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## Out with The Old and in with The New

Lely UK has announced Holly Jones as its new Marketing Executive.

Existing employee, Holly, is stepping into the shoes of Bruce Dawson, who is retiring from his role as Marketing Manager after 35 years of service.

Holly will work across the company's product portfolio, which spans Toro commercial turf machinery, irrigation systems, consumer lawnmowers and garden equipment and Otterbine aerating fountains, as well as a vast agricultural offering,

overseeing its marketing activities with immediate effect.

Meanwhile, Bruce is looking forward to indulging his passion for caravanning around Britain with wife, Christine, as well as spending time with his grandchildren. He also plans to undertake voluntary work.

A familiar industry face, Bruce joined Lely's agricultural division as Scottish Sales Manager in the early 70s and, having relocated to East Anglia as Area Sales Manager in 1979 and progressed to UK

Sales Manager soon after, was appointed Marketing Manager in 1989.

"I'm very much looking forward to my retirement and take with me a lot of fond memories of my time at Lely," he said.

"I wish the company, my former colleagues, and in particular Holly in her new role as marketing executive, all the very best for the future."

**ABOVE:** Lely UK's new Marketing Executive, Holly Jones, is taking the wheel as the company's former Marketing Manager Bruce Dawson retires.



### NEW DIRECTOR APPOINTED

John Deere has appointed Nicole Chase, former business manager, to the newly created role of Golf Sales and Marketing Director for Europe, Africa and the Middle East (EAME). Nicole will relocate to Germany in order to focus on worldwide growth opportunities for John Deere Golf.

"As emerging markets continue to provide potential for growth, we need to consider alternative options beyond our traditional approaches," said Gregg Breningmeyer, Group Director, Sales and Marketing for John Deere Golf.

"And with the recent introduction of several new product platforms, this is the perfect time to take advantage of new, exciting opportunities abroad."

Nicole will be responsible for bolstering sales and marketing support while exploring new opportunities for equipment and irrigation product lines.

### IN BLOOM AT CHELSEA

Kubota showcased a selection from its extensive tractor and groundcare product ranges at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2009.

Among the machines featured were the Kubota GR1600-11 13.5hp diesel ride-on mower, the G23 professional ride-on mower and the B1220 12hp compact tractor.

# Deal Extended



John Deere dealer, Godfreys of Sevenoaks, in Kent, has signed a new, exclusive three year preferred supplier agreement with The Royal St George's Golf Club at Sandwich, which will host its 14th Open Championship in 2011.

The agreement covers the supply and servicing of a full range of more than 30 John Deere golf and turf machines, including greens,

tees and surrounds and fairway mowers plus compact tractors and Gator utility vehicles, for use by Course Manager, Neil Metcalf and his team of 12 greenkeeping staff.

This follows the previous three year agreements signed in 2003 and 2006.

Photograph shows John Deere dealer, Principal Peter Bateman of Godfreys, and John Deere Limited

Territory Manager, Mike Waldron. Royal St George's Course Manager, Neil Metcalf, and Secretary, Christopher Gabby.

Godfreys Area Sales Manager Keith Rogers is pictured with some of the new John Deere machines at the distinctive starter's hut beside the first hole at The Royal St George's Golf Club.

## NEW RECRUIT

STRI has employed Jay Dobson to join their regional consultancy team in Scotland.

Jay, previously with PSD Agronomy, will take over the role of Regional Turfgrass Agronomist, replacing Simon Watson who moved to Syngenta in March - based in Glasgow, Jay will cover clients in Scotland.

Jay has more than 25 years' experience working across all sectors of the turfgrass industry. Prior to his position as a Director of PSD Agronomy Ltd, Jay lectured in Turfgrass Science and related subjects at UCL Myerscough. Here he managed a range of programmes, including Degree and HND Turfgrass Science, as well as pioneering delivery of the NVQ Level 3 Turfgrass Programme.

## New Ransomes Award for Juniors

Ransomes Jacobsen, has sponsored a new award recognising outstanding achievements from junior golfers in Suffolk. Introduced by the Suffolk County Golf Partnership, the award is for young golfers who

deserve recognition for their achievements over the past 12 months.

Nominations are being sought for any young golfers, male or female, under the age of 15, who are deserving of special recognition. They

may have reduced their handicap; helped others within the club; overcome particular difficulties or obstacles; or perhaps achieved success in club competitions.

They may not necessarily be the best

young golfers at the club. An individual award will be presented to the winning boy and girl at a prize-giving ceremony at the Suffolk Golf Partnership Golf Day on July 22 at Halesworth Golf Club.



## Marketeing Alliance Formed

Club Car has entered a marketing alliance with SolarDrive, a Denmark-based firm that specialises in solar technology for mobile solutions. Taking advantage of Club Car's extensive distribution network, the two companies will promote the use of solar energy to commercial and golf accounts all around the world.

SolarDrive designs and engineers vehicle canopies made with solar cells capable of capturing and transferring the sun's energy to electric-powered vehicles, including golf cars and utility vehicles.

The solar canopies transfer from 180 to 360 watts of energy to a vehicle's battery system, resulting in considerable additional range between charges in typical applications.

Club Car said it expects the initial adoption by users that are challenged to make it through demanding usage applications on a single electrical charge.

What's more, Club Car says the availability of solar energy in an easy-to-install application may encourage facilities now operating gas-powered fleets to switch to electric vehicles.



# Greenkeepers Training Committee



**A message from the Chairman of the GTC, Donald Steel**

**Donald Steel**, the recently appointed **GTC Chairman**, tells of his respect for greenkeepers, the progress that has been made through good education, training and qualifications but also how there must be a review of the methods of collecting funds from men and woman golfers to support the work of BIGGA and the GTC as he firmly believes it is the condition of the course that is every golfer's number one priority.

**One aspect of golf which has improved out of all recognition over the last 30 years has been the condition and presentation of our courses.**

Tournament players expect perfection every week and usually find it. Club golfers are no different. Their awareness of what they see on television, or on their travels, means that they, too, set their sights high. What is more, they see no distinction between winter and summer, expecting a consistency that enables them to play all year.

Nothing could be better for the game but too many take it for granted. Insufficient acknowledgment is made for the reasons behind the transformation.

Much is driven by the admirable desire to give the best service but it is equally driven by the desire for knowledge; and knowledge, in this context, is based on vastly better teaching. Greenkeeping is essentially a practical pursuit and knowledge and experience stem from active involvement.

It isn't so long ago that recruits to greenkeeping tended to come from farm workers and were paid accordingly. If inclined, they learned as they went along but traditional old Head Greenkeepers were sometimes reluctant to disclose their secrets and often carried them to their graves.

Where improvement has come about is that bodies like BIGGA and GTC have broadened the net by ensuring that proper education is available to all those who want it. It is not too much to hope that one day soon qualification may be a necessity. One of the secrets of a

good teacher, whether it be golf, the tuba or cybernetics, is the ability to break down technical language into simple terms everyone can understand. Teachers have the right to expect pupils to be interested, although that may depend on how well the message is put across.

Nowadays, the art of greenkeeping belongs to a more technical world in which everything is highly mechanised. The ability to cut grass surfaces tighter and to have a machine for almost every purpose is one reason why playing conditions are so good. Aeration techniques are more varied but so, too, are those for overseeding fairways as well as greens.

The volume of work that can be carried out is another huge advantage. Irrigation systems are more advanced and drainage systems more efficient although the dangers of over-watering set alarm bells ringing.

Sustainable golf is little more than the old basic principles of greenkeeping under a different name but there is no doubt that fast running courses are more potent forces than those deadened by too much irrigation, and anything which reduces the level of maintenance budgets by legitimate means is to be welcomed.

Greenkeeping teams are much more versatile with qualified mechanics and skilled machine operators forming part of most staffs. Any construction work is now readily tackled as a pleasant variation to routine maintenance. Seminars, conferences and shows give the chance to broaden horizons and compare notes but, in many

The GTC is funded by:



ways, the important message is for the users of our courses to appreciate what has been done for their benefit.

Greenkeepers work unsociable hours, on the course at 5am on summer mornings to prepare for the early starters, and on call all day during major tournaments.

In America, Superintendents are highly paid, influential figures, as well they might be. Maintenance and presentation need skill as well as responsibility for expensive equipment. They may lead a crew of 20 or more but, without the quality of the product suffering, our average greenkeeping staffs are no more than perhaps six. On the other hand, our golf has always been popular because it is affordable and nobody wants to see the game priced beyond the reach of most pockets. We wouldn't change places.

As greenkeeping becomes a more genuine career for young men and women, ambitions will only soar and that can only mean a rise in standards. It might lead to changing policies within Clubs and the abolition of anachronistic green committees.

The lines of communication with the Course Manager could then be by means of one member representing the Club's general committee or board and prepared to do a long enough stint to learn something himself. At all times, he must convince the staff they have full support.

In return should be a pledge from every golfer to contribute a small sum every year towards greenkeeper training and the wonderful playing conditions that nearly all of us experience. Many subscribe now without knowing it but methods of collection need reviewing and made more comprehensive.

We are talking pence rather than pounds, but nothing is closer to the heart of all men and women golfers than our courses and their condition; and, for once, they may be contributing to a cause from which they can see personal advantage by way of a return.



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# Learning & Development

Sami Collins, Head of Learning & Development,  
with an update on education issues



**July already. This year is really flying by. I'm sure you're all as busy out on the golf course as we are here at Headquarters.**

**Rachael and I have a little circus-juggling act going on with all the events that we are co-ordinating at the moment. I think we could make some spare cash on the side!**



## Toro Student of the Year Award 2009

We have had a magnificent response to the Toro Student of the Year Award this year with 44 entries received from 18 colleges.

This is the highest number of entries that we have received since our computerised records for the Award began in 1996 (the Award began in 1989).

This has, in itself, caused a few logistical problems when organising the Regional Interviews.

We have overcome these problems by drafting in the help of the Regional Administrators to replace me at the interviews, therefore relieving me of a week out of the office flying, driving and interviewing my way around the country in five days.

The interviews will take place in the following locations, shown above right:

**Monday 6 July**  
– York and Exeter

**Tuesday 7 July**  
– Hemel Hempstead and Bristol

**Wednesday 8 July**  
– Hemel Hempstead and Glasgow

Eight finalists will be selected from the Regional Interviews to attend the National Final at BIGGA House on 13 and 14 September.

The eight finalists will be featured in the September issue of GI.

## CPD

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### Continuing Professional Development 2009/2010

The new Continuing Professional Development year commenced on July 1, 2009 and will run until June 30, 2010.

To achieve your Certificate of Continuing Professional Development for 2009/2010 you must gain 10 CPD Credits within the 12 month period stated.

Credits can be gained for educational events that are attended including Section and Region events (not golf days), events run by suppliers and companies and events hosted by other associations such as the PGA, GCMA, EGU, SGU, GUW.

If you are unsure if you can claim credits for a specific event, please

The funding provided by Golden 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 Golden and Silver Key Sponsors.

**Contact Details**

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[www.bigga.org.uk](http://www.bigga.org.uk)

contact either Rachael or myself for clarification.

If you would like to register on the CPD Scheme, you can download an application form from the BIGGA Website:

[www.bigga.org.uk/education](http://www.bigga.org.uk/education)  
or telephone 01347 833800 and select Option 3 for Education and we will send one out to you.

### Funding

Government funding for training is available from the Train to Gain fund.

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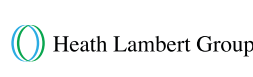
The half-day workshops that they run, on a variety of subjects are presented by professional trainers.

I, among many of the BIGGA HQ staff, have attended several of their workshops and I can wholeheartedly say that they are worth every minute of the time required away from the workplace.

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Go to [www.businesslink.gov.uk](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk) for further information.

## Thank you to our Golden and Silver Key Sponsors



Golden Key Individual Members: WJ Rogers; Andy Campbell MG, CGCS; Iain A Macleod; Tom Smith; Frank Newberry; Christopher Lomas MG, Lee Strutt MG.  
Silver Key Individual Members: Ade Archer; Steven Tierney; Paul Jenkins; Iain Barr; Richard McGlynn; Steve Dixon; Hamish Campbell; Neil Whitaker; Robert Maibusch.



# Chairman's Word

**National Chairman, Peter Todd, gives his thoughts for the month**

**Finding uninterrupted times at work to spend thinking, reading or writing is almost impossible in peak season.**

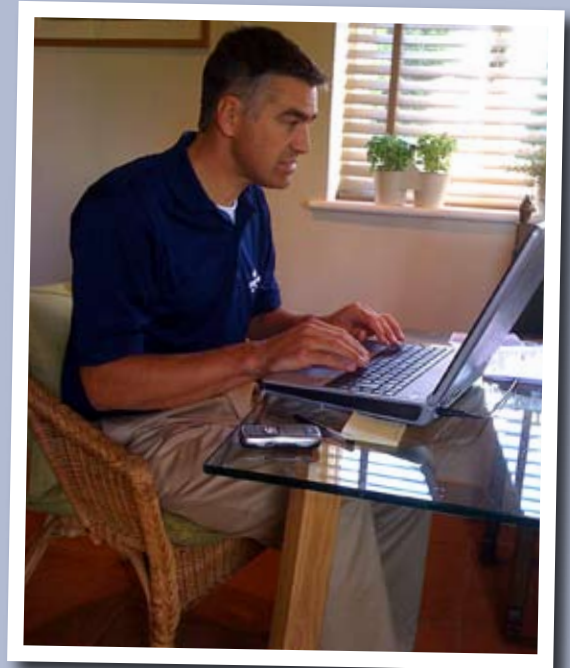
**If it's not one of the phones ringing or walkie talkie radio needing answering, then visitors, meetings etc all eat into the day and leave little room for time concentrating solely on an individual task.**

Having recently broken my leg in a fall on the course I am now working from home for six weeks and discovering what a difference it makes to be able to write a report without all these interruptions. Often we all try and juggle so many things at once only to find little space left to devote to a specific project that you know needs your complete attention which can end up taking weeks rather than days. Taking yourself away from the day-to-day work is only possible when you can rely on others to delegate to. The use of e-mail, laptops and mobile phones ensures you can keep in touch and at the same time enable you to break away to work elsewhere.

Having a well structured team with key members of staff able to step up and deputise helps in these situations. During our recent tournament both first assistants worked together and deputised for The Heritage Head Greenkeeper so he could respond to the call that his wife needed to go to hospital to give birth to their first child. Staff enjoy the opportunity to show what they can do when given more responsibility and you soon discover how much talent you have on your team. Delegating more even when you are not away can bring these benefits and free up some uninterrupted time to focus on areas that would otherwise keep moving down the to do list.

In our part of the country this has been one of the driest starts to the season for years with us experiencing only two thirds of the average rainfall. Play levels have no doubt picked up as a result of the better weather and this should be reflected in higher than expected revenue for clubs. The flip side of this is the prospect that the summer could continue unusually dry and a need to use large volumes of irrigation water. After the two very wet summers in 2007 and 2008 we needed some decent sunny weather to get golfers interested in playing regularly this year but the last two wet years did ensure that this dry part of the UK didn't suffer another drought. The expression that every cloud has a silver lining seems all too appropriate.

Water is fast becoming an expensive commodity at over £1 per cubic metre from some water companies and guarantee of supply looks decidedly shaky in future years. The last two years might have given some breathing space to water issues but we shouldn't be surprised when this subject returns again. Clubs need to look seriously at all areas of water usage. Starting with supply, whether recycling, rainwater harvesting or other suitable measures are a viable option for them. Thinking about your turf, do you have thatch levels under control, is sward composition where you want, do you have a comprehensive wetting agent programme? Is your irrigation system efficient, can you make improvements to coverage, design? The lead time



## Continuous improvement keeps you out in front

to design, obtain permission, secure finance and do whatever is necessary to deal with these problems and put solutions in place before next the drought order appears may prove to be time well invested.

The June edition of GI in the new format resulted from a response to some constructive comments and eagerness of all those involved to make improvements to the magazine. Scott and his team have worked hard to make the changes and bring a fresh look and content. As well as this, the sub committee changes to encourage more members to have an input in Association matters have now been reorganised. With proxy voting in place the move to include groundsman from other turf sports was a truly democratic process and one that should be recognised as a strength of BIGGA to embrace change.

Sport and the leisure industry are going through tough times with the golf sector having to adapt to the changed economic environment. After the recovery period whenever it comes, the golf industry will have gone through changes, some of which will be irreversible. Clubs that have shed

staff numbers may only be able to survive by operating on a lower cost basis in future. On the jobs front it is likely to remain an employers market with strong competition for every position. Whatever happens, clubs will need experienced, well educated and professional greenkeepers who are focused on maximising use of resources and improving their courses.

Being a member of BIGGA provides you with an opportunity to associate with like minded individuals with a shared interest and demonstrates your commitment to professionalism in the industry. In addition, the learning and development programmes, seminars etc, aim to arm you with the information and skills needed to keep you at the front of your profession. Aiming higher is something we should all aspire to and your association wants to help you get there.

**Peter Todd**  
National Chairman

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An aerial photograph of the Turnberry Golf Course in Scotland. The image shows a white lighthouse on a grassy cliff overlooking a rocky coastline. The sea is a deep blue, and the surrounding landscape is a mix of green hills and rocky outcrops. The lighthouse is a prominent white structure with a dark top, situated on a small grassy island or cliff edge. The surrounding area is a mix of green grass and dark, rocky terrain. The sea is a deep blue, and the sky is a clear, light blue. The overall scene is a beautiful coastal landscape.

# What a way *to bow out*

George Brown will end his illustrious greenkeeping career after this year's Open. As Scott MacCallum discovered, he couldn't choose a better way to retire

PHOTOGRAPH: The spectacular surroundings of Turnberry Golf Course, viewed from above  
© Leisurecorp





**There are few more iconic venues in golf than Turnberry. There is the magnificent, and unique, hotel - white with the red roof; the famous links; the white lighthouse, and Ailsa Craig, the giant curling stone-producing rock which stands guard nine miles off the coast but which often looks much closer.**

When they all come into view at the same time you know you are in for a special golfing experience and even more so this month when Turnberry hosts its fourth Open Championship.

Each time The Open has been held in this particular corner of Ayrshire it has been memorable. The Dual in the Sun –, the 1977 classic shootout involving Tom Watson and Jack Nicklaus, tops most lists as the best Open ever; while Greg Norman in 1986 and Nick Price in 1994

## “Royal Birkdale was in great nick and Carnoustie looked fabulous, so the bar is getting higher”

George Brown

emerged victorious in two excellent Championships. Expectations are therefore high for 2009.

For one man it will be a particularly poignant occasion as Courses and Estates Manager, George Brown, will have prepared the Ailsa Course for his third Open and the final time, before handing over the day-to-day running of the Greenkeeping team and taking an ambassadorial/consultancy role at the club.

“I’m really looking forward to this year’s Open. In ’86 we were really thrown into the deep end. I’d only taken over the November before, following the death of the then Head Greenkeeper, Russell Brown, and we had an exceptionally young crew without a lot of greenkeeping experience,” explained George, as we sat in the bar of the Turnberry Clubhouse, while, in another room, Open Champion Padraig Harrington was giving interviews to media as part of his sponsorship obligations during a Wilson corporate day.

“In ’94 it was easier as we had the experience of ’86 behind us, and I’ve been lucky that I retained, and I’ll still retain, much of that crew now.

“Between myself and my three Head Greenkeepers, Martin Lothian, Jimmy Johnstone and Tom Cuthill, we’ve got over 100 years of experience at Turnberry while our Mechanic, Jim Campbell, has also been here for more than 20 years. Many of our assistants also have a lot of experience.

“So we’ve all been down this road before. We all know what is expected and they all know what my standards are. Last year I thought Royal Birkdale was in great nick and the year before Carnoustie was absolutely fabulous, so the noose is getting tighter and the bar is getting higher. It’s nice to have experience to draw on to meet those challenges.”

George, who received BIGGA’s Lifetime Achievement Award at Harrogate this January, will have worked for a different Turnberry hotel owner at each of his three Opens and he is delighted that the current owner, Leisurecorp, places so much importance on the golf courses.

Evidence of this is the fact that the Ailsa Course closed to all play in October of last year and has only been open for the odd day occasionally since March.

“It is extremely rare for this to happen and rather nice. We knew we

had a large renovation programme to undertake and we also delayed a few projects because we knew this was coming. It gave us a free hand to get on without golf balls flying at us and all the related health and safety issues.”

The team have certainly made full use of this time and the hard work has resulted in some spectacular results over the non-golf period and the previous year.

All the bunkers have been renovated and revetted while 21 more have been added since previous Turnberry Opens.

“We’ve got 85 now which is well below the likes of Carnoustie and Lytham, but I think they are in the right place. The game is changing and the players would just murder the course if we hadn’t put in a few extra bunkers and tees to challenge them. We don’t want to trick it up or make it unplayable, but it has got to host an Open with the best players in the world and offer them a stiff challenge, otherwise they wouldn’t appreciate it.”

The break for play has allowed the team to carry out some intensive work that wouldn’t have been possible with golfers playing the course.

“Being closed enabled us to carry out aeration and vertidrainage of all the fairways and rough, not just once but three times throughout the winter, as well as working on the compacted areas – walkways, pathways and semi,” said George,



The War Memorial Monument  
© Eric Hepworth



Bunker at the 2nd Fairway: Ailsa  
© Eric Hepworth

who highlighted the cause as the problems of powered trolleys with wide wheels, heavy batteries and big bags, as well as new waterproofs which enable golfers to go out rain or shine.

“I’ve got a powered trolley myself and go out regardless of the weather and the number of rounds, coupled with the extra footfall of caddies we have here just adds to the compaction.”

This year has seen the Turnberry team return to a greenkeeping practice not seen for many years and George for one is delighted to see it.

“We’ve been taking seaweed from the beach and mixing it with our compost and that’s something we used to do but labour costs, and the quality of the ready done mix