

## MEMORIAL GARDEN RECOGNISES LEGACY OF HARRY FERGUSON

The life, work and inventive genius of tractor pioneer, Harry Ferguson, have been officially recognised in the creation of a memorial garden less than 50 metres from the farmhouse in which he was born and grew up in County Down, Northern Ireland.

Formally opened by his grand-daughter, Sally Fleming, the memorial garden has as its centrepiece a striking life-sized bronze sculpture of Harry Ferguson leaning on a farm gate with, appropriately, spanner in hand.

The opening of the garden marked the culmination of almost 10 years planning and fund-raising by the Harry Ferguson Celebration Committee, a group of Ferguson and Massey Ferguson tractor enthusiasts who wanted to establish a fitting memorial to the inventor of the hydraulic three-point linkage which first saw light in 1933 on the Ferguson Black tractor, now housed in London's Science Museum.



## COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABLE GOLF RE-AFFIRMED

Ransomes Jacobsen has re-affirmed its long-standing commitment to sustainability in golf through its appointment as the official and exclusive partner of the Golf Environment Organisation's (GEO) latest project.

The company will partner in the production of international Sustainability Guidelines for New Golf Development.

David Withers, Managing Director at Ransomes Jacobsen said: "We are an environmentally aware organisation and market our products using the strap line 'Driving Environmental Performance', but this is much more than a marketing slogan. We are totally committed to the ethos of sustainable golf and have clearly demonstrated our support as sponsors of BIGGA's Golf Environment Award and the STRI's Sustainable Golf Course Management DVD."

"We are also the initiators of an industry-first programme for the environmental disposal and recycling of redundant mowers and turf maintenance equipment, known as ELMO. We are delighted to accept GEO's proposal to partner this project and to see the body go from strength to strength."

With the funding and support now in place, this high profile project will run for two years and deliver strategic and practical guidelines for the planning, design and construction of golf courses, which will be of value to: Investors, Developers, Designers, Course owners, Governments and Environmental organisations.

## ALL IN THE NAME OF CHARITY

A special gold-painted Bobcat S175 skid-steer loader will be auctioned later this year to Bobcat dealers in Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) to raise funds for the 'Schools for Africa' campaign by UNICEF. The auction of the unique Bobcat loader is the latest initiative in the 3-year collaboration between Bobcat EMEA and UNICEF Belgium.

A second Bobcat S175 "Heart of Gold" loader will be put on permanent display at the reception area of the Bobcat plant at Dobris in the Czech Republic.

To emphasise the link with the children being helped by UNICEF, the auction of the golden loader is timed to close the day before St Nicholas' Day. The dealer winning the auction will be invited to come to the Bobcat EMEA headquarters in Brussels a week later, on Saturday, December 13 2008, at the annual company Christmas party to hand over a cheque for the winning bid to a representative of UNICEF Belgium.

Information about 'Schools for Africa' is available at [www.schoolsforafrica.com](http://www.schoolsforafrica.com)

## THE NEW INDIA REVEALED!

The championship course at the Karnataka Golf Association in Bangalore will be ready for play this month, after a two-year renovation project.

The original Peter Thomson course has been redesigned by Howard Swan and his Swan Golf Designs team and rebuilt completely to the most modern of standards and performance expectations.

The 7100 yard par 72 layout will be unveiled with new greens, tees, bunkering, and irrigation system together with new grassing throughout.

Much attention has been given to the design of the fairways, raising them above the flood plain, and enlarging the course's water features so that, even in the worst of the Southern Indian monsoons, the course recovers quickly for play.

"We are delighted that the objective in raising the bar at KGA has been achieved and that the first nine holes of the course, opened after completion of the first stage of the renovation, are proving playable even in the most inclement of weather.

We look forward to seeing the full 18 holes opening soon," said Howard.

# Membership



## AN UPDATE FROM BIGGA'S MEMBERSHIP DEPARTMENT

### BIGGA Members save money...

...at Harrogate Week, which is fast approaching, the dates for your diary are Sunday, January 18 – Thursday, January 22, 2009.

With last month's magazine you will have received 'The Definitive Guide to Harrogate Week 2009', which, hopefully, you have had the chance to read. Inside you will find a choice of workshops and seminars covering a huge area of topics. You will probably find some that are "interesting but not for me", while others will have triggered that "ah ha" moment, whatever your reaction there is certainly something of interest for everybody. Don't leave it until the last minute, book today.

Remember, as a member of BIGGA you are entitled to a 50% discount when booking a one-day workshop and 55% discount when booking a half-day workshop and the seminars are free. Visit [www.harrogateweek.org.uk](http://www.harrogateweek.org.uk) for more information.

### BIGGA Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Will be held during Harrogate Week on Wednesday, January 21, 2009 at 5.15pm in the Queen's Suite, Harrogate International Centre. The AGM is open to all members, however, only full Greenkeeper Members are entitled to vote. Remember to bring your current membership card to gain entry. Please make every effort to attend; your support is greatly appreciated.

### Winners of the September Prize Draw

We are pleased to announce that David Anderson, a new BIGGA Member in the West Scottish Section, has won the ipod and Michael Grant at Swinley Forest Golf Club, is the winner of the Nokia 6233, well done to you both.

### This month BIGGA welcomes the following new members...

Mark Humphrey, East of England  
Paul Martins, Mid Anglia

#### Scottish Region

David Anderson, West  
Sam Dixon, North  
Ross Hood, Central  
John Kelly, East  
Craig MacDonald, West  
George Oliver, East  
Steven Thomas, East

#### South East Region

Samuel Brealy, Kent  
Christian Brown, London  
Sean Bullock, Surrey  
Iain Burrowes, London  
Rob Cox, Essex  
Sean Eady, Essex  
Sean Eckett, London  
Stephen Ellis, Kent  
Ben Harwood, Sussex  
Thomas Kenny, Surrey  
Michael Mann, Surrey  
Timothy Smith, Kent  
Tom Snewin, Surrey  
Neil Stopps, Essex  
Brian Sullivan, London  
Lewis Thatcher, Surrey

#### Northern Region

Ian Austick, North East  
Duncan Barker, North East  
David Blank, North West  
Ian Clough, North East  
Richard Coulson, North East  
Matthew Harness, North East  
Adam Harrison, North West  
Jack Hetherington, North East  
Allan Martin, North West  
Karl Parry, North Wales

#### S West/S Wales Region

Trevor Eddolls, South West  
Carl Hicks, South Wales  
Mike Jupp, South Coast  
Bradley Milburn-Anderson, South West

#### Midland Region

David Bangham, Midland  
Gary Buckle, Mid Anglia  
Paul Buckle, East of England  
Nathan Corden, East Midland  
Freddie De'Ath, Mid Anglia  
Michael Grant, Berks/Bucks & Oxon  
Martin Green, Mid Anglia  
Stuart Horwood, Berks/Bucks & Oxon

#### International

Lukas Boettcher, Germany  
Gary Collins, Republic of Ireland  
Anders Linnet, Germany  
Carsten Marker, France  
Lars Stenberg, Sweden

## CONTACT US

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Other useful telephone numbers  
(for greenkeeper members only)

**Personal Accident Helpline**  
02075 603013  
**Greenkeepers Legal Assistance**  
0800 177 7891

## BIGGA's Regional Administrators



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# Learning & Development

## Key Sponsorship:

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The funding provided by Gold and Silver Key Sponsors is used to produce training and career aids, DVDs, CD Roms, field guides and provide refunds for training fees and subsidised learning and development courses. The funding also helps support seminars, workshops, courses, the lending library, careers advice, posters and manuals.

Many young greenkeepers owe their career progression to the assistance they've had from the Learning and Development Fund. An equal number of established greenkeepers have also been able to access the fund to continue their professional development thanks to the donations of the Gold and Silver Key Sponsors.

### THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING KEY SPONSORS



#### GOLDEN KEY



#### Golden Key Individual Members

JH Greasley; WJ Rogers; Andy Campbell MG, CGCS; Iain A Macleod; Tom Smith; Frank Newberry; Christopher Lomas MG, Lee Strutt MG.



#### SILVER KEY



#### Silver Key Individual Members

Ade Archer; Steven Tierney; Paul Jenkins; Iain Barr; Richard McGlynn; Steve Dixon; Sam Langrick.

### Sami Collins, Head of Learning & Development, provides a departmental update...

The last month has seen the Definitive Guide to Harrogate Week hit the streets, the final of the Toro Student of the Year Award and the results of the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition, all in all a busy month for us here in the Learning and Development Department. By the time you read this Rachael and I will have taken a deep breath and have hurtled headlong into the planning and preparation for Continue to Learn at Harrogate Week 2009.

Without all the political voting experienced at the Eurovision Song Contest, I'll get down to the results of the 2008 competitions:

#### Toro Student of the Year 2008

Having seen the front cover of this magazine you've probably guessed that the winner of the Award and the Scholarship to the University of Massachusetts, is Mathew Wormald from Luffenham Heath Golf Club, representing Brooksby College. Congratulations go to Mathew and to his course tutor Richard Barker. Richard will be joining the BIGGA group attending the Golf Industry Show in New Orleans in February 2009.

The runners-up who will be attending the Continue to Learn Education Programme at Harrogate Week 2009 are James Canham, from Gstaad Golf Club, representing Myerscough College and Paul Carella, from Bothwell Castle Golf Club, representing GOSTA Training Ltd.

Congratulations go to all the finalists who presented themselves in a truly professional manner.

#### BIGGA Golf Environment Competition 2008



The judges of the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition completed their deliberations and the results are:

- National Winner - Caldy Golf Club
- Regional Winners:
  - Scotland - Loch Lomond Golf Club
  - Northern - Fairhaven Golf Club
  - Midlands - The Enville Golf Club
  - South West & South Wales - Royal St David's Golf Club



- South East - The Beaconsfield Golf Club
- Best New Entry - Silloth on Solway Golf Club
- Special Initiative - Bearwood Lakes Golf Club

Caldy Golf Club will be the recipient of a cheque for £2000, the Scotts Weather Station, a plaque for their clubhouse and for a year, the Trophy.

The Best New Entry, Special Initiative and Regional Winners will all be awarded a cheque for £500 and a plaque.

The presentation of the prizes will take place on Tuesday, January 20, 2009 at 10am as part of the Opening Session and Awards Ceremony at Harrogate International Centre.

The following golf clubs have been Highly Commended and will be sent a certificate:

- Hankley Common Golf Club
- Minchinhampton Golf Club
- The Bedfordshire Golf Club

Congratulations go to all the winners.

#### Learning and Development Updates

##### Higher Education Scholarships



The most recent scholarship has been awarded to James Lindsay - Foundation Degree in Sports Turf

##### Library Books

We have added one new book to the library in the last month:

The Computer Book - Getting Things Done on Your PC. Windows Vista Edition.

##### Free Books

As mentioned in my article in September, we have some duplicate library books available to members, free of charge except for postage and packing. The list of books, with the p&p cost can be found at [www.bigga.org.uk/education/free-books/](http://www.bigga.org.uk/education/free-books/).

#### Don't forget Harrogate Week!



For Workshop availability and information on the Continue to Learn Education Programme contact Rachael Duffy on: 01347 833800 ext: 522.

## IMPROVING A NATIVE PRAIRIE GRASS FOR TURF

By Eric Watkins

In the United States, increased attention has been focused on the environmental effects of turfgrass areas such as golf courses and home lawns. In Minnesota, the most well-known of these efforts is the ban on phosphorus fertilisers for turf areas in the Twin Cities metro area (Horgan et al., 2003). This legislation has since been extended to include all 82 counties of the state. Plant breeders need to develop new options for golf course managers and greenkeepers so that further restrictions of commonly-used turfgrass inputs do not negatively affect the golf industry in the US.

Grass species that are native to North America should be better able to cope with our environment and could lead to overall reductions in inputs such as fertilisers, pesticides, and water. Prairie junegrass (*Koeleria macrantha*), a bunch-type grass native to the Great Plains of the United States, has shown the potential to be successfully used as a turfgrass in lower-input environments (Mintenko et al., 2002). The species is widely distributed throughout much of the western United States (Hitchcock, 1950) and it can also be found throughout much of Europe and Asia (Dixon, 2000). Based on data that has been collected in recent years, this species appears to perform well in Minnesota under low-input conditions (no irrigation, limited nitrogen application, and no fungicide or insecticide applications).

Prairie junegrass has several attributes that would make it a useful low-input turfgrass including: tolerance of droughty and alkaline soils, tolerance of sandy areas, survival of low and high temperature extremes, and reduced growth rates (Dixon, 2000). 'Barkoel', released by Barenbrug Holland, was the first cultivar of this species specifically developed for use as a turfgrass; however, this cultivar was developed with ecotypes from Europe (Alderson and Sharp, 1994). We have initiated a prairie junegrass breeding programme with the ultimate goal being the development of a cultivar using germplasm native to North America that can be used for golf course roughs, parks, home lawns, low-input athletic fields and roadsides.



Fig 1

### Challenges

It is clear that this grass has several traits that make it a potentially great low-input turfgrass. Unfortunately, there are several challenges that will need to be overcome before our goal of a useful turf cultivar can be accomplished. The primary challenge that we are encountering with native germplasm is very low mowing quality due to tough vascular tissue that is found in the prairie junegrass leaf. This trait may have some advantages (wear and traffic tolerance, summer stress tolerance, etc.); however, the high amount of leaf shredding that can be seen after a mowing would be unacceptable to turfgrass managers (See Fig. 1).

Turfgrass establishment may also become a major issue in this species. The slow vertical growth rate of prairie junegrass, which can greatly reduce mowing frequency, makes it an attractive option for low-input environments. While this trait is advantageous in an already-established turf, slow growth rate during establishment can lead to poor turf density and increased weed invasion.

This species can survive in very dry conditions; however, it may do so by going dormant. Turfgrass managers would prefer a grass that cannot only survive dry conditions, but also stay green during stress. We are screening our breeding material for drought tolerance in order to find plants that are able to maintain green color throughout periods of stress.

Although we have not yet identified any diseases that are a major problem with this species, rust and leaf spot do appear under certain conditions in our turf plots (See Fig. 2). We are continuously selecting for disease resistance in our breeding populations.

Although turfgrass quality is the primary breeding goal of our programme, in order to be used by consumers, a turfgrass cultivar must be able to produce sufficient quantities of seed. Yields from our nurseries in 2007 and 2008 indicate that seed production in Minnesota should be possible; however, it is unknown if it can produce economically adequate amounts of seed that can be efficiently harvested and cleaned.

## Germplasm

The major limitation when developing a breeding programme for a 'new' species is the availability of germplasm from which a useful cultivar can be developed. During the past several years, we have collected throughout the north central United States. To this point, we have made collections in North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota (See Fig 3), Nebraska, and Colorado.

When collecting, we are primarily focused on plants that exhibit good colour and high amounts of seed production even under dry, hot conditions. Seeds are collected from plants in native stands and then planted in the greenhouse. Eventually, seedlings are transferred to a breeding nursery where they are allowed to cross once they have gone through one winter in the field (See Fig. 4). The best plants are then allowed to cross and harvested seed is then evaluated for important traits.



Fig 2



Fig 3

## Evaluation

We have used material from our collections along with germplasm from government collections to establish multiple research trials that will address the aforementioned breeding challenges. Currently, we are collecting data on mowed spaced plants in order to determine if there are individual genotypes and lines in our collection that possess unique traits that can be utilised in the breeding programme. Characteristics that we are evaluating include leaf density, colour, mowing quality, disease

resistance, vertical growth rate, leaf texture and drought tolerance. Other trials that are currently in progress include seed production evaluations and turf trials. Plants that perform well in these evaluations will be advanced in our breeding programme. Eventually, after several years of breeding and evaluation, a group of elite plants will constitute a new cultivar of this species.

## Future Plans

Developing a new cultivar of any grass takes several years; this is especially the case for a somewhat undomesticated species such as prairie junegrass. During the next few years, our programme will continue to make germplasm collections throughout North America. We are currently working on expanding prairie junegrass research efforts by collaborating with other researchers throughout the US. Once we are able to develop a viable turfgrass cultivar, there will also need to be research conducted on the proper management of the species.

## Conclusion

The ultimate goal of our project is the release of an improved prairie junegrass cultivar that can be used by golf course managers and greenkeepers and other turfgrass managers. This will lead to an improved environment and reduced costs. This research is important because it is imperative that turfgrass managers are provided with viable options for low-input environments. As environmental awareness continues to increase, golf courses and other turf areas will be expected, and often required, to reduce inputs such as fertilisers, fungicides and insecticides. Improving the genetic potential of a native species such as prairie junegrass may solve future turf management dilemmas that arise due to environmental concerns.

## Acknowledgments

This project would not be possible if not for the generous support from the following organisations: United States Golf Association, United States Department of Agriculture – Agricultural Research Service, Minnesota Turf and Grounds Foundation, and the Grant-in-Aid programme from the Graduate School, University of Minnesota.

## About the author

Eric Watkins is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Horticultural Science at the

University of Minnesota (USA). Eric received his Ph.D. in Plant Biology from Rutgers University in New Jersey. His research focuses on the development of low-input turfgrass cultivars for use in cold climates. Research activities involve germplasm improvement of several cool-season turfgrass species including tall fescue, Kentucky bluegrass and perennial ryegrass. A major focus of his research is breeding native grasses such as prairie junegrass (*Koeleria macrantha*) and tufted hairgrass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*) for use as low-input turf. He is also involved with turfgrass cultivar evaluation and other turfgrass science research. Eric teaches three undergraduate turfgrass science courses.

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Fig 4

**TORO**

**Count on it.**

# SPLISH, SPLASH. I WAS...ER, PLAYING GOLF?

**The National Championship, sponsored by Kubota, didn't enjoy the best of weather but when it came to the golf the cream certainly rose to the top. Scott MacCallum reports from East Sussex National GC.**

First things first. No-one drowned or was blown away. I say that because the weather on the opening day of the 2008 BIGGA National Championship, sponsored by Kubota was such that either scenario was perfectly feasible.

The rain and wind combination was truly horrendous and it is a tribute to East Sussex National's Course Manager, Scott Litchfield and his men, that they got the West Course playable at all.

As it was, the two day medal competition was

shelved and became a Stableford on the opening day with a one day medal on the second, over the East Course.

The rain had begun on Saturday night and didn't stop until the middle of the Sunday afternoon but it didn't stop the greenstaff from preparing a superb test for a field of very talented BIGGA members. With preferred lies in operation tee shots were producing splashes of water when they landed and balls were plugging all over the course. It makes it all the more remarkable that the greens were as fast as they were true. Countless players were racing their ball past because they couldn't equate the horrible conditions with greens of such pace.

The Championship was sponsored for the second successive year by Kubota, who were

represented by Sales and Marketing Director for Tractor and Groundscare Products, Dave Roberts, and Colin Hennah, the local Area Manager. Colin had to stand in on the photographs when Dave had to leave on Monday morning for a meeting.

But despite everything some great golf was played and history made as +1 handicapper, David Simpson, from Crieff GC, became the first man successfully to defend the BIGGA Challenge Trophy, and thus become the Champion Golfer of the Association for the second time in a row.

Playing with two other +1 handicappers David emerged on top with a fine round of 74 giving him a two shot advantage over the rest of the field.

"I wasn't expecting to win as I'd been poor most of the season but I'm absolutely delighted to become the first person to defend the title.



Neil Geiring, Archie, and Scott Litchfield enjoy a laugh



Kenny Mackay tees off

"I'd much rather have played it over 36 holes but the weather was against us but I'd say it was a better test of golf than last year and the field was stronger with more low handicappers in it," said David, who along with his work colleague and fellow competitor, Tom Adams, had a 12 hour drive to get home, arriving at 7.30am the next morning.

David scrambled well over the early holes until he got into the swing, but he felt that he had missed a few opportunities on the way home.

"The greens were superb, but extremely tricky to read," he said.

"I am hoping to return to Burnham and Berrow next year to try and make it three in a row but it will be a tall order," said the 30 year-old.

With the destination of the Challenge Trophy

being fought out among the elite golfers in the field, the Challenge Cup for Best Nett was a realistic target for the majority of the field, and it was a closely contested affair.

The man who emerged with the spoils was 14 handicapper, David Fellows, Course Manager at Cocks Moors Wood GC, with a score of 70.

Ironically the first time I saw David play during the Championship was on the 3rd of the West Course the previous day when he four putted. He obviously used that day to hone his game for a determined assault on the main event the following day. It worked!

Fellow David – Fellows – had finished in the prizes a couple of times in the last four years but this year rose to the top.

"It's the biggest thing I've ever one. Anything

with the word "National" attached to it is special while it's against my peers on some very special golf courses," said David.

He was five over at the turn and in good shape and then went par, bogey, par bogey to give himself a real chance but a double bogey, double bogey finish meant he just scraped home.

"I'd targeted bogeying every hole on the way home but it didn't quite happen but that's why I'm a 14 handicapper."

On that four putt the previous day David took the positive from it.

"I knew then that it was all about the putting and getting the speed of the greens and I worked on that. It was down to hard work and luck on the day," said David, for who next year's venue of Burnham and Berrow is one of his favourite courses.



All the trophy winners

The Associate Competition was a real nail-biter! Andrew Cornes, of Acorn Golf, finished like a train, with a magnificent final four holes, including a par at the intimidating final hole par-4, to claw his way to the top of the leaderboard and lift the inaugural BIGGA Challenge Bowl.

The Sunday Stableford actually suited the players closer to the rear of the field as the weather improved dramatically after lunch and Brian Robinson, of Belton Woods GC, took advantage with a superb 37 pts.

The Regional Team Trophy was played for over the second day and the South East Region

made full use of home advantage clinching an eight shot win over the Midland Region.

Next year's BIGGA National Championship will be played at the superb Somerset links of Burnham & Berrow GC, near Weston-super-Mare, on October Monday 5 and Tuesday 6, 2009.

"It was great to be involved with the National Championship again this year, to see some familiar faces as well as meeting many new competitors. Although the weather did its best on Sunday, there was no dampening the commitment and enthusiasm of the players in the competition, and they were rewarded with some great weather on

the Monday," said Dave Roberts.

"Congratulations to David who won the consecutive title for the first time I believe. I am sure that made the long journey home to Crieff much shorter. The organisation by BIGGA and the excellent facilities at East Sussex National, made this a special event again and all of us at Kubota were very proud to sponsor the tournament again," said Dave, who showed his own golfing prowess with a few holes in the slightly better weather on the Sunday afternoon in the company of John Pemberton and myself.



BIGGA Challenge Cup winner, David Fellows (left) and BIGGA Challenge Trophy winner, David Simpson (right).

## RESULTS

### BIGGA Challenge Trophy (Best Gross)

- David Simpson, Crieff GC, 74
- 2. Lawrie Tremlett, Lewes GC, 76, (BIH)
- 3. Gary Burgess, Grange Park GC, 76

### BIGGA Challenge Cup (Best Nett)

- David Fellows, Cocks Moors Wood GC, 70
- 2. Darren Burton, North Foreland GC, 71
- 3. David Badham, Stockley Park GC, 73

### BIGGA Challenge Plate (Stableford)

- Brian Robinson, Belton Woods GC, 37pts
- 2. Antony Kirwan, Lexden Wood GC, 36pts
- 3. John Ganley, North Warwickshire GC, 35pts
- 4. Chris Bitten, Stoneham GC, 34pts

### BIGGA Challenge Bowl (Associate Prize)

- Andrew Cornes, Acorn Golf, 82 (Nett)

### Handicap Prizes

- +1-5 Mark Blacknell, Nottingham City GC, 73 (Nett)
- 6-12 Graeme Millar, Pitlochry GC, 73 (Nett)
- 13-24 Stuart Playle, Sandy Lodge GC, 81 (Nett)
- Nearest the Pin, Mark Blacknell, Nottingham City
- Longest Drive, George Morgan, The Mendip GC

### Regional Team Trophy

- 1. South East. 445. J. Hughes, 76; B. Wallis, 76; M. Henderson, 75; D. Badham, 73 G. Branchett, 74; D. Burton, 71.
- 2. Midland. 453. S. Scott, 76; J. Ganley, 78; K. MacKay, 77; M. Blacknell, 73, B Holt, 79; D. Fellows, 70.



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FEATURE



*Once again, the level of entrants for this year's Toro Student of the Year competition surpassed all expectations and it was up to the judges to make some tough decisions in a fierce final at BIGGA HOUSE. Melissa Jones reports...*

**As a student having to juggle both work and study requires hard work and dedication. This year's finalists are a prime example of what time and effort can achieve.**

Eight anxious greenkeepers visited BIGGA HOUSE on September 15 to be quizzed and probed within an inch of their lives and given the task of completing a report on Aldwark Manor GC (evaluating nine of the holes). On the judging panel this year were: John Pemberton, Chief

Executive of BIGGA; Jeff Mills, from the BIGGA Board of Management; Peter Mansfield from Lely (UK) Ltd and Sami Collins, BIGGA's Head of Learning & Development.

After an exhausting, nail-biting wait, finalists: James Canham, from Golf Club Gstaad, Switzerland; Paul Carella, from Bothwell Castle GC, Uddingston; George Pendrich, from Scotsraig GC, Tayport; Mathew Wormald, from Luffenham Heath GC, Lincolnshire; David Jones from Tadmerton Heath GC, Wigginton; Graeme Roberts, from Hankley

Common GC, Farnham; Barrie Lewis, from Ratho Park GC, Edinburgh, and Greg Wellings, from Stockport GC, Cheshire, were put out of their misery as BIGGA Chief Executive, John Pemberton, announced this year's winners.

Overall winner and Toro Student of the Year 2008 was Mathew Wormald (24) representing Brooksby College.

Mathew's amazing prize involves an eight-week trip to the USA, where, for six weeks, the University of Massachusetts will be home, as he