

## CHANCE TO BEAT THE WET WEATHER

Wimbledon Park Golf Club is prepared for wet weather after drainage work was carried out by Speedcut Contractors of Oxford.

The magnificent 18-hole course, in the shadow of the All England Lawn Tennis Club, is on clay and required drainage round more than half a dozen holes.

Under foreman Peter Little the Speedcut team used one of their Mastenbroek laser-guided trencher and pipe-layers to carry out drainage over the course of a week.

Trenches were back-filled with shingle and sand and surfaces levelled with minimal disruption to the smooth running of the busy course.



## NEW RECRUIT FOR SALES TEAM



Tycrop has welcomed Robin Lott to their turf division sales team.

"I come to this industry, most recently, from industrial equipment manufacturing and distribution, where I spent 13 years building a dealer network in Western Canada.

Pressure washers and industrial cleaning equipment sales has been very good to me, but the opportunity to work in the golf, turf and sport field industry for a respected Canadian manufacturer was something I couldn't pass up," said Robin.

## NEW TECHNICAL SALES REPRESENTATIVE

Becker Underwood Ltd has appointed Karl Geary as Technical Sales Representative with responsibility for sales in the UK and Ireland.

Karl Geary joins Becker Underwood bringing over 10 years experience to the post. Prior to joining Becker Underwood, Karl spent the last six years working for a leading manufacturer of fertilisers and pesticides with activities in the horticultural, amenity and retail sectors and previously studied Commercial Horticulture at Writtle College.



## NEW EXPORT ROLE

Steve Elms joins Vitax Supaturf Ltd in the newly created role of Export Sales Manager.

Responsible for co-ordinating and expanding the company's export business interests, Steve, who started his career in greenkeeping in 1976, brings considerable overseas experience to the post having worked as a Course Manager in Switzerland, Denmark, Germany and the Caribbean.

Now based in his home county in South Wales, he is looking to develop his career in a field that he knows, which will still allow him to travel.

"I've known Vitax since my first days as Head Greenkeeper," he said.

"It's a well established company with a good reputation, which I'm sure I can develop further."



## NEW H&S TRAINING PARTNERSHIP ESTABLISHED

Bedale based training specialist KNW are delighted to announce a new joint venture with Lucid Training of Sedbergh to deliver the best in Health and Safety Training.

KNW established in 1997, has built its business on the core values of consistency, quality and flexibility delivering a comprehensive range of training courses throughout the UK.

The joint philosophy is to help businesses implement health and safety policies, processes and procedures so that business benefits from H&S rather than being restricted by it.



(L to R) Mike and Jean John from KNW, Andy Binstead (CMIOSH) and John Colton from Lucid Training.

# Membership



## Are you...

- Moving House?
- Moving Job?
- Changing your mobile number?
- Changing your email address?

To ensure that we have the most up to date information and that you don't miss out on your monthly copy of Greenkeeper International or information on membership benefits, make sure you contact us to let us know of any changes to your details.

### Change of Address Checklist

#### Who to Inform...

- BIGGA
- Friends, family and colleagues
- Employers
- School
- Bank, building society, pension provider
- Telephone and Internet service providers
- TV licensing
- Credit card and store card companies
- Local council regarding council tax
- Subscriptions to magazines, charities, etc.
- DVLA
- Doctors, Dentist, Opticians etc
- Gas, water, electric companies
- Satellite/Cable Company

This month BIGGA welcomes the following new members, shown on the right...

#### Scottish Region

Stuart Beacom, Central  
Iain Bellshaw, North  
Stewart Ewan, Central  
James McAulay, Central  
David Middleton, East  
Darren Selby, East  
Kevin Taylor, North

#### Northern Region

Will Bessant, North West  
Nigel Booth, Northern  
Michael Burgin, Sheffield  
Thomas Chubb, North West  
Christopher Kelly, North West  
Daniel Killen, North East  
Lance Wilde, North West  
David Williams, North West  
Liam Williams, North  
James Wormleighton, North West

#### Midland Region

Michael Bunney, East Midland  
Jamie Dunning, Berks/Bucks & Oxon  
Nicholas Garbett, Midland  
Vince Harrison, East Midland  
Andrew Kirk, East Midland  
Mark Lambert, Mid Anglia  
Antony Plummer, East of England  
Nicholas Spittle, Midland  
Rob Wood, East Midland

#### South East Region

Harry Burgin, East Anglia  
Rod Daniels, Surrey

Jamie Jones, Essex  
Andrew Knight, Surrey  
Scott Litchfield, Sussex  
Christopher May, London  
Matthew Perks, Sussex  
Neil Pickett, Sussex  
David Purdue, London  
Neil Rose, London  
Nicholas Turner, East Anglia  
Brian Victor, Sussex  
James Witt, Surrey  
Matthew Woodford, London  
David Wootton, Kent

#### S West / S Wales Region

Josh Loughrey, South West  
Philip Powell, South Wales  
Ian Rees, South Wales  
Ben Unsworth, South Coast  
John Williams, South Wales

#### International

Stephen Cutt, Germany  
Matthew Dobson, USA  
David Willis, USA

#### Student

Steven Ferry, East  
James Telfer, Kent  
Dorota Cwil, Rep of Ireland

#### Corporate

Stephen Edwards, North East  
Paul Kelly, Northern  
Andrew Lloyd, Northern

## CONTACT US

By telephone - 01347 833800 (option 1 for Membership.)



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**Brad Anderson**  
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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:

### UNLOCK THE POTENTIAL OF GREENKEEPERS

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 countdown is on... Saltex is over and Harrogate Week is now a reality to all the staff at BIGGA House and the Learning and Development Department in particular. The biggest project of the year will start to wind up with the release of the Continue to Learn Education Programme featured in The Definitive Guide to Harrogate Week brochure and on the Harrogate Week website ([www.harrogateweek.org.uk](http://www.harrogateweek.org.uk)).

A range of two-day, one-day and half-day workshops is included in the Continue to Learn programme along with a comprehensive list of seminar sessions. The seminars that are taking place on Tuesday 20, Wednesday 21 and Thursday, January 22 are FREE of charge to all visitors. Places for the seminars are available on a first come, first serve basis with our seminar rooms holding approximately 70 delegates.

#### Two-Day Workshops:

- Manage Relationships and Improve Conflict at Work
- Health and Safety
- Moving into Management
- Making Successful Presentations

#### Cost:

BIGGA Member\* £205 + VAT  
Non Member £330 + VAT  
\*BIGGA Members save 38% when booking a two-day workshop

#### One-Day Workshops:

- Basic Budgeting and Finance
- Next Steps in Budgeting and Finance
- Drainage: Theory, Practice and Realities
- Irrigation: Planning, Installation and Water Management
- Measuring Success
- Stress Awareness

#### Cost:

BIGGA Member\* £105 + VAT  
Non Member £210 + VAT  
\*BIGGA Members save 50% when booking a one-day workshop



#### Half-Day Workshops:

- Getting Started with Microsoft Excel
- Beyond the Basics Microsoft Excel
- Getting Started with Microsoft Word
- Beyond the Basics Microsoft Word
- Getting Started with Microsoft PowerPoint
- Environmental Legislation Compliance Through Best Practice
- Making the Most of Your Woodlands

- Making the Most of Your Heathlands
- Making the Most of the Links Environment
- Master Greenkeeper Certificate Workshop

Cost: BIGGA Member\* £50 + VAT  
Non Member £110 + VAT

\*BIGGA Members save 55% when booking a half-day workshop

**TOP TIP:** For those of you out there who are not yet a member of BIGGA it works out cheaper to become a BIGGA member before booking your workshop. Contact the Membership Department on 01347 833800 and select Option 1.

The English Golf Union and the Golf Club Managers' Association will once again be presenting their Continuing Development Seminars on Wednesday, January 21 from 9.30 am – 3.30 pm with subjects including The Changing Landscape of the Golf Business and Presenting Change to Committees and Members. The day includes Lunch hosted by the EGU and the GCMA. The cost to attend is £50 + VAT.

#### Industry Skill Sets/Job Specifications

Most of you will recognise the term 'Job Specification' rather than Industry Skill Set, but in reality, they are the same thing. They both list the tasks that a Greenkeeper, Supervisor and Manager should be able to perform. The three skill sets have been developed and agreed by industry for the industry using the National Occupational Standards.

The new specifications (or skill sets!) can be downloaded from the BIGGA Training and Development Manual - go to Hole One, select the sub-text tab and click on Job Specifications.doc. The Training and Development Manual is accessed via the members area of the BIGGA website.

# Learning & Development

## TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OF GOLF COURSE STAFF

By Stewart Brown

**Staff are the most dynamic of all a golf club's resources. They need considerable attention from management, if they are to realise their full potential. Motivation, leadership, communication and pay are all included in the issues faced by management today.**

However, it is necessary to consider the role of training and development activities in the golf club. A question frequently raised by many is: What is the difference, if any, between 'training' and 'development'? Another is: What is the difference between 'education' and 'training'?

It will be useful to examine these three terms and compare their meanings. Principally they are as follows:

**Education** – usually intended to mean instruction in knowledge and skills designed to enable people make the most of life in work and in society generally; personal and broadly-based; focuses on knowledge acquisition.

**Training** – normally implies preparation for an occupation or for specific skills; narrower in conception than either education or development; job-oriented rather than personal.

**Development** – usually suggests a broader view of knowledge and skills acquisition than training; it is less job-oriented than career-oriented; concerned more with employee potential than with immediate skill; sees employees as adaptable resources.

Generally, education is a matter for government. Training and development, however, are matters for individual golf clubs. This article looks at how golf clubs can set about meeting their own specific internal training and development needs.

### Training and Development

The scope of training and development activities depends on club policies and strategies. Many commercial clubs carry out the minimum of staff training and development; instead preferring to invest in recruiting trained or professionally qualified staff.

However, the majority of golf clubs do have a positive policy on training and development.

The first priority is to establish the club's training and development needs. This will involve using job descriptions, employee appraisal records and other such data. Planning the training needed entails setting budgets and timetables, and deciding on objectives, content and training methods to be employed.

Implementation of plans is usually a joint affair between training specialists and their line and functional colleagues. It is important to evaluate results, so that changes to content and methods can be made, if necessary.

The benefits of systematic training include:

- Provision of pool of skilled manpower for golf club
- Improvement of existing skills
- Improvements in job performance, resulting in improvement in overall productivity
- Improved service to players
- Greater commitment of staff (ie, increased motivation)
- Increased value of individual employee's knowledge and skills
- Personal growth opportunities for employees
- Compliance with appropriate legislation such as Health and Safety



Greenkeepers must be trained to ensure their competence for Health and Safety and the achievement of golf course standards of maintenance and presentation.

### The Role of the Trainer

The role of training manager, or staff (often undertaken by the Course Manager or deputy) depends considerably on a club's style or culture. If training and development is actively encouraged, then trainers have an exciting and important role to play; the opposite is true for trainers at clubs wishing only to pay lip-service to training.

The training staff's own competence and professionalism is the other major factor in deciding what kind of role can be played. Where trainers are highly skilled, they normally enjoy a good reputation in the golf club; where they are not, reputation and effectiveness will be proportionately less.

In performing their direct training roles, training specialists are intimately concerned with (a) the identification or assessment of training needs, (b) the design, content and methods of training to be employed, and (c) the evaluation of training.

## Identifying Training Needs

A training need is any shortfall in terms of employee knowledge, understanding, skill and attitudes against what is required by the job, or the demands of golf club change. When managers conduct a comprehensive training needs' analysis in their golf club, they may seek the basic data for this process at three different levels, as follows:

**Golf club level:** Data about the golf club as a whole – e.g. its structure, services, manpower requirements, etc.

**Job level:** Data concerning jobs and activities – e.g. job descriptions, personnel specifications, on the one hand, and leadership and communication activities on the other.

**Individual level:** Data about individuals – e.g. appraisal records, personal training records, test results, notes made at counselling interviews and results of attitude surveys.



Training should be geared towards the needs of the individual and their job role

Picture Lely UK/Toro

Data obtained in this way enables training staff to draw a comprehensive picture of the areas of current, and potential, shortfall in requirements. The collection of information for a training needs' analysis is carried out by one or more of the following methods:

- Analysing recorded data relating to the golf club, jobs and to individuals
- Analysing questionnaires and attitude surveys issued to employees
- Interviewing managers and supervisors about their own or subordinates' training and development needs
- Observing job performance of individuals
- Monitoring results of group discussions relating to current work problems, etc
- Analysing self-recording diaries, etc, kept by managers, specialists and others.

Most popular of the above methods are those which utilise existing records, and those which involve interviewing managerial and supervisory staff.

One particularly important document contributing to the analysis of training needs is the appraisal form. This is the record of an employee's job performance, usually completed following an annual interview with their superior. Appraisal interviews, and the documentation which accompanies them, are the formal mechanisms by which golf clubs can assess or evaluate their human assets. In a well-managed golf club, this formal appraisal merely rounds off, in a relatively standardised way, the frequent informal appraisals carried out regularly by the club's managers as a normal part of their job.

## Planning Training

Once training needs have been identified, the Course Manager can begin the task of sorting training priorities, drawing up initial plans, costing them and submitting their draft plans for approval. Draft plans spell out the key areas for training, the numbers and categories of employees concerned, the nature of training proposed, preliminary time-tabling of training programmes and an estimate of likely costs.

Training programmes can be formal or informal, and can take place 'on-the-job' or 'off the-job'. The latter can mean in-company, or in-service, training or it can refer to externally-provided training. The table below illustrates some of the different methods of on- and off-the-job training, and indicates some of the advantages and disadvantages of each approach.

Training plans are designed to encompass the following:

- a. What training is to be provided
- b. How it is to be provided
- c. When it is to be provided
- d. By whom it is to be provided
- e. Where it is to be provided
- f. At what cost it is to be provided

Resources put into training and development represent a considerable investment that needs evaluating to ensure it is being deployed wisely.



Often 'off-site' training is beneficial as staff are free of workplace distractions and can focus better on technical aspects

Picture Lely UK/Toro

## Evaluation of Training

Evaluation is part of the training control process. Methods used aim to obtain feedback about training results and to use this feedback to assess its value, to improve things where necessary. Training evaluation is firstly concerned with setting appropriate training standards. These may take the form of policies, objectives, adherence to external standards, and standards of trainer training and qualifications.

The next key point is the collection of relevant training feedback data. Finally, there is the impact on golf club goals to be considered – e.g. what has training done for profitability? This is a favourite question from top management, but is extremely difficult to evaluate because there are many other variables that impact on these goals.

For further education and training advice, contact your local specialist land-based college. Most offer advice, bespoke training and a range of education and training courses often leading to recognised qualifications.

### About the author

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**TORO**

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# SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME

By *Melissa Jones*

**The Ransomes Jacobsen Scholarship Scheme, run in conjunction with BIGGA, has helped fund many aspiring greenkeepers through their studies, and aided them in fulfilling their ambitions of becoming fully qualified greenkeepers.**

"Ransomes Jacobsen has invested over £107,000 to support the Higher Education of BIGGA Members since 2002. This funding has been invaluable in ensuring that greenkeepers are the leaders in the sports turf industry," said Sam Collins, BIGGA's Head of Learning & Development.

We at BIGGA cannot underestimate the importance of this financial support from Ransomes Jacobsen and thank the company for its continued investment in our members," added Sami.

Among those who benefited from the scheme this year was Gary Baxter. Gary has been employed by Mid Yorkshire Golf Club since November 2006 as Deputy Head Greenkeeper and will be using his money to study for an Online Sportsturf Foundation Degree with Myerscough College.

"The scholarship funding has made the degree affordable, it has helped to fund the books that are needed and the annual fees for the course," he said.

"Once the degree has been passed I hope there will be more opportunities in England or Europe to become a Head Greenkeeper," said Gary.

James Hutchinson, Assistant Greenkeeper at Fairhaven Golf Club, in Lytham, has been a BIGGA member for 17 years.

"During this time I have watched BIGGA grow to the professional Association it is today, offering advice and help to all its members," said James.

James started work at Fairhaven from 1988 until 2000 - when he left to become self-employed as a gardener of both landscape and maintenance. He found he did not enjoy this as much and missed greenkeeping, so returned to his post at Fairhaven in 2003 where he has been ever since.

"In 2007 I was given the title of Eco Coordinator and with the help of our greenkeeping team gained the award of Best Newcomer in the BIGGA Golf Environment competition, sponsored by

Ransomes Jacobsen, Scotts and Syngenta - an achievement both myself and Fairhaven are proud of," enthused James.

In August of this year, James was accepted onto the Ransomes scholarship scheme,

"Without this my study may not have been possible and raising finance or funds could have been a problem - thank you BIGGA and Ransomes Jacobsen for making this greenkeeper very happy."

The online Foundation Degree course James will be studying, covers modules such as: plant cell biology ecology conservation, business planning and the management of sports turf machinery - all of which will help him to achieve my personal aim of golf course management. The course will take place at Myerscough College, Preston, through online delivery, which will take three years to complete.

Students who had completed their studies received relevant awards for their hard work and study in late summer, thanks to this BIGGA scheme, superbly supported by Ransomes Jacobsen.

"We are now into our sixth year of sponsorship of BIGGA's Higher Education Scholarship programme and it goes from strength to strength. As a major manufacturer of turf care equipment we have a duty to support our industry sector. Anything

we can do that assists turf care professionals to improve their understanding of fine turf, while at the same time raising their profiles, can only benefit the industry as a whole. This year we have supported seven scholars, so I hope that James, Christopher, Stephen, Kerry, Steven, Gary and Lee have found their studies worthwhile and of benefit to them in their chosen careers," said David Withers, Ransomes Jacobsen's Managing Director.

BIGGA has been able to help its members follow courses of higher education by offering them a scholarship since 2002. Many greenkeepers have been able to attend N/SVQ Level 4, Higher National Certificate, Foundation Degree/HND, BSc Turf Management and MSc Sports Surface Technology courses thanks to continued sponsorship of the Scholarship Scheme by Ransomes Jacobsen.

The amount of the scholarship awarded depends on the course and the funding available. The applications are assessed on the candidate's number of years as a BIGGA member, their contribution to BIGGA and their previous training and development.

Anyone wishing to be considered for a scholarship fund should contact Sami Collins, BIGGA's Head of Learning & Development on: [sami@bigga.co.uk](mailto:sami@bigga.co.uk)



Gary Baxter



James Hutchinson



# MAKING THE 'APPLIANCE OF SCIENCE' SIMPLE

*Scott MacCallum visited Scotts' Levington Research Station and learned just how much goes into producing the products you use on the golf course.*

**We all like things to be straight forward and get irritated when they become even a little bit complicated. For example, we love it when we switch on our computer and everything boots up perfectly, but when there is a little glitch and it doesn't work instantaneously we turn into Mr Angry, particularly if we are left hanging on a premium rate helpline.**

It's the same on the golf course. You want to put an application on the course as part of a turf management programme, or to counter a disease which may have developed, you want to know that everything is in place to enable you to do just that. You also want to know that the action you are taking is going to be effective.

The Scotts Company, a BIGGA Golden Key supporter, prides itself on using cutting-edge technology to produce effective products for use on the golf course, and making life as simple as possible for its customers.

"We only develop a product if we are sure it is going to improve on what is already available or if it's a new addition to the product portfolio, one that is going to make a real difference to the end-user" explained UK & Ireland Sales Manager, Nick Martin.

"Scotts is an extremely innovative company. We make a huge investment in research and development across the world and right here in the UK at Levington. The development of a new product can take many years, from the initial stage of identifying a need moving through the chemistry to testing and registration," he added.

Scotts was launched in 1868 when an American soldier, Orlando McLean Scott, left the Union Army and embarked on a new business venture with the mission statement, "Farmers need, and shall have, clean, weed-free fields". OM Scott made its name as one of the America's leading distributors of horse-drawn farm equipment before adding a farm seed business to its portfolio.

In 1907 Dwight Scott, his elder son, identified just how important the garden lawn would become in American culture and began offering grass seed by mail order and in 1916 the company received an order for 5,000 pounds of Kentucky Bluegrass from one of the first golf courses to open in the States – Brentwood-in-the-Pines, on Long Island, New York.

The UK business unit of Scotts Professional was formed in 1991 and is based in Ipswich. Its research station, unique to the UK, is located a few miles away in the village of Levington. It covers 7.1 hectares and boasts two 2,000 square

metre golf greens, one built to USGA guidelines and the other a traditional push up green, as well as other areas which replicate the various areas on a golf course.

"The greens aren't the best in Europe but they're not meant to be. We use them to test our plant protection products for example, to measure how effective they are at preventing and treating turf diseases. Our greens are managed and maintained in a way that enables us to test those products in natural conditions," explained Dave Steward, UK & Ireland Marketing Manager, as we strolled around the impressive facility.

"The greens are large because we split them into three and use them on a three year rotation to give the trial areas time to recover," he added.

There is also an area which has been overseeded with weeds – more expensive than high quality grass seed, would you believe – so prototype herbicides can be given a genuine challenge.

Among greenkeepers, Scotts is probably best known for its fertilisers such as Greenmaster and Sierrablen. The company is at the forefront of controlled-release fertiliser development and the key roles of its scientists is to produce coatings which react in certain ways to specific temperatures and soil conditions. The Levington soil is high quality which is great in normal circumstances,







but to ensure fertiliser trials are not distorted by a soil rich in nutrient the Trial team - there are 15 people who work at the Research Station - have stripped an area and replaced the soil with a sand mix which is virtually nutrient-free. A small garden shed to the side of one of the trial areas contains a £30,000 piece of reverse osmosis equipment which, aside from something you'd expect to find in a Tardis, lowers the electrical conductivity of the borehole water. That way, any improvements are purely down to what is being tested and not from any of the existing nutrients in the soil or water.

In addition to the turfed areas there are greenhouse areas and flowerbeds as the Station is used for the testing of Scotts' consumer and ornamental horticulture products as well as those for the turf market. Indeed, testing on plants like poinsettia and cyclamen can amplify any pros and cons of a test more than a test on a particular grass type, so there are cross over benefits to be had from trialling such an extensive portfolio at one site.

We visited the area being used to test the company's new seed range.

"We acquired the rights to the Tee to Green range and have also been developing our own varieties which originally came from Oregon. These contain salt and drought tolerant varieties. We're carrying out extensive testing in European and UK conditions and have been extremely pleased with what we have seen so far," said Nick, as he took another opportunity to study the test plots.

Scotts' product development always has the job of the end-user in mind. Greenkeepers who are under pressure to have their course looking perfect prior to a tournament and to maintain its health and appearance despite difficult winter weather conditions look to applications of iron as a useful tool. To highlight the benefits of the site, Trials Officer Roger Page, undertook a demonstration of Effect Iron, a product which was launched at Saltex the following week after four years in development. A two metre square patch

was sprayed with the promise that it would have noticeably greened up within three hours.

Not being able to resist a sneaky peak, we had a quick look 45 minutes later and there was a definite difference in the sprayed patch and the area around it. This was more pronounced when we did return after the full three hours.

Walking around the Station you can't fail to be blown away by the vivid colours and smells of some of the test plants but the experts are not distracted by this gardening explosion they are more concerned by objectively marking each plant to see how it measures up against its peers.

The investment in Levington is huge because product testing in the UK is tightly controlled by the PSD.

"All tests are carried out to the required regulatory standard so that products can be registered when required. Scotts regards compliance with legislation as a minimum requirement," explained Dave.

The trials, in addition to discovering whether Scotts is sitting on a new wonder product, also allow testing to see what application rates are optimum. Modern day pesticides, herbicides, fungicides and the like require much lower doses than their predecessors to produce the same, or significantly better results, because they used the latest, modern active ingredients in their formulation. That can only be beneficial for all.

All Scotts' development, production and operational processes are scrutinised to assess environmental impact and continually improve the company's environmental profile. Key to the structure of the process is ISO 14001, the international specification for environmental management systems which outlines the requirements for establishing an environmental policy. As well as its own corporate responsibility, Scotts is keen to promote environmental awareness among end-users and has been a key sponsor of BIGGA's Golf Environment Competition along with Ransomes Jacobsen, Syngenta and, as of this year, Golf Monthly.

"We see tremendous benefits in being involved. Looking at some of the past winners they are superb ambassadors for the game of golf in showing just how much expert conservation and environmental work goes on. There is an amazing amount of diverse wildlife on a golf course that you wouldn't get if the golf course wasn't there and managed in an environmentally-responsible manner," said Dave.

In addition to environmental impact, efficacy has been at the forefront of the minds of all leading chemical companies. With so much attention being drawn to the game of golf and European-wide restrictions on chemicals, much research goes on to provide the most effective products at the lowest application rates and often replacing older products which complied with older regulations but which have been overtaken by more advanced chemistry.

Keen to promote the responsible use of pesticides, Scotts has sponsored the Amenity Forum's 'Check Your Sprayer' campaign launched at Saltex.

"We promote integrated pest management solutions. Sometimes a chemical is not the best option. It is just one of the tools in the kit that should only be used when it's needed. That is the advice we give," explained Dave, who added that their entire sales force are BASIS and FACTS qualified to give advice.

"If you have a healthy plant it is much less susceptible to disease, so it doesn't need as much outside help."

Scotts has no doubt about the benefits of being a BIGGA Golden Key Supporter and contributing to the Learning and Development Fund.

"We've always supported education and training not just in the golf world but also in the sports and the growers side of our business. Just as our scientists are working hard to find solutions to everyday problems on the golf course, greenkeepers' learning must continue, so we're pleased to support BIGGA in its ongoing provision of training and education to the industry."



**JOHN DEERE**

# **YORKSHIRE'S FINEST TAKE THE HONOURS**

*Scott MacCallum was lucky enough to attend the John Deere Team Championship at Turnberry to share the experience with the finalists.*

**FEATURE**

