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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Greenkeeper

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

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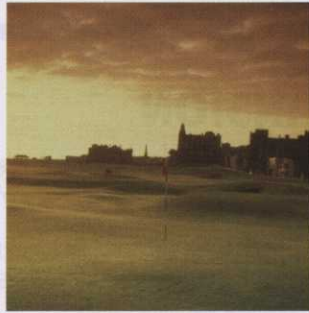
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30 Recycled products are gaining popularity



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NEW THIS MONTH!

Check out the Buyers' Guide on page 56-60.

For ways in which Links Leisure can help you!

Front cover: St. Andrews Old Course.
Photograph courtesy of Brian Morgan

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We ask seven Head men to share their experiences of hosting The Open.

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Nigel White studies the tactics that can be employed by a golf club to market, promote and attract new members to their product.





Welcome

A MAN WITH TARTAN IN HIS VEINS

A Scotsman winning the US Open! Who'd have thought Michael Campbell would become the first Scottish Major winner since Paul Lawrie in the 1999 Open? Now I know strictly speaking Campbell is a New Zealander but he himself is quick to attribute his golfing prowess to his Scottishness. His great, great, great grandfather - not sure about the exact number of greats - was a man called Logan Campbell who travelled from Scotland to the land of the long cloud and settled in very nicely it would seem.

Like Lawrie before him Campbell did well even to be at Pinehurst having to go through pre-qualifying. He snatched one the last qualifying places at the first UK-based US Open Qualifier at Walton Heath, superbly presented by Ian McMillan.

To then take on and beat the big boys in the main event was quite an achievement but no more than you would expect from a man with tartan blood flowing through his veins.

Taking the Championship as a whole the USGA went some way to rescuing themselves following the self inflicted problems of the previous year at Shinnecock when, in their manic desire to protect Old Man Par, they made the course virtually impossible to play.

Indeed on one green you'd have had more chance of halting a droplet running down a window pane than of stopping a golf ball on the short stuff. The problem reached such heights that the USGA decided to water the green during play which goes against the rules of golf and is definitely unfair to those players who had already gone through.

Now this year the weather was extremely hot particularly in the early part of the week but they had to do the same again and water greens which were threatening to bake and become rock hard. Now, surely the trick is to anticipate the potential problems and prepare the course accordingly. Euan Grant, at St Andrews, tells me that he could get the greens stimping at 14 for this month's Open but because it can be windy and the ball can be blown around they keep them down at around 12. Pure commonsense!

It was also interesting to read about Ian Poulter complaining about the hole cups not being inserted properly after a perfectly good looking putt bounced out. By all accounts, according to the British press, he had a valid point.

I've been to the US Open once, back in 1994, and was amazed that in the Media Centre scores were written on the huge scoreboard manually and very, very slowly, years after a much more effective and quicker system was in use in Europe.

We can be all too quick to compare ourselves unfavourably against our American cousins but we shouldn't. Our know how and skills are up there with the very best.

We shall see a perfect example of that at The Old Course where we will also see how the new US Open Champion copes on his return home.

Scott MacCallum, Editor

JCB EXPANSION

JCB'S UK dealers are embarking on one of their biggest single investment programmes by setting up separate sales companies to concentrate on JCB compact equipment.

The project will see the number of dealer salesmen dedicated to selling JCB compact equipment increase to in excess of 50.

The dealers - Greenshields JCB Compact Equipment, Gunn JCB Compact Equipment, Holt JCB Compact Equipment, Scot JCB Compact, TC Harrison JCB Compact and Watling JCB Compact - will also create separate compact equipment showrooms at

selected depots covering England, Scotland and Wales.

The dealers' expansion follows a decision earlier this year by JCB to set up its own Compact Equipment Sales division for Europe.

"JCB's compact equipment sales have been growing rapidly in recent years and have now reached a level where the creation of new compact equipment sales companies, with a dedicated, specialised sales force, makes sense," said the JCB Sales MD, Françoise Rausch.

HUGE EFFORT AT WENTWORTH

Once again BIGGA Members who volunteered their services for the BMW PGA Championship at Wentworth had the pleasure of being part of a great tournament on a Course superbly presented, as always, by Chris Kennedy and his Greenkeeping Team.

This year 15 BIGGA Members were on standby duty in case of bad weather on the Thursday and Friday of the event. As it turned out the weather was kind with only a distant threat of thunderstorms on the second day.

On the Saturday and Sunday 40 volunteers plus a few reserves were available as bunker rakers for

all the matches, played at times in very windy conditions, making scoring difficult. In the end Angel Cabrera was a worthy winner of the Championship.

I know Chris was very appreciative of all the team who gave up their valuable time to participate, some making journeys from as far as the West Country and the Midlands.

I would like to thank everybody for making my job so easy and representing our Association in a very professional manner.

Clive Osgood
South East Regional Administrator



The Wentworth Support Team with Championship winner Angel Cabrera

MORE DEALERS FOR KUBOTA

Kubota has appointed several additional dealers in southern England and Wales to strengthen its existing roster.

The line-up of new Kubota Construction Equipment dealers across southern England comprises Harper Plant of Salisbury, whose territory covers Hampshire and Dorset; Lister Wilder of Reading, with other depots at Cirencester, Devizes and Ockham, whose territory covers Avon, Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Berkshire and Surrey;

and South West Plant Sales of Monkekehampton, whose territory covers Devon and Somerset.

Stubbing Brothers of Ventor has been appointed to cover the whole of the Isle of Wight, while Vincent Tractors of Fraddon now looks after Cornwall. In addition, existing Kubota dealer Leach Lewis Plant of Reading, with other depots at Witney and Sevenoaks, has had its territory extended to include Kent, Sussex and East Anglia.

TO THE LAST

The annual South Wales Spring Seminar recently took place at the Royal Porthcawl Golf Club. The day, sponsored by Farmura Environmental, was deemed a great success by the 70 attendees that took part in what was an enjoyable and informative day.

Jonathan Harmer, Managing Director of Farmura, got the day off to a flying start with his talk on 'A Balanced Approach to Plant Nutrition'. This was followed by Ian Elliott, Marketing Manager of the Omex Group, and his talk entitled 'The Targeted use of Plant Nutrients, to improve plant health and vigour'. George Attwood-Harris, an independent golf course Agronomist, completed the morning line up with his presentation on 'The Agronomist and the Golf Course'.

In the afternoon our guest speaker, Jim Arthur, took the stage. Our sincere thanks to Farmura and Jonathan Harmer, MD, for the support and for ensuring that Jim was present. Jim had been

advised by his doctors against travelling to Wales, as he was not in good health, but despite this warning he attended and we are truly grateful to both parties for this, his last ever presentation to an audience of Greenkeepers.

Quite fitting that following his talk, Jim was presented with a gift from the members of BIGGA's South Wales Section to thank him for his support, friendship and services over many years. The gift presented to him by our Chairman, Angus Macloed, was a print of the changes made at the Royal Porthcawl Golf Club by Simpson in 1934, where Jim was an Agronomist for over 30 years.

Our sincere thanks to all at Farmura for their support, especially Gerald and Jonathon. To the Royal Porthcawl Golf Club and especially Course Manager, David Ward, for his assistance and support and to Jim for making the effort, he will be sadly missed.

Peter Lacey - Section Secretary



Jim Arthur and the delegates at the South Wales Section Seminar

BIGGA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

The BIGGA National Championship, sponsored by Ransomes Jacobsen, will soon be amongst us once again. The 2005 two day event will take place at both Workshop GC, Sheffield, and Sherwood Forest GC, in the East Midlands, on October 3 & 4.

Many Sections are holding National Championship Qualifiers currently, but if you miss the cut at Section level, you can still be part of this superb Championship. Entries of all standard of play are most welcome to play in the BIGGA Tournament, as the two days offer a wonderful chance to meet, socialise and play golf with fellow greenkeepers and trade members at all levels and new and old friends.

Graeme MacDonald, Newark GC, claimed



overall victory at Alwoodley GC in 2004, with marathon runner Noel Crawford, Royal County Down GC, winning the Scratch Championship. Many will be aiming to get their hands on their trophies this year. The annual event includes Nearest the Pin and Longest Drive competitions, with Regional team trophies and individual prizes in various categories up for grabs each day.

An information leaflet and entry form is included in this edition of Greenkeeper International. If you have not received this entry form in the magazine or require further information on the BIGGA National Championship contact Sarah at

BIGGA HOUSE on 01347 833800 or by email, sarah@bigga.co.uk.

HEDLEY GOES GREEN

The Scottish Golf Environment Group (SGEG), a partnership of the Scottish Golf Union, the R&A, Scottish Natural Heritage and the Scottish Executive, has appointed Carolyn Hedley as its new Project Manager to lead the delivery of its research and developmental work.

Carolyn's background is in civil and environmental engineering within the water industry and she brings with her a variety of project and environmental management skills.

"I am delighted to join the team at SGEG and look forward to the challenge of building on the achievements during the next phase of this unique initiative. I am keen to ensure the group's extensive work continues to have a positive impact on the environment and the Scottish golf sector," said a pleased Carolyn.

Over the past nine years SGEG has provided advice to over 330 golf clubs and facilities, and distributed a range of technical support materials - addressing issues such as climate change, waste management, energy conservation and new golf course development.

DIAMOND AT RAIN BIRD

Rain Bird have appointed Kneale Diamond as Golf District Manager. Kneale previously worked as Course Manager for the Marriott Hanbury Manor Hotel and Country Club.

"Besides strengthening our sales force Kneale will also provide valuable training for greenkeepers in the use of Rain Bird central control software," said Victor Jamieson, Regional Manager Northern Europe.



JOINING FORCES

Barclay Chemicals Manufacturing Ltd has joined forces with SumiAgro Amenity. The move is part of Barclay's growth strategy in the European amenity and turf management sector and will compliment its existing crop protection business.

The Barclay/SumiAgro Amenity business will form a new division of Barclay, trading throughout Europe and serviced from Dublin. The division will be headed by current SumiAgro Amenity Business Manager, John Gregory.



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For a free demonstration, please call 01480 226800 today.

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SGM HIRE MATHIESON

Colin Mathieson has been appointed in the position of Business Development Manager, Scotland, for SGM Hire, as part of the company's continued growth. Colin brings to SGM a wealth of experience, gained in both the agricultural and grounds care markets.

"I am sure Colin will prove to be a valuable addition to our team as we continue to develop our

Hire presence in Scotland," said Steven McInroy, SGM Hire's Managing Director.

Brian Goudie will continue to operate alongside Colin within the golf market in Scotland, but will now also take on additional responsibilities for the development of the company's presence within golf, across the whole of the UK.

CARRARO'S CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Kaizen was the watchword at the recent Antonio Carraro Tigrone World Meeting Day, held in Padova, Italy. The Japanese word, which means continuous improvement, has become the motto of the Italian tractor manufacturer after the company has spent the previous few years redeveloping, rebuilding and reevaluating its whole working process.

After investment in Porsche Consulting these changes, including a new production theory, which is used by Toyota, and increased concentration on Research and Development, have resulted in a new outlook for Carraro and an even brighter future for the Italian giant.

The day was marked by the unveiling of the new Tigrone Series, seven new models of tractor to further enhance the range. Carraro, whose tractors uniquely have equally sized front and rear wheels have 605 sales outlets worldwide, and their tractors are available in the UK via Carraro UK, a division of Riko UK, headed by Stephen Cabrol.

The celebratory event, which hosted over 500 individuals, including Dealers, Importers, Branch Managers and the press, involved a factory tour, a tractor show of the Tigrone Series, Dealer awards, the unveiling of the Giovanni Carraro monument in

celebration of the manufacturer's founder and culminated in a dinner with entertainment provided by Al Bano, a famed international singer and UN Representative.

"The Tigrone Day marks a change of an era for the company which will allow us to look forward with hope and optimism. A new generation is here, Antonio Carraro is much younger today and ready to face the future," said Antonio Carraro, President.



Stephen Cabrol, Sales Manager of Carraro UK, means business in a special Carraro 'sport' tractor

BIGGA INVESTMENT SUCCESS

BIGGA has had its Investor in People Award reaffirmed after successfully passing a recognition review. The review, which occurs every three years,

involved interviews with current staff at BIGGA HQ to establish if the Association continued to meet the high standards set by the award scheme.



BIGGA Staff with Investor in People inspector Steve Hudson, middle

JUST THE FACTS



Scotts has taken the innovative step of putting its entire Turf & Amenity team through a new, industry-recognised training scheme.

The fertiliser Advisers Certification and Training Scheme (FACTS) is independent, non-statutory and recognised by the fertiliser industry, Defra and the Environment Agency. It is accepted as a successful means of setting standards, training and accrediting the continuous professional development of those providing nutrient management advice.

Turf & Amenity Product Manager Simon Bamaby said: "It was an extremely tough five-day course, culminating in an examination and viva. All eight T&A managers passed, which is great news."

SWAN DESIGNS BLAKES

Howard Swan, golf course Architect, has designed an 18 hole golf course called Blakes, near North Weald in the heart of Essex which opens later this month.

Construction on the 6,631 yard Par 71 layout began back in 2001

following a six month planning and design process. Swan Golf Designs were appointed by the developers in 2000 to refine the course as 18 holes from an original 27 hole master plan.

Blakes Golf Club will operate on a pay and play basis, with a limited membership, and will be home to the Scott Cranfield Golf Academy with a bay driving range and a designated chipping and bunker practice area for players to hone their skills on.



GILHOLM LIVERPOOL BOUND

Craig Gilholm has been appointed Links Manager at Royal Liverpool Golf Club. Craig started his new role on Monday June 6.

The new headman succeeds Derek Green, who died earlier this year after playing a major role in getting The Open back to Royal Liverpool. Craig, 33, has 16 years experience as a greenkeeper at Muirfield, with the last eight as Deputy Course Manager. He brings considerable experience of managing a top grade championship course and has recent knowledge of accepting the varied demands of the Open Championship, with the 2002 Open being held at Muirfield.

IOG'S GOSSET RETIRES

Patrick Gosset is stepping down this summer as Chief Executive of the Institute of Groundsmanship. Patrick joined the IOG in 1996 as its first Chief Executive.

"It has been a great experience working with so many people, both in the Institute and across the wider industry, who are so truly dedicated to their work and to the advancement of their profession," said Patrick.

Alex Millar, IOG National Chairman, added: "Patrick's departure at the end of July will be deeply felt across the organisation and his contribution will be greatly missed."

A new Chief Executive will be appointed in due course.



NO MORE WASTE

Course Care has installed a purpose made granulator at their Keighley base to process thousands of plastic chemical containers.

Instead of taking them to a landfill, the machine turns the plastic into chips which are re-processed and turned into useful rot proof items for use around the golf course, including fence posts, seating, walkway, sleepers, etc. The company are encouraging waste reduction by recycling and composting.

Their new composting machines will turn grass clippings, twigs, branches, leaves, green kitchen waste and all that cardboard from the pro shop into compostable material.

The company is also busy warning golf clubs of the changes to the Hazardous Waste Regulations that came into force in April. These regulations require all clubs that are producing hazardous waste to register with the Environment Agency.

US OPEN BEGAN IN ENGLAND

Malcolm Campbell, victorious at the US Open in June, actually started his Championship run at Walton Heath Golf Club by taking one of the last qualifying spots on a score of 139.

The first US Open Regional Qualifying to be held outside of the United States was hosted by Walton Heath on June 6. 53 European Tour players played 36 holes for nine places to play in the US Open.

The club was approached in the spring of 2004 by the USGA to host this inaugural event and have signed up for a two year trial period. From the club's view this was an easy tournament to host without the usual infrastructure that comes with

most Tour events. The crowds were allowed to walk the fairways and get up close to see the competitors play, which worked well.

The Walton Heath green staff were ably assisted with course preparations by greenkeepers from Queenwood, Hendon, Hankley Common, Tyrells Wood, Ashridge and Letchworth. No major requests were made in relation to the set up of the golf courses, apart from a stimpmeter reading of 10.5ft.

"This has been a fantastic tournament for the golf club to host and we look forward to hosting it again next year," said Ian McMillan, Course Manager.



The Walton Heath greens staff witnessed Michael Campbell's qualification on his way to US Open glory

SANDBURN SETS THE SCENE

Staff from irrigation and drainage company North Staffs Irrigation attended the opening of Sandburn Hall on Friday June 10, and were greeted with the sight of the new course looking its very best. The par 72, 6700 yard course is nestled in woodland on the outskirts of York.

Under the direction of irrigation consultants IrriPlan, North Staffs began work installing the irrigation system in April 2004. Water that's drawn from a bore hole near to the clubhouse is held in a water tank before being applied to the greens, tees and approaches using a Tonick 2-zone controller and Hunter sprinklers.

A series of man-made lakes cascade across the course, which is on an incline creating a four metre fall. A pumping transfer system directs water from the lowest of the lakes through 1100 metres of pipework before discharging it into the highest, which is directly outside the clubhouse.

Director Martin Hinchliffe commented: "Those who've been involved in creating it have looked beyond the irrigation system and used water creatively, with stunning results, to enhance the relaxing, picturesque setting for guests and golfers to enjoy."



ALUN RACKS UP THE MILES

Alun Wright, Sales Manager at TH White Ltd, has fulfilled a lifelong ambition by riding his Honda XRV 750cc Africa Twin motorbike from Land's End to John O'Groats.



It took three days overall, a total of 915.5 miles avoiding all motorways, with the exception of one mile on the M48 over the old Severn bridge. He spent 16 hours 15 minutes actually in the saddle at an average speed of 56.33 miles per hour and averaging 54.2 miles per gallon.

Using all of his charm he managed to acquire a set of HotWired heated clothing, normally used in winter by greenkeepers, from the marketing department at Ransomes Jacobsen to ensure that he kept warm and dry throughout the 1,946 mile round trip.

"I've always wanted to do it and I had to use up some annual holiday by the end of April or lose it. This presented the ideal opportunity, so I hopped on the bike and just went for it," said a delighted Alun.

SMART THINKING

Cancer Research UK has launched a SunSmart campaign to help people reduce the risk of skin cancer, with individuals who work outdoors being targeted.

Over 2,000 people a year die from skin cancer, with over 69,000 new cases of the disease diagnosed in the same period. Malignant melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer, is one of the few cancers to affect young adults and is the second most common cancer in 15-34 year olds.

The campaign is offering the following advice: Stay in the shade between 11am-3pm; Make sure you never burn; Always cover up; Use factor 15+ sunscreen.

Never use sunscreen in order to spend longer in the sun. Sunscreen alone does not offer complete protection from sun damage. It should be used to increase your protection at times when you are exposed to the sun without adequate shade or clothing.

A crucial message the campaign is attempting to get across is that it does not have to be a scorching hot day for someone to burn. The sun does not have to feel hot in order to damage skin, as the heat from the sun comes from infrared rays, not UV rays, so sunburn can still occur on cool days.

"It is vitally important that melanoma is detected and treated early. The best advice we can give people is to keep an eye on moles and any unusual skin blemishes," stated Dr Catherine Harwood, a Cancer Research UK dermatologist.

	Skin type:			
Index	Fair, burns	Fair, tans	Brown	Black
1, 2	Low	Low	Low	Low
3, 4	Medium	Low	Low	Low
5	High	Medium	Low	Low
6	Very High	Medium	Medium	Low
7	Very High	High	Medium	Medium
8	Very High	High	Medium	Medium
9	Very High	High	Medium	Medium
10	Very High	High	High	Medium

GALLAGHER SO CLOSE

With The Open Championship upon us and the BIGGA Support Team warming up to aid in proceedings, one of the Association's greenkeepers has already lived his Championship dream.

John Gallagher, greenkeeper at Merchants of Edinburgh Golf Club, but who plays at Swanston Golf Club, finished runner up in the Amateur Open Championship at Royal Birkdale and Southport & Ainsdale GC. After battling through the rounds during an early week in June, John lost out 5&4 in the final to Irishman Brian McElhinney.

"It's a hell of a hard game when you're down all the time and although I'm disappointed I'm also delighted with how far I got. I putted well all week, but lost the pace of the greens in the final. It's a long week when you play 10 rounds and I just ran out of steam," said John, the Lothian's Champion.

John, 24, has taken a year out to play golf full time, a decision which is clearly paying off, and

reaching the final of the Amateur Championship may well help him achieve a lifetime ambition.

"I've always dreamt of playing for Scotland," stated the Amateur finalist, who plays with his left hand below the right.

"My grip lets me hit the ball low and that's been very effective throughout the week. My swing isn't pretty, but I get the ball round. I'm more of a grinder than a golfer."



John Gallagher, left, congratulates winner Brian McElhinney

LELY TEAM UP WITH YANMAR

Yanmar's range of compact tractors and power products will be distributed by Lely (UK) Ltd as from September 1. The announcement comes after Claymore Grass Machinery and Yanmar decided to go their separate ways.

Claymore, Yanmar and Lely will work together over the coming months to ensure a smooth transition of the distribution and, in particular, the continued availability of spare parts and services. Lely's Peter Wheeler will head up the activity.

AVONCROP ADD NEW NAMES



Joe Crawley

Avoncrop Amenity Products have announced that Joe Crawley and Ceri Richards have joined their sales team.

Following the loss of Colin White, Joe Crawley will be covering the Hampshire, East Dorset and West Surrey area for the Company. Ceri Richards will be taking over the South Wales area in July after the retirement of Ray Burrows.

Both Ceri and Joe are well known in the amenity industry, both having worked for Vitax in the past.

"I'm really pleased that Joe and Ceri have joined Avoncrop Amenity Products. For both of them they have hard acts to follow, but I'm sure they will

look after their customers with dedication and excellent technical support," commented Chris Briggs, Business Development Manager.



Ceri Richards

SYMBIO UP BY TWO

Symbio has announced that two new members are joining its technical sales team.

Paul Sheather, previously Head Greenkeeper of the Arden Course at the Marriott Forest of Arden, has joined Symbio as Regional Technical Manager covering North London, East Anglia and Leicestershire. Paul completed his HND in horticulture and moved rapidly through the greenkeeping ranks, preparing the Arden course for several European tour events and of course The Masters Championship.

Vicky Willet, whose first degree was in agronomy and forestry, did a PhD assessing the role of organic nitrogen in plant growth. Vicky is based in Skipton North Yorkshire and will help Symbio to grow in the North of England. Vicky spent a year in Malawi managing a plant research project on top of seven years of research into UK soils and she is looking forward to applying her knowledge to help greenkeepers improve growing conditions and their playing surfaces.



David Golding, Education Director, explains how the golf clubs and greenkeepers in Britain really have a 'united' voice and how this is being heard in the various 'corridors of power'.

I recently read in another turf publication an article calling for "a voice" for the turf sector and listed bodies all of whom the author stated "served their members well." but were often not focusing on key issues and bringing about change due to them being "commercial entities".

I cannot speak for the "other side" of sports turf, groundsmanship, as the GTC is specifically designed to represent golf club (employers) and greenkeepers (employees). However I do think we sometimes fail to promote the work we carry out often on behalf of the wider turf industry. It is unusual in golf for representative bodies to show a total united approach, working for the same aims and supporting an independent organisation by funding its work. However, the GTC brings together the following bodies all working towards a common aim.

- The British & International Golf Greenkeepers Association (BIGGA)
- The English Golf Union (EGU)
- The Scottish Golf Union (SGU)
- The Welsh Golfing Union (WGU)
- The Royal & Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews (R&A)
- The PGA European Tour

The GTC is funded by contributions from all of the above bodies with the R&A match funding the contributions from the Home Unions and BIGGA.

A per-capita levy is set by the GTC Board annually, which is paid by each golfer in England, Scotland and Wales plus each member of BIGGA, to allow the GTC to operate without the requirement to seek sponsorship from the wider industry. This shows the importance put on greenkeeper education by the major bodies within the sport.

One of the main objectives of the GTC is to ensure that golf clubs and greenkeepers in Britain have education and training options developed within the Government's national and the European approved framework of qualifications. It is only since the GTC reformed back in 1993 that the above objective has been an achievable option for the sector.

All Government frameworks have to engage employer bodies and this is where the Golf Unions play their vital role within the GTC. BIGGA clearly has its greenkeeper membership and the Association not only has full board representation but also has a major influence within the GTC's Technical Committee, which is the engine room when it comes to apprenticeship and qualifications development and review.

It is therefore the GTC's clearly defined role to be involved in any developments relating to sports turf qualifications and training schemes.

The qualifications range from the vocational (work based) to the Masters Degree in Sports Turf Technology and, while these are the formal awards that attract

Government funding, there are also many short courses that benefit both employers and greenkeepers. Certificates of Competence awarded by the NPTC are popular as often these types of awards have legislative compliance attached to them, e.g. pesticide and chainsaw use.

You might think that it is a bold statement to make, however if the content of any approved qualification is proved to be inappropriate or in need of updating the GTC can, through the Lantra Sector Skills Council, make the changes.

Having established a range of formal qualifications and certificates it is the choice of the training provider, that golf clubs often make without contacting the GTC for the most up to date information on the options available. An approved list of training providers has been published by the GTC for many years and this is currently being reviewed.

The development of career literature, including the highly acclaimed Career in Greenkeeping CD, is just one area where the GTC and BIGGA work closely together.

BIGGA is very much a training provider in as much as short courses, often held on a regional basis, covering subjects such as computers, manual handling, first aid and management skills. The Continue to Learn programme at Harrogate each year is supported by the GTC and the level of cooperation between both organisations has never been better.

The promotion of the Association's Master Greenkeeper Certificate and the various high profile competitions, such as the Student of the Year and Environmental Awards, all adds to the number one priority of BIGGA and that is the education of its members.

The GTC has a business plan which is regularly updated to include any new initiatives identified by the technical committee and approved by the Board. You too can have an input by making proposals, either through BIGGA or direct to the GTC, where you think greenkeeper education can be improved and is not currently covered either by the providers or the industry.

By having the lead employer and employee bodies round the same table it really does allow the sector to move forward with an agreed agenda.

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