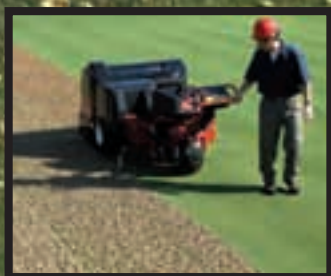


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Tel: 00 353 (0)45 526170
Email: torosales@lely.ie

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A guide to who's who at BIGGA

President
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BIGGA Board of Management
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Lee Strutt
Jeff Mills
Gavin Robson
Archie Dunn
Tony Smith
Elliott Small
Mark Dobell

Chief Executive: John Pemberton
Email: john@bigga.co.uk

Deputy Chief Executive
Education & Training Manager: Ken Richardson
Email: ken@bigga.co.uk

Communications Manager/Editor: Scott MacCallum
Email: scott@bigga.co.uk

Sales Manager: Rosie Hancher
Email: rosie@bigga.co.uk

Membership Department:
Vanessa Deppe
Email: vanessa@bigga.co.uk and

Contact us

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

Post: BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwick, Ave, York, YO41 1UF

Email: reception@bigga.co.uk

Website: www.bigga.org.uk

Tel: 01347 833800

Fax: 01347 833801



IN EXTREMIS PARALLE

Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

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

Editorial

Communications Manager/Editor: Scott MacCallum
Tel: 01347 833800 Fax: 01347 833801
Email: scott@bigga.co.uk

Assistant Editor: Melissa Tombs
Tel: 01347 833800 Fax: 01347 833801
Email: melissa@bigga.co.uk

Design

Stone Soup
Web: www.stone-soup.co.uk

Advertising

Sales Manager: Rosie Hancher
Tel: 01347 833800 Fax: 01347 833802
Email: rosie@bigga.co.uk

Advertising Sales Executive: Kirstin Smith
Tel: 01347 833800 Fax: 01347 833802
Email: kirstin@bigga.co.uk / sales@bigga.co.uk

Sales Assistant: Karen Russell
Tel: 01347 833800 Fax: 01347 833802
Email: karen@bigga.co.uk / sales@bigga.co.uk

Printing

Warren Midlands Plc, The Millings,
Manor Lane, Broom, Lincolnshire PE30 9PH
Tel: 01778 391000 Fax: 01778 394268

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Cover Picture: Castleknock Golf Club, near Dublin, taken by Victor Lucas

Welcome

We're all Human Beings After All



Do we like to see top golfers struggling or shooting the lights out?

That's the question being posed following this year's Masters as the Augusta National Club achieved the rare feat of protecting Old Mother Par over the four days of competitive golf.

Since then I've read people say it was a terrible Masters and that it got the Champion it deserved in the shape of Zack Johnson, in much the same way as they spoke of Paul Lawrie at Carnoustie eight years ago.

Funnily enough I found both the '99 Open and this year's Masters extremely exciting and good television. The dramatic conclusion at Carnoustie will be remembered for many a long year, and not only by native Scots and flamboyant Frenchmen, while the eventual winner of this year's Masters was not known until very late on the final afternoon.

Many players appeared on the verge of donning the green jacket only to find and give up the opportunity to some other soul who'd just holed a chip or sunk a putt involving 45 feet of break – It was riveting stuff.

But, getting back to the original point, it may be a case of schadenfreude, but isn't it refreshing to see the top guys making the sorts of errors we all manage at home – knocking short chips into the water, failing to pitch far enough up the green and seeing the ball trundle back down the slope to our feet and four putting from six feet. The degree of difficulty involved may be vastly different but the outcomes are very much the same.

We can all admire golf where the fairway is hit, the green is hit and, every third time, the putt is holed. It would add up to a 66 but it's hardly edge of your seat stuff. I once watched Bernhard Langer shoot 65 round Wentworth from inside the ropes. It's a backhanded compliment to Bernhard to say I was bored by the end. Far more exciting to see the old Seve style of golf miraculous recoveries are manufactured from cosses and car parks.

So let's revel in the Masters of 2007 and be thankful that once in a while the best golfers in the world are seen as not machines but human beings.

Look out for a new look Greenkeeper International dropping through your letter box next month. Over the last few months, together with designers, Stone Soup, we've looked at re-designing your magazine to bring it into the 21st century and we have come up with a new and contemporary design. I hope that when you see the June edition you will feel that it has been time well spent.

Scott MacCallum, Editor

NEW HEAD GREENKEEPER FOR OLD COURSE

It is a case of out with the new and in with the old for Gordon McKie, who has been appointed Head Greenkeeper at the world famous Old Course.

Gordon, who has been Head Greenkeeper at the New Course for two years, will take up one of the most prestigious roles in golf



next month. His immediate task will be to continue the preparations on the venerable links for the staging of the Women's British Open in August and further ahead the Curtis Cup next year and The Open Championship in 2010.

Gordon takes over from Euan Grant who is moving on to a similar role at a new development in the Mull of Kintyre after three years at the Old Course.

Having worked for St Andrews Links Trust for 12 years, Gordon said he was very proud to be taking over at the Old Course.

"It is a privilege to work on the most famous course in the world. The history and tradition surrounding the Old Course makes it unique and it is continually under the glare of the international media spotlight. I am very much looking forward to maintaining the exceptionally high standard of the course and ensuring it continues to set the benchmark for links courses around the world."

NEW CONSULTANT

Kelly Watson, Ecological & Environmental Consultant, is the most recent addition to STRI's expanding Ecology & Environment Team working from head office in Bingley.

Kelly has an Honours Degree in Environmental Science from the University of Ulster in Northern Ireland and has completed a period of doctoral study at the University of Nottingham. Her PhD studies had a practical focus and aimed to quantify the effects of aquatic vegetation on river flooding, water velocity and sediment storage. On the golf course, this work has particular significance to sustainable urban drainage systems, reed bed filtration systems and the recycling of waste water.



NEW TERRITORY

Golf & Turf Equipment Ltd, the Wokingham-based Charterhouse Turf Machinery dealership for Berkshire, has now added the county of Surrey to its territory. The business is part of the Burdens Group of agricultural and groundcare companies serving professional

and domestic markets. "The timing is ideal for us as we recently expanded our team with the appointment of new Sales Representative Steve Coone," says Golf & Turf Managing Director Tom Scanlon.

COMPACT TRACTOR PROVES IDEAL FOR TRAINING COURSES

Growing demand for grounds care and amenity equipment training courses has resulted in a rapid expansion of the machinery fleet used by Littlefield Manor Training Services Limited.

Owned and managed by former Agricultural Training Board instructor, John Tangye, Littlefield Manor Training Services was established in the 1990s as a provider of general agricultural and horticultural short training courses.

Although farm tractors, implements and hand-held equipment remain very much in evidence at the company's headquarters, they have been joined in the past year by a 32hp Massey Ferguson compact tractor and a number of matching attachments including a 400-litre mounted sprayer.

The result has enabled Littlefield Manor to extend its range of National Proficiency Tests Council (NPTC) sprayer courses to include staff employed by golf courses, local authorities, landscape contractors, plant nurseries and public and private gardens, among others. "We are training close to 400 people a year and virtually all of our courses lead to trainees being assessed for an NPTC certificate of competence," explained John who, as the



Surrey agent for the NPTC, is responsible for also organising independent assessments throughout the county. "Having a range of relevant, up-to-date equipment is a key factor in the success and popularity of our courses and we own the majority of the kit that is used for training purposes."

John Tangye (wearing red overalls) of Littlefield Manor Training Services, guides horticultural students through basic tractor operation and maintenance procedures with the help of his MF1531 compact tractor.

SURVEY REVEALS HIGH LEATHERJACKET NUMBERS

An autumn 2006 survey has revealed that leatherjacket numbers are again high and that greenkeepers and groundsmen, particularly in the south of the country, should assess the risk of turf damage by leatherjacket activity and take action.

Although mean leatherjacket numbers are down on 2005 levels at 97.1 per m², they are still significantly higher than the long term mean of 69.7 per m² for all survey sites in the period 1992 – 2006. Regionally, mean numbers of leatherjackets have fallen in the Midlands and north but in the southern region they are 28% higher than in 2005 and the highest since 2001.

Adequate soil moisture in the autumn is critical for the survival of crane fly eggs and newly hatched leatherjacket larvae. All counties experienced heavier than average rainfall in late August, and apart from a warm dry week ending 12 September 2006, the weather in autumn 2006 has been conducive to egg and young leatherjacket larvae survival.

"We have been routinely monitoring leatherjacket numbers, via an independent organisation, since 1992," explains Andy Cawley, Sales and Marketing Manager, Specialty Products of Dow AgroSciences.

"Monitoring helps greenkeepers and groundsmen plan control measures against leatherjacket damage. It certainly helped alert them in 2006 when 2005 survey figures revealed exceptionally high numbers of leatherjackets in the soil. In the south numbers are well up on last year and therefore we would recommend greenkeepers take action now and perform a risk assessment of the damage potential by leatherjackets to their turf roots."



TGA TURF SHOW SET TO BE BIGGER THAN EVER

The TGA Turf Show is to be hosted by Andy Fraser at County Turf on Wednesday, June 27 at Cleatham Hall Farm, near Kirton Lindsey in North Lincolnshire, and will include a wide range of activities, events and demonstrations for everyone involved in the growing, buying, selling, laying and after-care of turf for amenity, sports and landscaping.

Entry to the show is free and registering is easy. Simply log on to: www.pitchcare.com and click on the 'TGA Turf Show' banner to the side of the homepage. By registering online, entry to the show is quicker and the TGA can also keep you up to date with all the latest news and information.

For more information about the turf show and the TGA, visit: www.turfshow2007.co.uk To enquire about exhibiting or to book tickets for the dinner at Forest Pines, please contact the TGA office on: 01507 607722.



Andy Fraser of County Turf will host the 2007 TGA Turf Show.

WWW.GOLFBLOGGER.CO.UK

A new blogg: www.golfblogger.co.uk has been created to provide golfers of all standards with an up to date global golf result service and the latest golfing news.

This site also provides Reviews of golf courses, equipment, clothing, accommodation and other golf-related material.

In addition, there is a list of upcoming events, golf tips, interesting golf facts, and the latest golf betting.

Blogg navigators do not have to register and are invited to post comments on golf-related subjects of their choice.

For further details, please click on: www.golfblogger.co.uk to view this blogg.

NEW GROUNDCARE SALES MANAGER



New Holland has appointed Henry Bredin as Groundcare Sales Manager for the UK and Ireland. His role includes the development and management of the groundcare dealer network throughout this region, and he will also contribute to the development of New Holland's groundcare business throughout Europe.

Henry, 28, brings a wealth of experience to the position. He previously spent four years working for John Deere, joining straight from university as a graduate trainee. He made rapid progress to become a Sales Instructor and then an Aftersales Area Manager.

Most recently, for two years before joining New Holland, he worked for himself, founding and managing his own landscaping business, which employed two other people. Henry felt the opportunity to join New Holland was too good to miss and sold his company to a fellow landscape firm.

AWARDED WATERWISE MARQUE

Barenbrug has received a significant accolade for its unique Rhizomatous Tall Fescue (RTF). The grass seed variety is the first to gain the prestigious Waterwise Marque.

It was one of 15 products to be awarded the Waterwise Marque at a special awards ceremony at Oxford University. The Waterwise Marque is the first scheme in the UK to highlight water efficient products.

The Marque is awarded annually to products which reduce water wastage or raise the awareness of water efficiency. RTF was included in the list of winning products, which included dishwashers, an aerated showerhead, water storing gels for the garden, a waterless urinal, a new dual flush toilet and a waterless carwash. Joanna Yarrow, Director of Beyond Green, presented the awards.

INDUSTRY ANNOUNCEMENT

Turf-Seed Europe Limited is pleased to announce their collaboration with Andreas Herrmann, a well known certified Golf Course Superintendent.

Andreas will provide technical assistance to Turf-Seed's national distributors in central Europe and Scandinavia regions.

Andreas can be reached at: herrmann@golfgrasses.com



CLIMATE CHANGE SEMINAR

Course Managers, Head Greenkeepers, Contractors and Grounds Managers are invited to hear a panel of eminent speakers discuss the impact of climate change on the turfgrass industry.

The one-day seminar entitled Climate of Change in Turf Culture, will be held at the Celtic Manor resort on Wednesday, July 11.

Hosted by British Seed Houses it features a diverse programme of presentations from guest speakers Arwyn Harris from the Met Office, Professor Al Turgeon from Penn State University, Ed Clarke of Absorbent Technology Inc, European Agronomist Dr Michael Schlosser and Jim McKenzie, Director of Golf & Estates at the Celtic Manor Resort.

The cost is £50+VAT, with all proceeds going towards funding a climate change-related research project by a UK-based PhD student, selected by British Seed Houses. Refreshments and lunch are included. To book contact Julie Brankston on: 01522 868714 or email: julie.brankston@bshlincoln.co.uk

PERFECT PITCH

Sportsturf specialist, White Horse Contractors, has purchased three JCB Groundhog utility vehicles for work on its high profile projects including the development of the Welsh Football Association's training facility at Hensol.

The three new JCB models will be put straight to work on the development of Premiership quality training pitches on behalf of the Welsh FA. The pitches incorporate intensive irrigation and drainage systems and the Groundhogs' primary role at the Hensol facility will be to cross the site during the construction phase - quickly and efficiently - without disturbing the gravel layers which are installed to fine tolerances.

On completion of the Welsh FA project, the Groundhog models will be used for a range of tasks including the transportation of surveying teams and equipment, providing site mobility for drainage and irrigation crews, the movement of light or low volume materials over delicate surfaces and to give access to restricted sites.

SCOTTISH NATIONAL TOURNAMENT

The 2007 Scottish National Tournament will be held at Berwick upon Tweed (Goswick) Golf Club on Thursday, June 21 by kind permission of the Captain and Committee. The cost of the event will be £20, which includes coffee/tea, filled roll, evening meal and prizes. (Apprentice fee will be £12.) Entry forms will be available at all Section Spring Outings and from the Regional Administrator.

All entries with remittance to: Regional Administrator, Peter J Boyd, 10 Meadowburn Avenue, Newton Mearns, Glasgow G77 6TA by June 12. Please make cheques payable to: BIGGA Scottish Region. The draw will be placed on the BIGGA website.

RETIREMENT

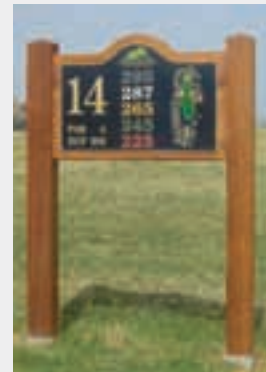
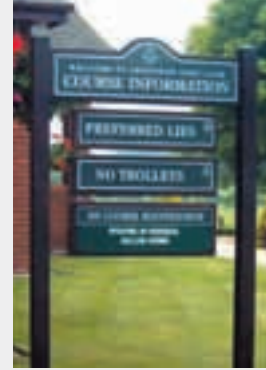
The end of March saw the first ever retirement at BIGGA HQ. Staff said a fond farewell to Tony Cocker, who has been an Accountant at our headquarters in York, for the past 10 years.

"Tony is the first headquarters-based member of staff to retire and we all wish him a long and fulfilling time. He has been an extremely valuable member of staff for the last 10 years and I will miss him both as a colleague and a friend," said John Pemberton, BIGGA Chief Executive.

Happy Retirement Tony!



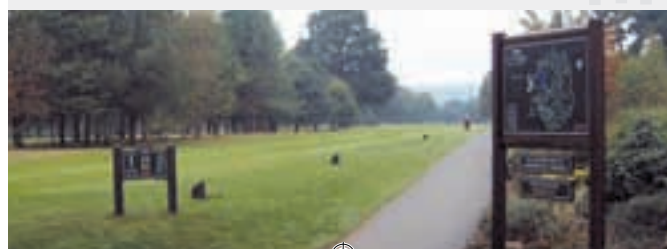
BIGGA Chief Executive, John Pemberton, thanks Tony Cocker, (left) for his hard work over the past 10 years.



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QUALITY GOLF COURSE SIGNAGE

WARWICKSHIRE FIRM WINS DEALER OF THE YEAR

Warwickshire company, Parks and Grounds Machinery, has been named Turfmech's dealer of the year for 2006.

The award, which is now in its ninth year, was presented in recognition of the outstanding sales results achieved by the firm during 2006 and the consistently high level of service provided to owners and users of Turfmech equipment. An engraved plaque marking these achievements was presented to Parks and Grounds Machinery's management and sales staff at a special ceremony arranged by Turfmech at the company's premises in Waterloo Industrial Estate, Bidford on Avon.

Presenting the award, Turfmech's Area Sales Manager, Jon Proffitt, said that Parks and Grounds Machinery had achieved consistently good results since being appointed a Turfmech dealer in 2001. However, 2006 had proved an exceptional year for the business, culminating in the firm securing Turfmech's coveted Dealer of the Year award.



Turfmech's Area Sales Manager, Jon Proffitt (centre), presents the Turfmech Dealer of the Year award for 2006 to David Tullett, Co-Director of Parks and Grounds Machinery. Also pictured are Jon Lewis, Will Davies and Andy Perkins of Parks and Grounds Machinery and Dave Rogers and Ian Pogson of Turfmech.

NEW APPOINTMENT

James Gilbert has been appointed Commercial Manager at Ransomes Jacobsen.

In this new role, he will be responsible for all the commercial aspects of the Ransomes Jacobsen business including the dealer development programme, market and segmentation analysis, pricing and contracts. He will also assist the field sales teams with commercial issues applicable to the dealer and distributor network. He will report directly to Alan Prickett, Sales Director.



James is new to the turf care industry having spent the majority of his career working in the financial services industry in the field of management information and business/performance analysis.

SCOTTISH NATIONAL CONFERENCE

BIGGA's Scottish Region's Conference was once again held at the Business Learning Centre, Dunfermline on Tuesday, March 6 where we welcomed over 160 delegates. In charge of proceedings was the Scottish Chairman, Stuart Greenwood, Course Manager at North Berwick West Links, who introduced the speakers. Our first speaker was Ian Butcher, International Golf Development Manager at Elmwood College in Cupar. Following Ian we had Graeme Francis, from Lakes and Greens Ltd, and to round off our morning session Gordon Irvine, Master Greenkeeper Consultant.

After lunch and prior to the afternoon's session, the Chairman had the very pleasant task of presenting the Harry Diamond Quach to the Student of the Year. This year it went to Kenneth Gilroy, Shiskine Golf Club on the Island of Arran.

Starting off the afternoon session was Dr Jim Hunter, Agronomist from Florida, USA followed by Brian Robinson, Senior Agronomist from Rigby Taylor. To round off the afternoon Kerran Daly, Past Chairman of BIGGA and Course Manager at The Gog Magog Golf Club, finished the day in his own inimitable style with his interpretation of a Dylan classic but with a Fife theme.

The Board of the Scottish Region would like to thank the delegates who attended the

Conference once again in such numbers and look forward to seeing you all at the same venue on Tuesday, March 4, 2008.

Our thanks to the Patrons of the Region for their continued support to the Association in Scotland, and to the Education Department at Headquarters. Thanks must also go to the members of the Central Section who assisted me on the day.

Peter J. Boyd
Regional Administrator

THE 2007 NEIL THOMAS MEMORIAL GOLF DAY

Companies who have entered teams and sponsored a hole in the 2007 Neil Thomas Memorial Golf Day include: Rigby Taylor; Heath Lambert; Kubota; Ransomes Jacobsen; Hayter; Colourstream; Warners; Yorkshire Aggregates; Hunter Grinders; New Holland; the Tower Group; John Deere and Destination Harrogate, while Q Hotels, owners of Aldwark Manor have offered four x two balls at any of Q Hotels' golf clubs as a main prize and two nights B&B at Forest Pines GC, near Scunthorpe, which will be offered as a raffle prize.

The money raised will be going to this year's designated charity the Rainbow Trust, for children with life threatening or terminal illness rainbowtrust.org.uk

GEAR CHANGE INTO GREENKEEPING

After two decades in the high pressure world of motor sports, welder and fabricator David Jones has changed gear to a career in greenkeeping.

And 42-year-old David is continuing to use his engineering skills while learning new ones in his dream job at Tadmarton Heath Golf Club near Oxford. "I had wanted to be a greenkeeper for quite some time but had to wait until the time was right in my life," said David, who spent 20 years working with touring car and formula one teams.



"It was a very volatile industry which revolved around sponsorship and other people's money and I had been made redundant several times. I also had a seven year old daughter and I wanted to spend more time with her and not work weekends and all the hours God sends." However, David is fully aware that greenkeeping is far from a 9-5 job!

Having made the decision to change careers – and with the support of his wife Jayne, an NHS ward manager – David's next steps were to try and get a job. "This was quite difficult as my CV was very motor orientated but then someone suggested that I go to college and get some qualifications," he said.

David went to Moreton Morrell College where he gained the pesticide application PA1 and PA6 certificates. "Eventually I was offered a job at Brailes golf course in June last year," he said.

"The club registered me with the Warwickshire College on the NVQ Level 2 sports turf qualification and I was then contacted by Tadmarton Golf Club asking me if I was still interested in working there."

As that had been somewhere David wanted to work initially, he jumped at the chance. "It is a private golf club and is very supportive of staff training and health and safety," said David. "It is over 80 years old so has some history and is also closer to home for me."

Tadmarton encouraged David to carry on working towards his NVQ and the college recognised his commitment and awarded him the Derek Sharman trophy in the process. "To get this trophy at 42 years of age was quite an achievement," he said.

Now happily working at Tadmarton, David said: "I love the job – it's absolutely fantastic. I like working outside, the hours are good and I enjoy a much better quality of life."

A normal working day is from 7am until 3pm and David is able to pick up his daughter Emma from school every day. "A lot of fathers aren't able to do that so I feel very lucky," he said. "And I don't mind getting up early so the hours suit me really well."

"Being a greenkeeper means I can work outside and also use my engineering skills. Really, I am "engineering" the right grasses to grow and I am involved in all aspects of the maintenance including of course, the machinery!

"I also use my welding and fabrication experience in repairing machinery – I am using all my old skills while continuing to learn new ones. " Hoping to register with the college on the NVQ Level 3 sports turf, David found support from the college combined with work experience an interesting and a very flexible way to learn.

"Andy Turnbull, the turf tutor at the Warwickshire College, was very helpful – the avenues are all there if you want to learn," he said. "Doing a job while learning at the same time is great and I am very lucky to have the support to do this."

Working alongside and learning from colleagues is a key way of gaining new skills, according to David's course manager Brian Owen. "David is very good and his enthusiasm is excellent," said Brian, who has been in the industry for 32 years.

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IMPORTING OR EXPORTING SKILLS?

In his latest article David Golding, the GTC's Education Director, looks at the opportunities to import and export greenkeeping skills.

Having just returned from a cross-landscaping Industry group meeting, it is clear that several land base sectors in Britain, have already recruited many workers from Europe, with an increasing number coming from Eastern Europe.

I know that several golf clubs have also recruited non-British workers and we can see this trend continuing as the European Union grows and travel between countries becomes more accessible. Skilled labour is of course any employers' priority and now we have established formal work-based training as the best way to develop and assess skills, there should be no barriers to recruitment, apart from maybe language.

Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers, especially those qualified assessors, will be able to train up all operators using the national standards as the guidance to competence. Awarding Bodies such as the National Proficiency Test Council (NPTC) and Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), are looking to develop assessment strategies for migrant workers in areas such as health and safety and the safe use of pesticides.

The GTC, as previously reported, has been involved in meetings to discuss the merits of establishing a European Greenkeeping Education Unit and this initiative transpired following a greenkeeping questionnaire which had been circulated to all the Federation Members of the European Golf Association (EGA).

One of the R&A's priorities is to help develop the sport in countries where golf is only just starting to grow and as many of the returned questionnaires sought help in greenkeeper education and training, a working group was established.

BIGGA and FEGGA, together with the GTC and college representatives from European countries, have met and proposed three sets of skills, which, following consultation, will become the foundation for the Education Unit to develop a Pan-European Certification Scheme. The development of Pan-European standards will undoubtedly be useful for the greenkeeping sector and should encourage the movement of skilled workers in our specialist sector.

In many golf developing countries owners and developers are still designing courses, building them and then as the handover day looms somebody then thinks who shall we employ to maintain the course!

If only more Architects encouraged the obvious and that is to ensure developers recruit a Course Manager before the earthmovers enter the site, future problems would be reduced greatly. The grow-in and aftercare programmes are so important to the long-term success

of the golf course, and therefore the recruitment of a qualified Course Manager is very important.

Britain has exported some great talent over the years and the experiences of these pioneers is often shared through their attendance at the BIGGA Harrogate Week, articles in this magazine or more recently on the Bulletin Board on the BIGGA website.

I am sure there will be more and more opportunities for qualified greenkeepers to ply their trade abroad as the game continues to grow across the world but we must also encourage local skills to develop in these countries.

Several British colleges are playing a major role to help establish greenkeeper education programmes in other countries and we can all learn from each other as I found out at the first meeting of the Pan - European working group meeting!

The language can be a massive obstacle and that is why it is so important, if you are looking to work abroad, you try to learn at least some of the language before heading off. Consideration for how the family might settle in should also be high on the agenda with the education of the family a priority.

I am sure many of the British qualified greenkeepers working abroad would endorse this statement and would be willing to discuss their experiences with anybody considering a move abroad.

Just thinking that the grass will be greener in another country needs careful consideration and without sounding flippant, grass comes in a variety of species and so do people!

I know of many British greenkeepers who have nothing but good to say about their life on foreign soil but there are also some horror stories.

Be prepared as the days of importing and exporting skills are clearly with us.

It is increasingly important that employers in Britain continue to invest in their staff development and the most successful golf clubs in terms of business coincidentally have a competent Course Manager at the helm.

Equally if greenkeepers do not keep themselves updated on all issues relating to MANAGING the golf course – someone else will!

David may be contacted by email at: david@the-gtc.co.uk or tel: 01347 838640

