just a case of taking those and they too would end up as Head Greenkeepers."

He is not unused to leadership having spent three years as Captain of the Leicestershire County Second team - he has also amassed almost 50 Caps including a number for the First team as well.

Richard has a clear idea of how the Association should progress during his 12 months at the helm.

"I do feel that as a profession, we aren't really recognised for the work that we do - that's where I'd like to see BIGGA doing more. I want BIGGA to become more of a force within the golf club and for clubs to come to BIGGA if they have a problem they wished solved.

He sees the new Golf Club Show, run for the first time alongside BTME this year, as a superb vehicle for this endeavour as it brings more Chairs of Green, Golf Club Captains and Secretaries to Harrogate.

"Unfortunately Chairs of Green and Captains who have found out and appreciate what BIGGA does are often lost off committees and we find ourselves back to square one

"BIGGA is down at the bottom when it comes to body recognition within golf clubs but in many ways with the practical help it gives and the courses it puts on BIGGA does as much as anyone for golf clubs," he said

"I want us to become better known within the golf clubs and know what BIGGA is all about. I don't think that's happening yet.

"I have not become Chairman with any hidden agendas. I see my role this year as that of Publicity Officer spreading the name of BIGGA around the country and to golfers and the other golfing bodies," he explained.

Richard is currently working alongside one of his long-time friends, Ian Needham, Head Greenkeeper at Beedles Lake, in Leicester, and Ian and the club itself, have been

extremely supportive to him in what will be a demanding year.

"The club owner has been tremendous and will give me all the time off I require to carry out my duties as Chairman."

One of his first duties was to choose his Vice Chairman and if the astute nature of his appointment is any indication of the quality of his decision making over the next year the Association will be in more than capable hands.

"I'm extremely happy that George Brown, from Turnberry, has taken on the Vice Chairmanship. He has one of the best jobs in the country and to have him on board is a great honour."

Richard is an affable character. He accepts the good nature ribbing about the number of times his picture has appeared in the magazine with a shrug and a laugh and is delighted that his record will be extended over the next 12 months.

"I basically look upon BIGGA as a big family. It could be corny but I come to Harrogate and see so many people that I know and can sit down and have a pint with and I don't intend changing anything other than to make more people aware of what we are doing."



The methods introduced by TurfTrax could make major impact on greenkeeping over the next few years. Scott MacCallum met the people who will make that happen

# MAKING TurfTrax



# TRAX

There is a saying "Information is King". Boiled down to its simplest form the moral is that the more you know, the better the chances you have of success, particularly if you are better informed than your rivals.

With that in mind, you can see nothing but success for BIGGA's latest Golden Key Supporter, TurfTrax, a recently-formed company which specialises in conducting non-destructive scans of soil to provide indications of how soil properties vary spatially across a playing surface. This information is crucial in providing a basis for advice on how to achieve the best

possible results with what grows above the ground.

The company uses an adaptation of the same technology used in seismic surveying, where it is generally used to look at areas 10s of metres below the ground, but have fine tuned it to provide detailed information of the top 1.2 metres of the soil profile.

"We operate two forms of scanning," said Sales Director and former greenkeeper, Colin Hood.

"One which is hand-held and the other which is towed behind a specially adapted quad bike which is designed to collect as much data as quickly as possible to the inconvenience and cost," he explained.

"By using the quad bike on the fairways and rough we can collect five readings per second - which is the equivalent to taking five soil samples at a depth of 1.2 metres which represents 300 litres of soil. On a typical fairway we take approximately

10,000 readings - the equivalent of 10,000 cores but it's a non-destructive reading and therefore doesn't affect the ground in any way."

Those readings are then emailed back to the TurfTrax headquarters where the raw data can be turned around in about half an hour. The next stage is to build up a layered map of the ground which will identify potential trouble spots and allow the TurfTrax experts to specify what the soil requires to make it the best possible medium for its usage.

The man who developed the TurfTrax idea is Technical Director, Justin Smith, who until three years ago had spent his entire career in research as a soil scientist.

"I spent the last three years looking at how the new technology which was coming into the agriculture market could influence the decision making processes on farms in terms of achieving better productivity," explained Justin.

The exercise confirmed to Justin the importance of working with the medium in which everything grows rather than concentrating on what to put on the living organism to keep it going.

It was while working in the agricultural field that a chance remark on the radio opened Justin's thinking to the possibility of using the technology they had developed in the sporting arena as well.

"We were driving back from an agricultural job when we heard Cornelius Lycett (the BBC's horse racing correspondent) discussing the going conditions at a race course and how no-one ever told him why conditions varied. My colleague and I just looked at each other as the light bulb lit up in our heads."

They approached a race course and met the Clerk of the Course to show her how the scanning technology worked and she was impressed by what she saw.

"She said we should do it for the Grand National in three months time

and get it in front of the BBC. We wanted to rise to the challenge and were literally writing the software the night before the National but the BBC used it to explain what the "going" was going to be and it snowballed from there," explained Justin.

Now the technology, which also involves weather stations and sensors planted in the ground is used on all Britain's Super 12 race courses and The Jockey Club are particularly keen on it.

Having convinced the horse racing fraternity, they moved on to football, cricket and then golf.

"In some ways golf was the most obvious market because of the variability. On 200 acres of golf course not too many of those acres are going to be identical and it is going to require different levels of management to produce the best results," said Justin.

The company was given a major boost when it caught the attention of Adam Mills, a businessman with an impeccable City pedigree, who was looking for a company with investment potential.

"I was extremely impressed with the data collection element but the really clever bit is the analysis and what the information will mean to the greenkeeper. It is the totality of the service we can provide which impressed me," said Adam, TurfTrax Chairman.

That point is reiterated by Colin. "Yes, the technology is very clever but it is the data, its interpretation of that result and the diagnostics which lead to a solution which is the most important element."

"We use very high-tech technology to get there but as far as the greenkeeper and the greenkeeping world is concerned we are offering scientifically proven solutions, coupled with what we term on-going ground management. It means the soil and the conditions are measurable, so that a more measured approach can be taken all round."

The benefits of that do not take long



Above: Adam Mills, Chairman; Colin Hood, Sales Director; Justin Smith, Technical Director; and Tim Bonfield, Field Operations Manager.  
Below: An accurate survey of a golf course can take the supposition out of decision making

