

OF THE YEAR 2008



Back row L to R: Peter Mansfield from Lely (UK) Ltd, BIGGA Chairman Kenny Mackay, Graeme Roberts, Jeff Mills, BIGGA Board Member Tony Smith, Barrie Lewis, David Jowes, BIGGA Head of Learning & Development Sami Collins, BIGGA Chief Executive John Pemberton. Front row L to R: George Pendrich, James Canham, Mathew Wormald, Paul Carella, Greg Wellings.

completes a residential turf management study course. The trip also includes visits to the Toro Headquarters in Minneapolis, the Toro Irrigation Division and to the GCSAA Golf Industry Show in New Orleans next February.

Runners up were James Canham (22) representing Myerscough College and Paul Carella (20) representing GOSTA Training.

James was a blast from the past (as far as this competition goes), 2004 saw him claim runner-up position at the age of 18, while working as an

Assistant Greenkeeper at Weston Park GC.

"The award serves as inspiration to all student greenkeepers with enthusiasm and ambition. It's a memorable and highly rewarding experience; a credit to both BIGGA and Toro," said James.

Paul, who is currently working towards his NVQ Level 3, has worked at Bothwell Castle for four years now, taking on the role of Assistant Greenkeeper.

"I would like to thank BIGGA and Toro for organising and running the final. I had a great

time and met a fantastic group of people. I would also like to thank Bothwell Castle Golf Club's Garry Anderson, Head Greenkeeper, Alasdair McDermid, First Assistant, Stewart Carbray, Assistant and my lecturer, Iain Forbes and GOSTA Training Ltd, for supporting me through my education," said Paul.

James and Paul both win a trip to Harrogate Week 2009, where they will be invited to attend the Continue to Learn Education Programme as well as the social events.

AND THE WINNER IS...

2008 Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year winner, Mathew Wormald, couldn't be happier and feels as though he's finally found his path in life. Melissa Jones reports...

Mathew has always had an interest in golf but greenkeeping was the last place he expected his career to take him.

"I went to university not knowing what I wanted to do and opted for a business and marketing degree, as that offered a wide spectrum of management and I knew it would stand me in good stead for almost anything," explained Mathew, who has a handicap of 18.

After finishing university Mathew went to London to work as an Estate Agent.

"I was awful at it. I couldn't lie and didn't sell many houses," laughed Mathew. "I decided to come home. I worked at a farm for a couple of months, during this time I saw the vacancy at Luffenham Heath advertised, I applied, got the job – the rest is history."

Mathew has been at the club for two years now and feels as if he has finally found his path in life.

"It's awesome, I love it. Greenkeeping makes me burn inside. Every single aspect of turfgrass management you can think of excites me. It's just so interesting and indepth," enthused Mathew.

At the end of this month Mathew will have completed his Level 2 in Sportsturf Management at Brooksby College with the help of tutor Richard Barker – BIGGA Chairman 2002.

"It's nice that the college is now getting some publicity. To win the award coming from Brooksby is even more satisfying, I hope it makes people sit up and realise how good the college is".

Mathew couldn't be more thrilled with his achievement and his bursting enthusiasm for the industry is plain to see.

"People just don't understand how passionate I am about greenkeeping. I cried to my mum on the phone. It means that much to me that I got back to my hotel room and cried. It's been a long two and a half days and I don't think it's completely sunk in yet.

"The only person that can hold you back is yourself, if you really want it, you have to go for it. Greenkeeping is a fantastic industry to be in, you can travel the world with a career in greenkeeping if you wish.

"It's been so draining. It's an amazing experience but nervewracking. I've been awarded the prize for a reason - because people believe in me. I want to be Student of Year for a reason and for people to see me and say 'I saw him 10 years ago and he's done what he said he would.'

"Going to America will add to the depth of what I can learn. When I first started greenkeeping and found out about the award it instantly became something I wanted to work towards. I always put that little bit of extra effort in when doing



Toro Student of the Year 2008 Mathew Wormald representing Brooksby College.

my college work, it's been 18 months of hard graft to get here."

It seems that preparation was the key to Mathew's success.

"For the final interview I explored every single area of the competition. I phoned America to find out what books and areas I would be studying if I got through, and bought and read a couple of them so that I had a better understanding of what getting myself into."

Mathew also came up three weeks prior to the final at BIGGA HQ to complete his course report and phoned 2007 winner, Avon Bridges, and 1994 winner, Euan Grant for their advice on what to look out for and what to expect at interview. Mathew also took the time to read through our BIGGA website, as well as Toro's.

"I walked into the interview and for the first time in my life I wasn't nervous," he beamed.

"You know when you work so hard for something and you actually achieve it. It's just an amazing feeling. I just nailed it! It worked. When I get to go to America it's gonna be even better. I can't wait to get my teeth into it and gain a better, more scientific understanding" smiled Mathew.

"Hopefully I'll be able to bring some good ideas back from America, amalgamate them with British greenkeeping and move forward from there."

"The way technology is going, greenkeeping is going to get really exciting over the next 10-15 years, with companies like Toro pushing the boundaries

with irrigation. It's time for British greenkeeping to embrace it and move forward."

Appreciative of the support that BIGGA have given him, Mathew is also keen, after he has been in greenkeeping for a number of years and been around the world, to open peoples eyes to what BIGGA is and what we do,

"Maybe I'll be Chairman one day, with a bit of luck," he laughed.

Mathew's goal is to become a Head Greenkeeper at an Open venue. Once he has achieved that, he is keen to work on new courses and new builds, advising people on how to manager their golf course.

"I had Royal Troon in my sight but that might be a little too soon! I love Troon as a golf course and would love to work there, it would fulfil my childhood dream really."

Mathew wants to thank Avon Bridges and Euan Grant for their advice, and BIGGA and Toro for the opportunity of a lifetime.

"It's just been awesome. People that have gone away disappointed need to realise they have got through to the final and if they want something that bad they will eventually get it. I wish everyone the best of luck for the future. Just to get through to the finals is a cracking achievement for everybody."

Mathew would like to thank Luffenham Golf Club for their support throughout the competition and for their continued support while he is away in America.



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by BIGGA

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or find accommodation, visit
www.harrogateweek.org.uk

Harrogate Week 2009

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MOVING WITH THE TIMES

John Pemberton, BIGGA's Chief Executive, outlines proposed changes to the Constitution that are to be put to members at the AGM in January

Setting the Scene

Some while ago the then BIGGA Board of Management recognised the need to develop the Association beyond greenkeeping into sports turf generally. Over the years, working with the GTC in particular, BIGGA has developed the formal training and education of greenkeepers and has successfully become a training provider in its own right. Much of what has been achieved has a natural synergy with the role of the sports turf groundsman and this led to talks in 2007 between representatives of the BIGGA Board and the IOG Board, regarding a possible merger. The basic concept being that one united organisation would be better placed to represent and develop the interests and education of those working in the maintenance and management of sports turf.

Merger talks sparked off a great deal of industry debate and speculation, some of which became very passionate at times. The trade companies embraced the notion with open arms and a great number of people, members and non-members in both camps, welcomed the suggestion recognising that perhaps a unification should have taken place years ago. The more the two organisations talked the more administrative hurdles came to light but never were the BIGGA Board discouraged on the grounds of a mis-match

between greenkeeping and groundsmanship. Sadly the potential operational problems ruled the day and the IOG withdrew after 10 months of in-depth discussions.

Moving Forward

Following the collapse of the merger talks, the Board were even more convinced that greenkeepers and groundsmen had a great deal to share and that the way forward for BIGGA and the sports turf industry would be for the Association to embrace groundsmen as members on an equal footing to greenkeepers, at an equal rate of subscription. To this end a working party has, over the last six months or so, been looking at how this could be achieved, what the consequences would be for existing members, which key industry partnerships could be developed and how administratively the changes could be achieved.

At its latest meeting on October 14, the Board approved draft proposals for changes to the Constitution to allow sports turf groundsmen to become members together with a draft simplification of the membership structure. The fundamental governance of the Association would remain unchanged; it would remain an organisation for its members, run at the highest level by its members. Nothing, however, can progress

without the backing of the members at a General Meeting and consultation will take place over the next two months prior to the AGM in January at Harrogate.

The Board is not of the opinion that if the proposed Constitution is approved by the members that there will be a sudden influx of groundsmen, who will then seek to take over the Association. There will be a systematic recruitment programme that will include attractive offers to the larger golfing/sports turf establishments where membership is currently under represented, coupled with a drive on individual membership. Rest assured that the proposals protect the rights and benefits of current members who have a great deal to gain rather than much to lose.

Some of the strengths and advantages of the proposed development include:

- A unified voice for sports turf employees
- A better chance of having impact at Government level
- Enlarged local representation enabling 'new blood' to come into the administration and management of Regions and Sections
- The opportunity for greater support for Region and Section activities
- Improved influence over the development



of the structure and content of national qualifications

- An enlarged membership base would increase the Association's buying power thereby providing the opportunity to improve member benefits
- Improved financial stability through new commercial opportunities
- Better provision of short training and education courses on a local and national basis
- The opportunity to develop a National Centre for Sports Turf based at Aldwark Manor

Next Steps

Members can obtain a copy of the proposed Constitution upon request from the following sources:

- Headquarters
- Regional Administrators
- Section Secretaries
- Any member of the Board of Management
- The Members' area of the BIGGA website (Downloadable Forms)

If you wish to discuss the contents of the document then please do not hesitate to contact either myself, a member of the Management

Team at Headquarters, a member of the Board of Management or a Regional Administrator. The views of the members are important and I would hope that any concerns will be addressed before the AGM. While there will be an opportunity to debate the draft Constitution at the AGM I would hope that prior consultation will keep this down to a minimum, so that the matter can be dealt with in a professional way. During November I, together with Tracey Maddison (Head of Membership Services), will be attending the conferences of both the South West and South Wales Region and the South East Region. We will also attempt to visit some of the Section events and will try to keep members advised of our plans through the Bulletin Board on our website. By the time that you read this I will have started a discussion forum on the Bulletin Board where I will respond to Members as openly as possible.

I have detailed, in the section on the right, the main proposals for the revised membership Categories that form part of the draft Constitution. In the Board's opinion the Association must accept that change is inevitable if BIGGA is to develop. We are all aware of the changing face of golf and unless we are proactive in managing the change then we are in danger of having to contract. Your Board needs your support please think carefully about the consequences of not giving it.

REVISED MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

1 Full Member

Any person employed in the maintenance of sports turf at a sports facility.

Split into: -

Category A = Manager

Category B = All other greenkeeping or grounds care employees who have gained a minimum qualification or who hold a minimum of three years continuous relevant experience.

**(Incorporating: Category A - Course Manager, Head Greenkeeper. Category B - Deputy Course Manager, Deputy Head Greenkeeper, First Assistant, Greenkeeper aged 21 years and above, Greenkeeper aged 20 and under and Mechanics)*

2 Associate Member

Any person employed in the maintenance of sports turf at a sports facility and is not eligible to be a Full Member.

(Incorporating unqualified aged 21 years and over and unqualified aged 20 and under)

3 Life Member

At the discretion of the Board of Management any Full Member recognized as having contributed in an outstanding manner to the Association or profession.

(Proposals for the election of a Life Member shall be made only by the Board of Management following Regional Board nomination and the election shall be by the Association in General Meeting.)

4 Retired Member

Any Full Member who has been a member for a minimum of 5 consecutive years and has retired from work.

(Incorporating Retired Member (full) and Retired Member (limited benefits)).

5 Student Member

Any person studying full-time towards an appropriate qualification in turf management.

(Incorporating full time Students).

6 International Member

Any person employed in maintenance of sports turf outside the UK.

(Incorporating International Course Manager and International Member).

7 Affiliate Member

Any person who does not come within the provisions of categories 1-6 above.

(Incorporating Associate and Corporate categories of membership).

8 Honorary Member

At the discretion of the Board of Management any persons recognized as having contributed in an outstanding manner to the Association or profession.

** notes in italics are to clarify changes to the present structure*

TEAM WORK AND TEAM BUILDING

By Melissa Jones



When Head Greenkeeper, Richard Hollingworth, called to say his team were about to put their newly acquired skills into action and complete a project on their parkland course at Rudding Park, I was eager to meet the team and check out the plans.

The greenstaff commenced work on a new hole at their parkland course in September.

“Building the hole is a way of helping our greenkeepers to use the skills they are acquiring through their studies,” explained Head Greenkeeper, Richard.

Building in-house the greenkeepers will be able to construct the hole to the standards they want with no corner cutting. The staff will also be able to view the construction from a greenkeeping and players point of view – as they are all keen golfers. They will be involved in all the decision making processes.”

PLAN OF ACTION:

- End of August '08 – areas have been marked out for the hole and green. Greenstaff have begun to chop down trees, while being sensitive to the environment and only removing those that are diseased or dead.
- September '08 – construction started.
- October/November '09 – seeding (if the weather is good).
- April '09 – seeding.
- April/May '10 – completed and open for play.

As they are in charge of the operation and costs, the greenstaff have the benefit of being able to change things, if needed, as they go along.

WORK BASED LEARNING

Rudding Park prides itself on investing money and time into training its staff.

“The whole ethos here is that everybody should be able to do everything. This allows you to have flexible staff, if anyone is off sick or has an emergency there are no problems. We have 16 year olds joining us and within a space of six months they have been shown strimming, mowing tees and greens, cutting fairways etc, etc. Within six months we then have a member of staff that can do nearly everything,” said Richard.

It's very much the same with education and study at Rudding.

“We push our staff on to cultivate their knowledge, improve their personal skills and the golf course. Their personal development is key to us – the more motivated our greenstaff, the happier they will be.”

The greenstaff are very much into team building and bonding, they go out en masse once a month to play golf, and check out other courses.

“Everyone gets on with everyone,” enthused Richard.

“It's more of a profession for them than just cutting grass. It's not a 9 to 5 job that just generates income, it holds a genuine interest for each of them and is a career.”

Three members of the Rudding Park greenstaff are currently studying for NVQ's and have a tutor from Myerscough College, Preston visit them every four weeks to assess their work and give feed back on their progress to the Head Greenkeeper.

Greenkeeper, David Pinder, as part of his NVQ Level 3 in Sportsturf, has to complete a construction job and gain experience of planning, ordering, getting quotations and quantifying. Therefore, this is the perfect opportunity for him to put his new-found skills into action.

LEARN AS YOU EARN

NVQs and Apprenticeships are designed for employees in the industry who wish to gain competence in their operations and gain a broad understanding of Sportsturf Operations.

They are ideal for greenkeepers in employment as they are delivered in the workplace using qualified, industry experienced assessors, and course content can be tailored to suit the needs of each individual student/workplace.

Tutorial times are agreed at suitable work times and all observations and assessments take place while staff complete their usual work activities.

Achievement of a nationally recognised qualification at NVQ Levels 1, 2, 3 or 4.

“Work based learning is more appropriate to our surroundings and works best for our staff. Rather than be in a classroom, Andrew Kenworthy comes from Myerscough every four weeks to assess the



Head Greenkeeper Richard Hollingworth.



Part of the plans for the new hole.

students' work and works, more or less, one to one with them without any distractions. We are able to monitor and assess the greenkeeper's progress from seeing the lecturer. We can plan jobs so that their job sheets criteria are met and they can use every piece of equipment," explained Richard.

The greenstaff's personal development is key to Rudding Park:

"If the staff are motivated they are happier in their work," said Richard.

"Because the staff are physically doing the job as they go along, they seem to be getting more out

of it and can actually SEE what is happening and the consequences etc. They are looking more at the science and asking questions such as: What fertiliser do I need to apply to get the best out of the plants? What cultural things can we do to stop this disease instead of spraying a fungicide?

"Matters and problems with construction are discussed as a group and I am explaining as we go along with the hole construction. The team are beginning to understanding the depth of greenkeeping and golf course management," concluded Richard.



Left to right: David Pinder, James Kelledy, Brandon Stanford, Richard Hollingworth, Robert Hilton, Danny Millar and Karl Walker.

Rudding Park greenkeeping team are:

Richard Hollingworth, Head Greenkeeper

David Pinder – College student NVQ Level 2 working towards Level 3

Danny Millar – NVQ Level 2

Robert Hilton – NVQ Level 2

Karl Walker – College student NVQ Level 2

James Kelledy – College student NVQ Level 2

Brandon Stanford – Currently applying for NVQ Level 2. Commencing college course Spring 2009

Liam Williamson - Currently applying for NVQ Level 2. Commencing college course Spring 2009

USEFUL COLLEGE CONTACTS:

Myerscough:

01995 642294

www.myerscough.ac.uk

Writtle:

01245 421858

www.writtle.ac.uk

Askham Bryan:

01904 772277

www.askham-bryan.ac.uk

Brooksby Melton:

01664 850850

www.brooksbymelton.ac.uk

Elmwood:

01334 658856

www.elmwood.ac.uk

**Guildford College,
Merrist Wood Campus:**

01483 884000

www.guildford.ac.uk

Hadlow:

01732 853261

www.hadlow.ac.uk

Plumpton:

01273 890454

www.plumpton.ac.uk

Warwickshire:

01926 318285

www.warkscol.ac.uk

Reaseheath:

01270 613242

www.reaseheath.ac.uk

Oatridge:

01506 864800

www.oatridge.ac.uk

The Bigga Training & Development Manual, sponsored by John Deere, is an invaluable tool for everyone working within the greenkeeping industry.



The BIGGA Training & Development Manual

FREE USE FOR MEMBERS

This online manual provides users with the information they need on recruitment, induction, training and career progression using video clips, written information, downloadable documents and useful web links.

A valuable membership benefit the manual can be accessed via the BIGGA website on the Education, Jobs' and Members' areas. Simply log in using your surname and BIGGA membership number on the Home page.

Designed around a theme of 18 holes users can gain access to training records, job specifications, job descriptions, sample contracts of employment, appraisal forms and details of continuing development.

How to access the BIGGA Training & Development Manual

1. Go to the BIGGA website www.bigga.org.uk
2. Click on the Members area, the Jobs page or the Education page and click on the BIGGA Training Manual link.
3. Enter your login details and select the BIGGA Training & Development Manual from the left hand menu.
4. The Training Manual will load and the user can click on Enter the Site to view a welcome video or can select 1–9 or 10–18 on the top menu bar.
5. You can progress through the manual hole by hole or go straight to the hole you wish to view. You can also skip to holes 10–18.
6. When you select a hole you will be presented with a window that explains what that hole is about. You can then select from the bottom tabs, video or sub-text (downloadable documents and links).
7. When clicking on a downloadable document it will automatically open in your default word processor. This can then be amended, updated and saved to your computer's hard disk or printed and filed in your personnel files.



NOISE INDUCED HEARING LOSS

RAISING AWARENESS FOR GREENKEEPERS

By Herbert Barker

Over the next few months Greenkeeper International will be working in conjunction with vibration testing services Fivesquared to discuss the implications of Hand Arm Vibration (HAVS), Whole Body Vibration (WBV) and Noise. Number two in the series is Noise Awareness, discussing the measures that greenkeepers can put in place to prevent a loss of hearing.

OVERVIEW

As with last month's article, Hand-Arm vibration, the European Commission introduced legislation 'harmonising' noise levels in the workplace for all member states, and gave each state three years to effect this. The UK 'version' became law in the form of the 'Control of Noise at Work Regulations (2005)'.

Many clubs have implemented noise management for greenkeepers, while others have done little, or decided that it doesn't affect them and have 'shelved' any action.

This article is designed to give a brief overview of the problems of Noise Induced Hearing Loss and the solutions.

NOISE LEVELS FOR GREENKEEPERS

Our research has shown that some, but by no means the majority of golf clubs, have implemented best practice management systems for controlling noise exposure in their golf clubs and more specifically their greenkeepers exposure levels.

Noise can be a difficult subject to grasp, with numerous different types of hearing protection available what is the best for your greenkeepers and which type will offer the correct level of protection. During our recent research we found that some golf clubs offer their staff different types of protection, some golf clubs leave it to the greenkeepers themselves to choose which type they prefer to use, but, more importantly, is the hearing protection offered or chosen the correct type and suitable for the job?

WHAT IS IT?

Hearing loss caused by prolonged or regular exposure to loud noise is a widespread recognised problem affecting many workers.

Hearing loss can be temporary or permanent. Temporary deafness is often experienced after leaving noisy places, such as a club, or party. Although hearing recovers within a few hours, this

shouldn't be ignored. It is a sign that continued exposure to noise could cause permanent damage.

Permanent damage can be caused immediately by sudden, extremely loud, explosive noises.

The majority of hearing loss, however, is usually gradual, due to prolonged exposure to noise. It is only when damage caused by noise over the years combined with normal hearing loss - due to ageing - that people realise how deaf they have become. Hearing loss from prolonged exposure is usually incurable.

Many tools, machines, and processes used in industry can produce noise levels likely to cause hearing damage to anyone within the vicinity of the noise source and in some cases, those some distance away, by reflected noise.

It is safest to regard regular prolonged use of any tool or machine causing loud noise as suspect.

As a general rule, noise may damage your hearing if you have to shout over background noise to make yourself heard, the noise hurts your ears, makes your ears ring, or you are slightly deaf for several hours after exposure to the noise.

Hearing loss can be caused by factors other than noise, but noise induced hearing loss is different in one important way - it can be reduced or prevented altogether.

Loud noise can damage the hearing of young people as easily as the not so young.

HOW DO I RECOGNISE IT?

Prolonged loud noise exposure affects the tiny hair cells in the inner ear which send electrical signals to the brain. Once damaged, these cells no longer respond to sound and so hearing decreases.

Loss of hearing at higher frequencies.

When hearing impairment begins, the higher frequencies are often lost first, which is why people with hearing loss often have difficulty in hearing the high pitched voices of women and children.

Difficulty in understanding speech.

Loss of high frequency hearing can also distort sound, so that speech is difficult to understand, even though it can be heard. Hearing impaired people often have difficulty detecting differences between certain words that sound alike, especially words that contain S, F, SH, CH, H, or soft C sounds because these sounds are in a higher frequency range than vowels or other consonants.

Tinnitus

Hearing loss is not the only problem. Tinnitus (ringing, whistling, buzzing, or humming in the ears) may also occur. This condition can also lead to disturbed sleep.

Sufferers from any symptoms of hearing loss should initially report their symptoms to their supervisor, so that if required, appropriate health surveillance can be initiated.

WHO IS AT RISK?

Those whose jobs require regular frequent use of noise producing tools and equipment (hand-held or ride on), or in the vicinity of these machines, are most at risk.

These occur in industries, including:

- Road and railway construction/maintenance
- Construction
- Forestry/Gardening/Greenkeeping
- Foundries
- Light and heavy engineering
- Mining and quarrying
- Stone masonry
- Wood working

WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT IT?

The 'Control of Noise at Work Regulations (2005)' puts obligations on employers to assess, control, and manage noise exposure in the workplace.

The challenge is to determine which information is correct and current. This can be confusing. To protect successfully your workforce from Noise Induced Hearing Loss it is vital that employers have an effective Noise Management System to - Assess, Measure, Monitor, Control, and Manage any noise risks.



Harrogate Week has a new event for 2009

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welcome

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