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A guide to who's who at BIGGA

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January 2002

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Greenkeeper INTERNATIONAL

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'THE TURFTIME TEASER'

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Providing the last minute information you might require before heading to Harrogate
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Meeting 2002 Head On

With a new year comes renewed enthusiasm. My personal resolution is to take life by the scruff of the neck and make the most of 2002.

I've decided that after 30 years of playing at it I'm going to make a special effort to become a better golfer. I've already decided to take the first lessons I'll ever have had and seek professional help to turn my Heath Robinson swing into a thing of beauty. This should allow me to give full rein to my natural talent!

I started jogging a couple of years ago but in the last few months I've become a little less frequent so I'm going to rededicate myself to pounding the pavements. Health and fitness, that's what it's all about.

I started writing a book about 10 years ago and it's currently lying dormant on the computer somewhere. I tell myself that I write so many words each month for the magazine that I don't have any left for my own personal masterpiece, but that's just looking for excuses. In two year's time, whether it turns out good or bad - a Rowling or an Archer - I want it finished.

With the magazine, I want to give you, the readers, every opportunity of ensuring that what we produce each month is what you want. There is always room for a piece inspired by one of you and if you have an idea for an article please talk with me and between us we'll make sure it happens. You can either write it yourself and I tidy it up, recommend an expert you know who I can then approach to write it for us or I can interview you and do it that way. Whatever way, we'll get it done and you will get articles on the specific topics you want covered in the magazine. There shouldn't be barriers to achieving what we want, we just need the will to make it happen.

Sure, the downturn in the economy has affected the magazine. Fewer adverts have meant we have had fewer pages to devote to editorial features, but, with the power of positive thinking, we can ensure that we make best use of those pages. I also believe that the positive signs are there that companies will soon be looking to Greenkeeper International to publicise their wares once again.

Even writing this makes me feel uplifted and I'm sure that 2002 is going to be a year we look back on as being special.

So if all things go according to plan in the next 12 months I shall be a single figure, fitter, best selling, Editor of a magazine which is catering for every desire of its readership.

It's a goal I'm unlikely to achieve on all fronts, but in making special effort I'm sure I will move things forward a bit in each area.

Have a successful 2002.

Scott MacCallum
Editor

A First for Andy Campbell MG

Master Greenkeeper Andy Campbell, Course Manager at De Vere Carden Park, near Chester has become the first UK based greenkeeper to achieve GCSAA certification.

Andy achieved his Master Greenkeeper status in 1998 and decided to attempt the GCSAA certification route as his next educational challenge.

"I was looking for something which wouldn't tie me into the formal structure of university, as time away from work would have been difficult. The GCSAA route allowed me to work at my own pace in my own time... There was also a feeling that 10 or 11 American Superintendents had 'done it to us' by becoming Master Greenkeepers so I wanted to 'do it to them'," smiled Andy, who added that he got a lot of support from the American Master Greenkeepers.

The initial step proved to be one of the trickiest and that was having UK qualifications recognised by the GCSAA for education points and Ken Richardson, BIGGA's Education and Training Manager, was able to assist in this area.

He still needed to gain continuing educational points from the GCSAA and it meant him undertaking five correspondence courses, including the University of Guelph Turf Certificate programme before he was eligible to sit the six part exam but only after he successfully completed an inspection of his golf course operation.

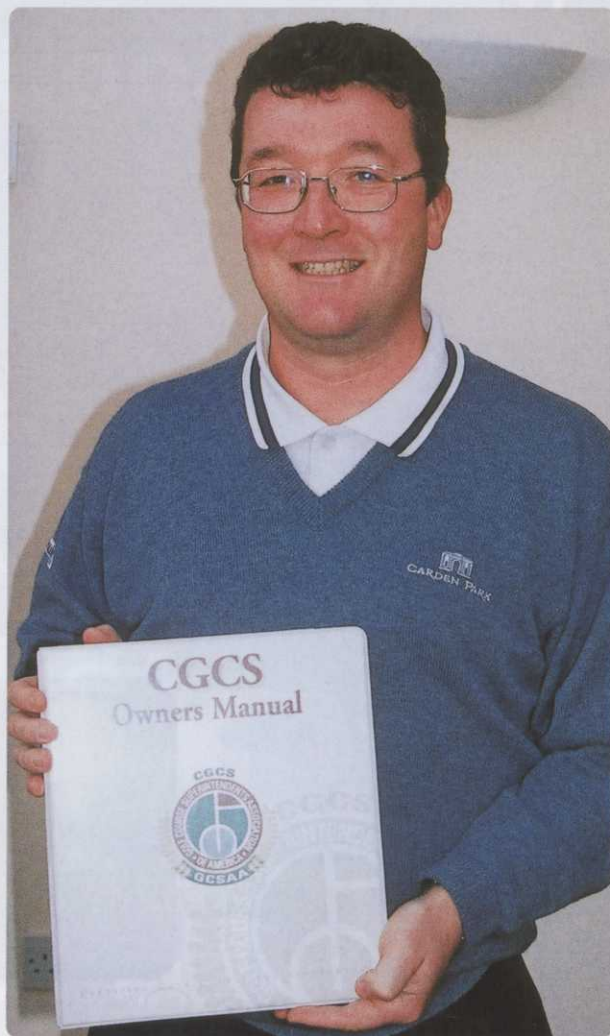
"Like MGC the exam is six hours long but unlike MGC it is open book and multiple choice. There are 300 questions which works out at an average of one minute and 15 seconds per question," explained Andy.

The difficulty for Andy, is similar to that faced by Americans facing the MGC exam, in that much of the content is alien.

"Obviously a lot of it was American and talked about warm season grasses, and American health and safety legislation which is totally different to what we face here. Also they use US Standard measures - the same as imperial - while we are metric. They also round up and round down and, although you are allowed a calculator, you must remember to do it otherwise your answers would be different."

Andy passed five of the six sections at the first attempt - no mean feat as 80% is required for each section - and actually got 92% on the Health and Safety section.

"I failed on the Turf Management, which was the broadest section of the lot. I got 69% the first time and 73% the second and it was on my third



attempt that I got 82% although I averaged 86% over the whole paper."

He is firmly of the belief that taking the certification has made him a better greenkeeper as it has helped to broaden his outlook.

"I'm a fairly confirmed Jim Arthur fan and I do think that's the way to go but there are situations where others have got answers which we haven't or another way of working."

"John Scott, the US Tour's agronomist who has become a great friend of mine, told me that I should be looking and questioning things more. Before I may have been a little bit narrow minded and focussed on one way, so in terms of thinking outside the box I think I'm a better greenkeeper," he explained.

"One thing it hasn't done is diminished his admiration for British greenkeepers."

"We're probably as good, if not better, than most when it comes to coping with a variety of conditions and dealing with the high expectations of golfers."

Like anyone who is a "first" the determination and commitment shown by Andy is quite remarkable.

"For the last six months, five

or six nights a week I studied from 9pm to 2am and when I was doing the correspondence course it was every night for nine weeks. The financial cost, in terms of books and seminars etc was considerable, shall we say," said Andy, who is now considering learning Spanish and also starting a BSc.

"I do have a high sense of achievement, in a pioneering sort of way, but that will be

wasted if others don't follow. "However, I'd definitely recommend people going for the Master Greenkeeper first because you've got to acquaint yourself to the sort of exam pressures MG exposes you to without doing it all with another country's methods."

Andy will be presented with his certificate at the GCSAA Conference and Exhibition in Orlando by Walter Woods, who will be awarded the GCSAA's Old Tom Morris Award at the Conference.

"There was real pressure to retake the exam quickly as I knew Walter was going to be presenting the certificates this year. I admire Walter greatly and his receiving the Old Tom Morris Award is fantastic for British greenkeeping."

Recognition for Kenwick Park GC

Winners of the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition Northern Region in 2000 and one of only two English clubs granted Committed to Green recognition, Kenwick Park Golf Club, which is near Louth in Lincolnshire, hosted an Environmental Seminar last month, to spread the word on how good environmental management can enhance the golfing experience.

Kenwick Park, which opened in 1992, formed an environmental panel in 1999, comprising the Head Greenkeeper, the Club Secretary and four members.

The Panel produced an environmental management policy document in January 2000 which led to the Club registering for the Committed to Green programme in February 2000.

Ian Shepard, Chairman of the Environmental Panel, said that the aim of the seminar was to encourage other golf clubs to participate in the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition, to register for the Committed to Green programme and to use sound environmental management policies.

Ian also stressed that golf clubs were there for people to play golf and were not nature reserves. Moreover, with good management, strong commitment and effective communications, many more clubs could help to show that golf courses have a positive impact on the environment.

Plaudits for Broadstone

The Presentation of awards for the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition 2001 took place at Broadstone Golf Club, in November.

More than 50 Broadstone members, past Captains, Chairman of Green, Lady Captain, Club Captain, Course Manager Adrian Archer and the Greenkeeping Team, joined Neil Sherman, Norman Fenwick, Mike Dickens from Ipswich Golf Club, Graham Lang from Cardigan Golf Club, Dr Keith Duff, Bob Taylor, Ken Richardson and David Ansell from the Dyke, last year's winners, to hear how Broadstone had been working for many years to improve the maintenance of their course as a traditional heathland while still giving golfers a memorable golfing experience.

Thanks to the generous sponsorship of the R&A, this competition has con-

tinued to encourage golf clubs to think about their course management policies and see how good environmental practice can run alongside the need to have a good course for golf.

Ipswich Golf Club, winners of the first competition, in 1995, were the winners in the South of England, Cardigan Golf Club were the winners in Wales, Wilmslow Golf Club were the winners in the North and Kilmacolm Golf Club were the winners in Scotland. Each regional winner was presented with a cheque for £500 and a plaque to display in the Clubhouse.

Broadstone, the National Winners, were presented with a cheque for £4000, a Glass Bowl and a plaque to display in the Clubhouse by Dr Keith Duff, Chief Scientist of English Nature and National Chairman Clive Osgood.



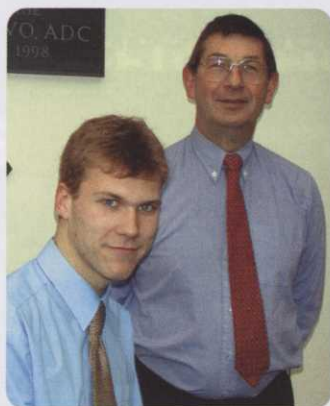
Role model for young trainees

BIGGA's Clerical Assistant, Brad Anderson, has been featured in a Learning Skills magazine as a prime example of what can be achieved by a young person through work based training.

Brad has attained his NVQ Level 2 in Business Administration and his Key Skills since joining the BIGGA HOUSE staff in September 2000 and the article highlighted his success and the work BIGGA, as an Association has done, in supporting him.

"I've been discussing what to do next with John Pemberton and I'd really like to do an IT qualification and I'm planning to do the European Computer Driving Licence as well," said Brad, 18.

John Pemberton is delighted that the



Association has been able to assist in Brad's progress.

"Brad has quickly become a valuable member of the BIGGAHOUSE staff and he has deserved his success," said John.

Toro deal renewed by Elmwood College

Elmwood College, in Scotland, has renewed its five-year exclusive partnership agreement with Toro for golf course maintenance equipment, in a deal valued at £350,000.

"We renewed the deal because the reliability of the whole range of Toro products, plus the back-up we receive, ensures that we can maintain our own high standards and offer the best in the industry," said John Quinn MG, Director of Elmwood Golf Developments, who oversees the management of the college's 18-hole course, restaurant/clubhouse and consultancy/contracting operations.

The college is serviced by local Toro dealer Henderson Grass Machinery.

How do you spend yours?

Did you know that the average cost for a solicitor's advice is £140 per hour. Those members with the BIGGA Legal Expenses package have unlimited access to legal advice 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and therefore could spend that money on other things. Here's a list of what you could get for £140!

- You could escape the dreary winter weather with a week in Spain
- Live up your evenings with a DVD player or PlayStation 2
- Support your team with a season ticket for a premier football club
- Work off those Christmas pounds with annual gym membership
- Instantly increase your sex appeal by hiring a Ferrari for the day

In the last quarter, BIGGA members made 148 calls to the GLP Helpline. These have been broken down into the following categories:

- 21 Queries regarding potential claim information
- 99 calls regarding employee disputes
- Seven calls regarding family or matrimonial matters
- Eight consumer dispute enquiries (including property disputes)
- Four calls about potential personal injury claims
- One Road traffic accident query
- Five calls about criminal legal advice
- Three calls asking for financial legal advice

The average length of a legal advice call is 11 minutes, therefore in legal advice calls alone, these BIGGA members have saved £3,800 between them.

What would you rather spend your money on?

Further details can be obtained from the Membership Department on 01347 833800 or via membership@bigga.co.uk

Testing times for European Turfgrass Laboratories

European Turfgrass Laboratories have once again been reaccredited by the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation to undertake putting green materials testing.

"We are pleased that once again we have met the standards of the A2LA, being now accredited to ISO/IEG 17025 until July 2003," said Ann Murray, Laboratory Director.

ETL continues to be the only accredited laboratory in Europe that tests to USGA standards.

"In addition to being accredited we also take part in the USGA proficiency testing programme. Care should be taken to note that the USGA proficiency testing programme does not accredit any laboratory, it is merely a way of the USGA gaining an insight into testing variability in the laboratories which participate," explained Ann.

Royal Inverdivot GC...

Strip Cartoonist of the Year www.tonyhusband.co.uk



Section Event?

www.bigga.org.uk/events.html

Prestigious events require volunteers

Volvo PGA Championship, The Wentworth Club, May 23-26, 2002

The Association will again be providing a support team for this prestigious event on each of the four competition days. Each member will be allocated a match and will walk the course with the game, raking any bunkers found by the players.

In addition, should adverse weather conditions prevail, you may be required to assist the Wentworth greenkeeping staff in keeping the course playable.

You will be responsible for your own transport arrangements to the course and there is no provision for overnight accommodation.

You may apply to help on any or all days and usually all those who apply are given the chance to participate on at least one day.

When applying please give details of your polo shirt size as this may be provided together with daily meal vouchers.

Helping at this event will not prejudice your chance of a place on The Open Championship Support Team.

Applications to Derek Farrington, BIGGA Regional Administrator, 35 Cleveland Road, Worthing, Sussex BN13 2ES Tel: 01903 260956

The Open Championship, Muirfield, July 18-21, 2002

The BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team at The Open Championship will be involved in early morning course preparation, bunker raking while matches are in play and evening course repair. You must be available from Wednesday evening July 17, through to the close of play on Sunday July 21.

While all transport, accommodation and meals will be provided between these dates it is the team member's responsibility for travel from home to the venue and return.

Full BIGGA members only may apply to be considered for the Team, and must apply to:

John Pemberton, BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Alne, York, YO61 1UF. Should you require any further information then John can be contacted on 01347 833800 or via e-mail: john@bigga.co.uk

The closing date for applications for the Open is Friday, February 22, 2002.

Latest news?

www.bigga.org.uk/news.html

Employment tribunal payout

Neil Whitaker, a member of the Mid-Anglia Section, has recently won substantial damages at an employment tribunal against Arkley Golf Club, North London, for unfair dismissal.

Line adds to Gaunt & Marnoch team

Line Mortensen is the latest addition to Gaunt and Marnoch's team of golf course architects. Aged 30 and from Copenhagen, Denmark, Line will strengthen further G&M's push to expand its activities in Continental Europe. But Line will not work solely abroad and in her first three months in G&M's Bakewell office has immersed herself in a range of remodelling work at Prestatyn, Trentham Park and Aston Wood.

"We have travelled far and wide across Europe to find somebody like Line. Her profile is perfect and we're delighted how quickly she has fitted in

as a key member of our team, alongside our other recent golf course architect recruits Dimitri Van Hauwaert and our trainee, Steve Pope," said Co-director, Jonathan Gaunt.

Line brings a wealth of experience to her new role. Like Jonathan and Steve Marnoch, Line is a landscape architect. Unlike them she is an exceptional golfer, having played for the Danish National women's team from 1987-1992. She was top graduate of the EIGCA's Professional Diploma course in 1998 – the first woman and only Dane so far to graduate to the EIGCA.



UK Irrigation Association 2002 Spring Seminar

Losing the right to irrigate? Wednesday, February 13, 2002 London Golf Club.

The south east of England may suffer from devastating floods in the winter but is there sufficient water to go around in a dry summer? Will there be enough for irrigators of fruit and vegetables and for those in the sports turf and leisure industries who have come to rely on irrigation to provide quality? How will trickle irrigators fare under the new abstraction licensing arrangements? How much water can you reasonably expect to have? How can you make the most efficient use of it? Never has there been a time when

the industry has had such change and uncertainty. You need to know the facts and how the changes will affect your business so you can plan for the future.

Presentations will look at: How do Changes in Water Resources Management affect Irrigators? Implications and experiences of introducing the new southern region water resources strategy for irrigators; Abstraction Licences - how are they dealt with? What is a Reasonable Irrigation Need? What is the optimum use of water for irrigation from which the guidelines for future licencing will be drawn. How can Irrigation Efficiency be improved? The technical

and management options available to irrigators for improving water use efficiency in the light of the Environment Agency's new water use efficiency requirements for licensing approval and a look at the future of irrigation.

Cost: £60 (plus VAT) for UKIA members, £80 (plus VAT) for non-members. This includes seminar registration, buffet lunch, refreshments, and a summary of Seminar Proceedings.

Contact: Melvyn Kay, Executive Secretary, UK Irrigation Association, 5 Lea Road Amptill, Bedford, MK45 2PR UK Tel: 01525 635127. Fax: 01525 754537 Email: m.kay@ukia.org

Textron seal new deal



Textron has been appointed as the distributor for Iseki compact and mid range tractors for the Middle East and South Africa. Before this extension to their territory, they held the franchise for the UK only.

Glynn Patrick, Sales Director at the international turf maintenance equipment manufacturer and distributor said,

"This extension to our territory is a direct result of the success of our sales and marketing strategy for the brand here in the UK. We were awarded the franchise over three years and in the intervening period

have brought some welcome stability to the brand.

"We have a significant distribution chain, both in the Middle East and South Africa, which will be able to offer the same level of customer service and support to Iseki as they have achieved with the Jacobsen, Ransomes, Cushman and Ryan brands. We are looking for further penetration in the turf maintenance market with this territory extension."

Textron has been appointed distributor for Iseki's compact and mid range tractors in the Middle East and South Africa.

Kawasaki awards New European role to Jack Ford

The growth of Kawasaki Commercial Products in the UK over the past decade has earned the man behind the scenes of this success a key post in Europe with the Japanese manufacturer.

UK Sales and Marketing Manager Jack Ford takes 30 years of knowledge and experience in the commercial

products industry to his new role as European Sales and Marketing Manager as part of a broader restructuring within Kawasaki on a Europe-wide scale. Speaking on the appointment, Jack described it as a wonderful opportunity, but at the same time he is fully aware of the magnitude of the challenge.

"I'm naturally very pleased and flattered to have been selected for such a position and am looking forward to being able to make a difference on a European scale, but this is not just a mammoth opportunity, it's a mammoth task and will take a great deal of careful consideration and thorough planning," he said.



Ford: Opportunity



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Viva Las Vegas!

Bude and North Cornwall GC Assistant, Jason Chidley, made his local paper with his marriage to Bridgette recently.

The couple had headed off on holiday to Las Vegas having assured their parents that there was no way they were going to get married only for Bridgette to phone home at 2.15am one morning to announce that they had indeed got themselves spliced... which, in fact, had been the plan for the previous nine months.

Having wed in the glitz capital of the world the newly weds then spent their honeymoon in Hawaii.

Congratulations to you both.



Chidley—Brooks, Las Vegas.
THIS marriage of Jason Chidley and Bridgette Ann Brooks took place at the Imperial Palace, Las Vegas, on November 20, the groom being the only son of Pat and late David Chidley, of Bude, and the bride being the youngest daughter of Gordon and Valerie Brooks, of Holford, Bude. The honeymoon is being spent in Hawaii.

US trip goes with a surprise hitch

A BUDE couple feared bad news when their daughter

Gleneagles Conference "a success"

Jimmy Kidd, Gleneagles Hotel Golf Courses and Estates Director, declared the inaugural Gleneagles Turf Care Conference, sponsored by Textron Golf, Turf & Specialty Products, "a resounding success".

Speaking to over 135 delegates at the conclusion of the three day conference he said, "The conference has surpassed all my expectations and, without fear of contradiction, I can say that it achieved all of its aims...and more. We had a diverse range of delegates from all parts of globe and it provided the ideal forum for them to expand their knowledge and understanding of the golf industry. The speakers, many of whom had travelled from across the world, were first rate and question time at the end of each session provided the opportunity for a lively debate on the various issues raised."

Keynote speaker, Fred Green, the renowned golf course developer whose projects include Nantucket Golf Club, Eagle Springs in Colorado and, more recently, the new Queenwood Golf Club in London, expounded his philosophy on golf club development and the impact of modern technology on course design. He was particularly concerned with the advances in club and ball design, suggesting that a review would be necessary to ensure that all the major courses remain challenging to the top professionals.

This theme was continued later with course designer, David McLay Kidd, providing a fascinating insight into designing courses that are challenging for the professional, while remaining playable for the majority of golfing enthusiasts.

Further topics relating to other aspects of the design and management of a course were discussed including grass types, the use of seed or turf, the future of turf maintenance equipment, water sourcing and usage, tournament preparation which included an interesting case study from Paul Latshaw on his regime for the 2001 Walker Cup.

Melvin Thomas, of Barreldfield Golf, looked at project finance and management structures, and George Shiels, consultant agronomist with PGA European Tour, spoke on the use of fertilisers and maintenance procedures. Various environmental issues including site planning, bio-diversity and wildlife management were discussed, before the final session on marketing, promoting the business and working with the media completed the conference.

"Jimmy Kidd has been nurturing



At the podium: Jimmy Kidd

this idea for the past three years and it didn't take us long to accept his request to support what has proved to be an absolutely superb event. As principal sponsor we are delighted with its success. Through Jimmy's vision and the efforts of everyone involved, this inaugural conference has achieved its goal by providing an international perspective on golf course management and providing a forum where best practice can be explored to the benefit of all the participants," said Glynn Patrick, Sales Director at Textron.



When a greenkeeper of Duncan's (McGilvray) experience and status expresses concerns about the state of our profession it must be noted (See Greenkeeper International November issue page 9). Clearly from the tone of Duncan's letter he wishes to stimulate a debate, on that I wholly endorse him, I too feel that stagnancy has crept over us recently, and that the stature of our profession is diminishing.

I do not believe that our profession has become complacent. However I do think that our profession is struggling to cope with the golfers expectations of year round perfection, that changing work patterns due to climatic change is exacerbating the problem and that a lack of support mechanisms for the Course Manager can leave him feeling isolated.

I believe that what our profession is suffering from is a crisis of confidence. A lack of confidence deriving from that feeling of isolation. At a time when the demands made of our golf courses are increasing. The Course Manager is too often left slogging it out with Committees, Boards, Golfers, and Secretaries in the pursuit of best practice.

The source of the demands is quite simply the constant drive for higher standards, and the need for clubs to

Response to Duncan McGilvray

generate revenue. Now that is a good thing, as professionals we should welcome it, yet realism demands that higher standards require resourcing, and nature insists that golf courses have limitations. To balance those certainties with the demands of golfers requires an employer who is sympathetic to the situation. Sadly in too many golf clubs that is not the case. When that occurs the Course Manager's options are limited, and his job is often on the line. Let's not avoid this fact. We are talking about careers and livelihoods here.

If I have a concern with Duncan's letter it is that it ignores the elements of our industry that can make greenkeeping a tenuous hold on a career. Unfortunately this is one thing that despite all attempts, has not changed, and it is this that must be at the core of any debate about the state of our profession.

Duncan's suggestion that some Course Managers are lacking in proactiveness may well be valid, but the fact that he knows potentially pro-active managers who have abandoned the industry really does demand scrutiny. What is it about our industry that demoralises young enthusiasts, to the point that they will walk away? What is it about our industry that results in short-term reactive management?

Our profession is golf course management, our industry is Golf. We need

to look at all the elements within the industry, the structures (the golfing authorities) the employers (the golf clubs), the decision-making processes (committees, boards of management), Golfers (our customers) the education system and finally support mechanisms for the Course Manager. That means BIGGA. We have to analyse the extent to which these various elements impact our capacity to deliver a product. We have to consider whether the nett sum of these elements means that golf courses suffer, and golf Course Managers are hindered.

"The Way Forward" the R&A, for a period managed to pull these elements together. But it is inherent within our industry that change occurs. The constant turnover of club committee members guarantees that last year's decisions are next year's debates. The inevitable consequence of this is that even as valid a document as "The Way Forward" annually becomes diluted, and eventually ineffective.

If the Golf Club is not always an ideal environment for golf Course Managers to work, how can we change it?

I believe that all the elements need pulling together and refocusing, and that the condition of golf courses needs to be moved to the very top of the industry agenda. To do this we have to start at the top. The Golf Authorities are respected enough throughout the

industry to have influence within individual clubs. They could impart this influence by issuing a code of conduct to clubs, or even club officials, controversial yes, but if it was dependant on affiliation it would be effective.

The golf clubs have to reconsider priorities, and accept that pro-active management commences in the committee room or boardroom. A return to the principles of "The Way Forward" in those clubs where it has lapsed, or an adoption of those principles where they never existed would be a positive step.

Golfers need educating, and every avenue has to be pursued in this goal. The Course Manager has to be active within his club, Golfing magazines should be persuaded to take up our cause, and TV commentators must be told to refrain from filling in time by commenting upon a subject that they know nothing about. For golfers take their word as gospel.

The education system needs an urgent review. I believe that the worst thing that has happened to our profession in my time has been the introduction of NVQ's. (I speak from experience here because I have taken NVQ3 and C&G3) If knowledge is power, and power breeds confidence, then NVQs are eroding the confidence of the greenkeeper. To make the step from greenkeeper to Course Manager you need to be furnished with more

Industry stalwart retires



From left to right: Mrs Heather Brown, Mr George Brown, Ian Bridges (Area Sales Manager), David McInroy (Managing Director), Steven McInroy (General Manager)

One of the biggest supporters of the Scottish golf industry has retired after 50 years career servicing, repairing and selling equipment to golf courses throughout Scotland.

At a special celebration at the headquarters of Scottish Grass Machinery George Brown received £200 golf vouchers.

Since 1951, George has become one of the leading UK authorities on the Ransomes brand of grass cutting equipment experiencing the high manpower requirements of horse-drawn

and pedestrian machines to the latest high output equipment.

Over the years George has become one of the most knowledgeable and best known characters on golf courses across Scotland. Professionally, he will be missed by us all, but given the number of invitations that he has had to play golf from all of his hundreds of customers, I am sure that we will constantly be bumping into him as he plays the country's finest courses!" said David McInroy, Managing Director, of Scottish Grass Machinery.

Are we stagnating?

than group assessments of simple tasks, and the barest of essentials on soil science and amenity horticulture. The lack of theory and scientific background in NVQ's is simply disgraceful. We as a profession should not be accepting these as industry standards, and should be encouraging the educationalists to produce a qualification that is viable.

And finally BIGGA, we may well look back with pride, where it all started, how far we have come, but we must continue to strive forward. We must question whether the goals set up at creation have been attained, and whether those goals are still what the membership requires? Does the Association interact with clubs enough? Is the Association offering the support mechanisms the Course Manager needs? What input does the Association pursue in the items discussed above? I believe that BIGGA has a huge input to make in the representation of our profession, and that it must do so forcefully and with confidence.

Finally, having had my tuppence worth let me say that I am not pessimistic about our future. I see around me hungry young men, articulate, dedicated and keen to take up the baton. If the industry, and all those in it behaves responsibly then the future for them is bright and prosperous. However if the industry is irresponsi-

ble, then it is to those young men that they will eventually turn to for a solution. Ultimately, they cannot get by without us.

John Ross, Course Manager,
Laleham GC, Chertsey

Thanks!

I would like to thank the Golden & Silver Key sponsors for supporting the Regional Training Programme. I attended the Risk Assessment and COSHH Awareness Course on 29 November at West Hill Golf Club. They offer excellent value for money and I would urge other greenkeepers to attend the training provided by BIGGA.

Stuart Hogg,
Fortrose and Rosemarkie Golf Club

Editor: For further information on the latest Regional Training Courses on offer, see the Education and Training article overleaf on page 10

Address your letters to The Editor, Greenkeeper International, BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Alne, York YO61 1UF, or email them to scott@bigga.co.uk

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This month, Ken and Sami from BIGGA'S Education and Training Department would like to wish all readers a very happy New Year, and outline details of forthcoming Regional Training Courses...

Education and Training update

Regional Training

Following some very successful Regional Training Courses, which took place during November and December, we are planning a series of courses for February/March. Several sections have requested courses ranging from Basic Computing to Chain Saw Competence and these will run alongside the very popular Essential Management Skills and a, new, Next Steps in Management Course. Details will be sent to members during January so make sure that you book early to ensure your place.

Remember, each one day course costs members an extremely low £30 thanks to a £60 per delegate subsidy from the BIGGA Education and Development Fund. Golden Key Members of the Fund (see opposite) are also issuing £30 training vouchers to their Greenkeeper customers making one day courses completely free.

The National Education Conference, Workshops, Seminars, all BIGGA courses, Section and Regional Education and Training all count towards BIGGA CPD credits.

Continue to Learn at Harrogate

The popularity of the Continue to Learn Week is increasing with many delegates booking early. Workshop 1 is now full and only a few places remain on Workshops 2 and 3.

There are still places available on all Seminars, which may be booked 'on the day'. Remember, that bone fide students and all lecturers can gain free entry to all Seminars.

The weeks events are rounded off on Thursday 24 January by the BTME/Golf Club Show Banquet,

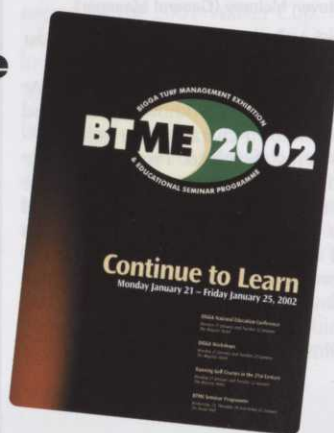
which is open to delegates of both shows. Returning to the Majestic Hotel, the Banquet stars the comedy duo Brahms and Liszt supported by the Nightjars. Banquet tickets are still available but please ensure to book your place before 9 January.

BIGGA has sold all of its reserved accommodation and all those wishing to stay in Harrogate during Continue to Learn/BTME/Golf Club Show should contact Reservations Highway on 01423 525577.

You've got mail!

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:
education@bigga.co.uk
ken@bigga.co.uk
sami@bigga.co.uk



Greenkeeper Education and Development Fund

BIGGA GOLDEN KEY and SILVER KEY CIRCLES

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

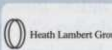


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