

5. Skipping Overseeding

This allows an early green up and a strong sward in summer, no competition between ryegrass and bermudagrass. Course 2 skipped overseeding in autumn 2004 so the condition of the bermudagrass would be excellent for the US Open in 2005.

Being part of the programme has influenced our lives and careers in a very positive way.

It feels like a big change, but also a challenge and we found that it's important to stay enthusiastic, Pinehurst has an influence on our ability to react positively to change and challenge, which has made us better greenkeepers, better golfers and better people.

It's great being part of a programme and part of a team of British interns, we all chose to participate for similar reasons so have lots in common but it has brought out the best in each of us and made us better team players. While we are thousands of miles from home on a safe, legal and organised programme, it's important to have a sense of adventure and an adventurous spirit.

As a result, it builds our confidence to go anywhere. We now know what to expect and we are not afraid to apply to top courses anywhere in the world - number one because, they are very familiar with The Ohio Programme and number two, they know that we will have learned a lot by the time we finish the course. Therefore, young people who do the American programme tend to be more in demand.

We would like to thank our lecturers back in the UK for supporting us in our endeavours, we will take away many great memories of Pinehurst, lots of contacts and life long friends in this great profession. It has been a great learning experience. Thanks also to our Superintendents and the team at The Ohio State University.

WHAT IS THE OHIO PROGRAMME

Run by The Ohio State University since 1979, the programme brings 19-29 -year -old single guys and girls for 12 to 18 months to train/gain experience on some of the most exclusive golf courses in the United States. You have to be drug free with no criminal record, have a clean drivers licence and most importantly a willingness to learn and ability to endure long hours of on-the-job training. Irishman Mike O'Keeffe manages the programme and brings in over 100 turf trainees a year from all over the world.

For more details on The Ohio Programme (www.top.osu.edu) contact Mike O'Keeffe on: okeeffe.1@osu.edu or your local SVQ or NVQ training authority.

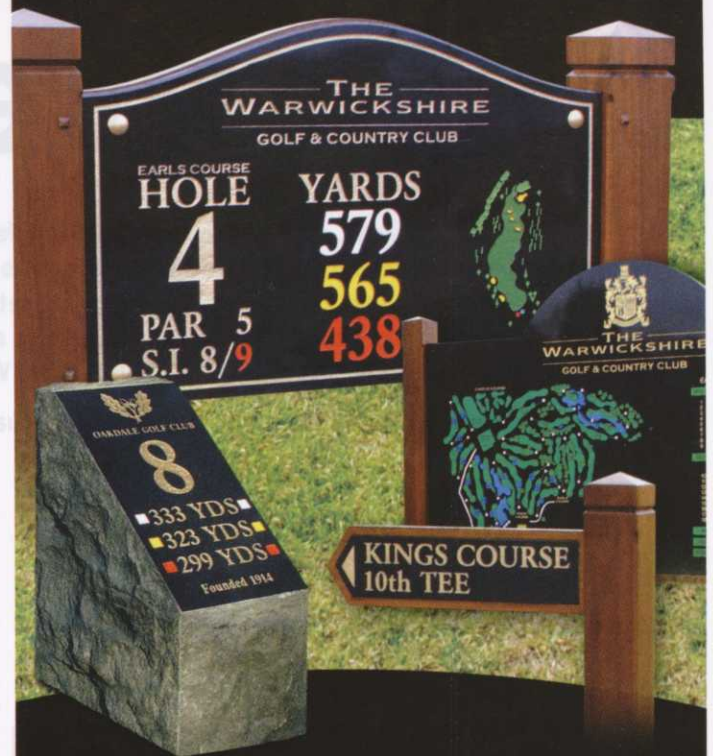


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Harrogate week

It's Arrived!

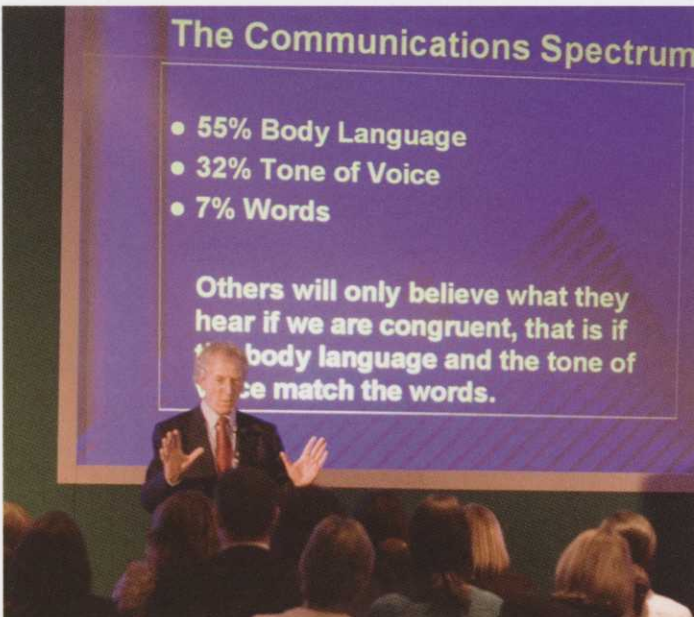
January can be viewed in two ways. A disappointing month - the festive season is over, the Christmas decorations have been taken down and packed away back up into the loft, you're more than likely on a diet after overindulging in December and all you have to look forward to in the immediate future is cold, wet, dreary weather. Or, a brand spanking New Year! - A time for new beginnings, time to make New Year's Resolutions, take up a new hobby, get fit - join the gym, enrol on a part time course, and most importantly, attend the event of the year - Harrogate Week!

GI provides a glimpse of what the most important week in January has to offer.

WOMEN'S FORUM

Tuesday, January 23, 16.30 - 17.30

Aiming to keep the few women there are in the fine turf industries in contact, the Women's Forum enables women and men alike to join in lively debate on relevant topics and allows them to spend time networking.



AMERICANS TO ATTEND HARROGATE WEEK



Bernhard and Company have given individuals in the greenkeeping industry the chance of a lifetime after sending out a press release in the states, announcing that GCSAA Class A members could apply to be flown over to the UK for Harrogate Week 2007.

Members who were interested had to go to the Bernhard and Company website and fill-out an application form. In just two weeks over 370 GCSAA members had filled out the application.

The response was tremendous (more than Bernhard and Co had bargained for!) and with applicants being of such a high standard, it was a very tough decision for the company.

Members who did not make it on 2007 trip have remarked how they will be applying again in 2008, so there is a definite interest from the GCSAA members to see BTME.

The selected delegation is as follows:

Roger Stewart - Golf Course Superintendent at the TPC Jasna Polana, a GCSAA member for 31 years:

"It is important that the strong relationship between BIGGA and GCSAA continues to grow in the future and BIGGA is an important link to other international associations so we all benefit from our collective knowledge and experience. I would be pleased to have the opportunity to pass on the experience."

Bob Farren, CGCS - Manager of Golf Courses and Grounds at Pinehurst, a GCSAA member for 27 years:

"I have a great deal of interest and passion for all aspects of the golf industry. I feel I could represent the GCSAA, The Bernhard Company, and Pinehurst Resort in good fashion. I feel very fortunate to have worked so many years at Pinehurst, the "Birthplace of American golf", and I love to share those experiences."

Bob Becker - Golf Course Superintendent at Scioto Country Club, a GCSAA member for nine years:

"I believe this would be a great experience to interact with not only the delegates, but also the superintendents and students, which we will be in contact with, during our trip. As my trip to Australia taught me there is much to be learned by travelling outside the United States. It gives you a different perspective on how tasks can be accomplished."

C. Todd Pippin - Golf Course Superintendent at The Club at Longview, a GCSAA member for six years:

"In being a delegate to Harrogate it will allow me the opportunity to share those experiences with others and gain insight into those issues that are faced within the European market. In the near future I foresee all turfgrass managers worldwide will be faced with similar problems, I hope to make my introduction to my peers at Harrogate and begin the discussion of solving our common problems in the future."

Michael Morris, CGCS - Golf Course Superintendent at Crystal Downs Country Club, a GCSAA member for 21 years:

"Gaining a new, different perspective on golf course maintenance from my British and European counterparts would be invaluable to me. The membership of Crystal Down Country Club and the club itself is truly connected to the international world of golf. Having first-hand, educational experience with golf course maintenance in the UK and Europe would benefit me in my role as superintendent at Crystal Downs."

David Phipps - Golf Course Superintendent at Stone Creek Golf Club, a GCSAA member for seven years:

"I know that the best way to learn new ideas is to share knowledge that works. Having the opportunity to meet and share information with UK and European superintendents would be a chance of a lifetime for me."

Kerry Satterwhite, CGCS - Director of Golf Course Maintenance City of Bloomington, a GCSAA member for 23 years:

"I have always been an advocate of trying to maintain our golf courses with fewer pesticides and preserving natural resources like water. I believe that in a decade water will become as an expensive commodity as oil is today. I would be very interested in learning firsthand about the management strategies that are implemented by our European peers."

Kenneth D. Williams, CGCS - Golf Course Superintendent at Stanford University Golf Course, a GCSAA member for 21 years:

"I'm what would be considered a low input superintendent, always striving to be as efficient as possible and let nature take its own course. Having the opportunity to meet my peers in BIGGA would no doubt help me in my efforts. It would be a great honour to share experiences with people who have a very different perspective."

Gregg Blew, CGCS - Golf Course Superintendent at Wellshire Golf Club, a GCSAA member for 22 years:

"Being able to see golf courses in England, will give me the opportunity to talk with superintendents there about their challenges with turf, insects, diseases, weeds, weather and of course, the golfers."

Thom Charters - Golf Course Superintendent at Bayview Golf and Country Club, a GCSAA member for 30 years:

"One of the most important factors in my success as a Golf Course Manager has been networking with my peers. Whether it has been at the local, national or international level, the friends I have made, the knowledge they have shared and knowing that I can pick up the phone to seek their input on any subject has made my job easier and more rewarding. I would welcome the opportunity to do so again in Great Britain."

THE R&A AT HARROGATE WEEK

Queen's Suite, Harrogate International Centre (Springfield House entrance),
Tuesday, January 23 from 9.30am until 10am

R&A



Hoyle hosted the 2006 Open

TURFGRASS CLIMATE MAP

The R&A Golf Course Committee is launching a worldwide climate map, to inform on grass species selection, which will be available on their best practice website, www.bestcourseforgolf. The interactive map shows where warm or cool season grasses are most appropriate and the Transition Zone where, often difficult choices have to be made with regard to the most sustainable turfgrass selection. The map is linked to text on the site that describes the turfgrass species in detail and this new addition to www.bestcourseforgolf.org will be of great value to course developers, architects and turf managers.

THE OPEN ROAD TO SUSTAINABILITY

The Open Championship at Hoyle last July was considered to be a great success, with the condition and set up of the golf course receiving plaudits from those playing and watching alike. A DVD, produced by The R&A Golf Course Committee, will be shown that highlights the sustainable nature of the course. With footage taken both from The Open itself and again nine weeks after Tiger Woods picked up the Claret Jug for the third time, this DVD considers the recovery achieved after hosting a major golf event.

SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Approximately 500 people are killed at work each year and many more are injured and suffer ill health. Many of these accidents occur because of a lack of knowledge or understanding of good practices and safe working procedures.

Golf courses can be hazardous places to work at and play on but if a sensible, common sense safety management system (SMS) is put in place risks can be kept to a minimum.

The AGCS and BIGGA have both been giving Health and Safety advice and guidance to their members for some time. However, the two organisations felt that there was a need for standardisation and they have cooperated to produce a 'best practice' SMS for golf clubs.

The AGCS/BIGGA Safety Management System (SMS) will be launched at 5pm on Wednesday, January 24 in the Queen's Suite. Please note that the BIGGA AGM will now take place at 6pm.

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TORO

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BMW PGA CHAMPIONSHIP

THE WENTWORTH CLUB, MAY 24-27 2007

BIGGA are to provide a Greenkeeping Support Team for the BMW PGA Championship at The Wentworth Club, May 24-27.

As a team member you will be involved in walking with a match and raking any bunkers found by the players, as well as aiding Chris Kennedy and his staff, should adverse weather occur.

You will be responsible for your own transport arrangements to the course, while there is no overnight accommodation provided.

Being a member of this team will not be detrimental to your chances of making The Open Championship team.

Applications should be sent to: Clive Osgood, South East Regional Administrator, 34 Howard Close, Walton-on-the-Hill, Tadworth, Surrey, KT20 7QF.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED FOR BIGGA SUPPORT TEAM

THE OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP, CARNOUSTIE, JULY 19-22

This is your opportunity to work at Carnoustie - probably the toughest test of all the Open venues - to assist Links Superintendent, John Philp, and his team with the preparation of the famous old course and be a part of the on-course team which accompanies each match ensuring bunkers are raked in a correct and professional manner.

It will be your responsibility to get to the team's base for the week - Abertay University in central Dundee, but after that transport to and from the golf course, accommodation and meals will be provided for the duration of the Championship. You will be expected to report for duty by 5pm on Wednesday, July 18, and be available until the close of play on Sunday - a meal and bed and breakfast will be supplied for the Sunday evening and Monday morning if required.

This opportunity is open to full BIGGA members only.

To apply complete and photocopy this application form and send to: Scott MacCallum, BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Alne, York, YO61 1UF.

For further information contact Scott on 01347 833800 or email scott@bigga.co.uk

Closing Date for applications for The Open Team February 1, 2007, and you will be notified later in the month.

Full Name: _____

Golf Club: _____ Position: _____ Age: _____

Please tick all boxes that apply below:

I have applied for/appeared on the team at:	Applied	Successful
Hoylake, 2006		
St Andrews, 2005		
Royal Troon, 2004		
Royal St Georges, 2003		
Muirfield, 2002		

	Yes	No
I have been a BIGGA member for more than three years		
I serve, or have served in the last three years, on a Section/Region Committee		
I am enrolled on BIGGA's CPD Scheme		
I have attended three of the last five Harrogate Weeks.		
I am/have been a member of the PGA Championship Support Team		
I am willing to be a mini bus driver (You must have held a full driving license for three years and be over 25 years of age.)		
I am an overseas Member		

Note: New rules have been introduced from this year in a bid to be as fair and transparent as possible. A place on the team is open to all full BIGGA members but priority will be given to the more active members. Also, subject to sufficient applicants and starting with a clean slate this year, no BIGGA member will be eligible to appear on more than three consecutive teams. A limited number of places will be made available to overseas members and younger members who haven't had the chance to yet say "Yes" to too many of the statements.

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Day 2:	15th May
Day 3:	29th May
Day 4:	12th June
Day 5:	26th June

South-East England

Day 1: Thursday	3rd May
Day 2:	17th May
Day 3:	31st May
Day 4:	14th June
Day 5:	28th June

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- Day 2 – How much water does each grass species need?
- Day 3 – Is your irrigation system applying water uniformly?
- Day 4 – Applying the correct amount
- Day 5 – How efficient is your system?

Certificate Module

- Day 1 – The role of each component of an irrigation system
- Day 2 – Diagnosing malfunctions and fault finding
- Day 3 – Pipe, electrical and component repairs
- Day 4 – Operation, maintenance and risk assessments
- Day 5 – Activation and winterisation of a system

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or email btliasecretary@btconnect.com
www.btlia.org.uk

Grass Selection for Drought Affected Sites

A precious resource - will water become more difficult to access in the future.

By Megan Hood.

At home and abroad, Britain is perceived as being a water-rich nation. It is not surprising then that the severe water restrictions of 2006 in South East England caught many people napping. While some parts of England and Wales have relatively reliable rainfall, we also have high population density. This means that there is relatively little water available per person, particularly in the South East of England, where rainfall is low in a high population area.

In 2006, two dry winters and a dry early summer diminished available water supplies in the South East of England and severe water restrictions were imposed. The consequences for some turf facilities were disastrous in both agronomic and financial terms. As we look toward the future, greenkeepers will need grasses on their courses that are sustainable under low irrigation regimes, without compromising on turf quality.

So, do you need to consider changing the grass species on your site?

MINIMISE ANNUAL MEADOWGRASS

Most greenkeepers are aware of the push toward providing sustainable golf courses in the UK. While much of the focus of sustainability has been on minimising fertiliser and chemical inputs, the judicious use of water is likely to become a major issue in the near future (in some areas it is already a major issue). Overseas experience shows that maintaining annual meadowgrass on golf courses with limited water supplies is extremely difficult. While annual meadowgrass can provide an excellent putting surface, golf clubs located within drought-prone areas with high annual meadowgrass populations on their course need to investigate a change to a more suitable grass over time.



Poa Annua green under severe drought stress

TURFGRASS SELECTION

Basically, turfgrass selection is about knowing what you want from your grass. Once you know what you want from your grass, you can utilise the widely available industry information to select the grass that is right for you. So, what do golf greenkeepers need from their grasses?

The plant selected must be able to adapt to:

- Climate
- Growing conditions (soils, drainage, wear etc)
- The intended use (green, tee, fairway, rough)

An inappropriate selection can result in an inferior playing surface or a surface that is more difficult and/or expensive to maintain. The persistence and quality of a turf and the severity of weeds, diseases, insects and other pest problems often reflects known characteristics of specific turfgrass types.

The following should be considered when selecting a turf species to use:

- How will the grass perform under local conditions such as climate and water availability?
- How suitable is the grass for a golf surface?

ADAPTABILITY OF TURF SPECIES TO REGIONAL FACTORS

The grass selected must be suitable for use with the region in which it is grown. From time to time we see warm-season grasses marketed that are completely unsuitable for the British market. It is essential that the grass selected can tolerate other stress factors related to the site. Factors to consider include:

- Resistance to pests and diseases common in the area
- Soil type (sand, soil, nutrient status)
- Soil conditions (e.g. degree of compaction, poor drainage etc)
- Wear (low level, high level)
- Water type (potable, non-potable, recycled)
- Water availability (unlimited, limited)
- Club expectations

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Grass Selection for Drought Affected Sites

The level of turf quality desired and the available maintenance inputs also strongly affect the grass selection decision. Density, texture and colour are the primary aesthetic (visual) considerations.

Carefully evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of a cultivar before deciding to use it.

Unlike many drought-affected areas in the world, warm season grasses are not a viable option in the South East of England. Realistically, options available to golf clubs in the United Kingdom are limited by climate to the following grasses:

- Fine fescues (*Festuca* spp.)
- Browntop bentgrass (*Agrostis capillaris* L.)
- Creeping bentgrass (*Agrostis stolonifera* L.)
- Perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne* L.)
- Kentucky bluegrass (*Poa pratensis* L.)
- Tall fescue (*Lolium arundinaceum*, formerly *Festuca arundinacea*)
- Annual meadowgrass (*Poa annua*)

HOW SUITABLE IS THE GRASS FOR A GOLF SURFACE?

This will vary depending on the type of area, i.e. green, surround, rough, fairway, tees. Factors to consider include:

- Leaf texture
- Mowing height tolerance
- Wear tolerance and recovery from wear
- Long-term growth habit (e.g. clumpy growth)

For example, bentgrasses are better suited for use on golf greens than perennial ryegrass due to their finer leaf and tolerance of low mowing. Perennial ryegrass on the other hand is better suited for use on pathways than fine fescues because of its tolerance to abrasive wear.

It is vital that the playing characteristics of the grass selected are suited to the particular golf surface you are dealing with. For example, tall fescue is being installed on dry areas of some golf courses. While great advances have been made in the breeding of tall fescues in recent years, questions need to be asked regarding their suitability for golf courses in terms of long-term playability and blending in to the surrounding landscape.

So considering the growth type of each grass and their adaptability to the UK climate, the following grasses are options for golf course use:

Golf Greens

- Fine fescues (*Festuca* spp.)
- Browntop bentgrass (*Agrostis capillaris* L.)
- Creeping bentgrass (*Agrostis stolonifera* L.)
- Annual meadowgrass (*Poa annua*)

Tees and Fairways

- Fine fescues (*Festuca* spp.)
- Browntop bentgrass (*Agrostis capillaris* L.)
- Perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne* L.)



Tall fescue on bunker faces can become clumpy and look unsightly

SELECTING GRASSES FOR DROUGHT-AFFECTED SITES

There is considerable variation in the water use requirements of different turfgrass species and cultivars of the same species. A number of characteristics are important including:

- Water use rate
- Drought resistance
- Drought survival
- Drought recovery

The combination of a turfgrass' water use rate and drought resistance mechanisms determine its ability to provide an acceptable turf quality under a specific soil moisture regime.

WATER USE RATE

This is the total amount of water used by a turfgrass surface or sward through evaporation and transpiration. It is usually expressed as ET (evapotranspiration) in millimetres per day (see table 1).

There is considerable variation in the relative drought tolerances of different grass species (see table 2) and there can also be a significant difference in the drought tolerance of different cultivars.

Relative ranking	ET rate (mm/day)	Turfgrass	
		Cool season	Warm season
Very low	6 - 7		Cynodon sp.
Medium	7 - 8.5	Hard fescue Chewing's fescue Red fescue	Buffalograss
High	8.5 - 10	Perennial ryegrass	
Very high	> 10	Tall fescue Bentgrasses Kentucky bluegrass Annual meadowgrass	

Table 1: Relative ranking of evapotranspiration rates (ET) for common turfgrasses (adapted from Beard & Kim, 1988).

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