

2009 Golf Course Environment Awards

The Golf Course Environment Awards have had a successful first year. Despite being a difficult period for many clubs, the response to the Awards Programme has shown that enthusiasm for the environmental side of golf course management has continued to grow.

The standard of application has been high, and while this has not come as a shock to the judges (STRI are aware that there is a vast amount of exceptional environmental management work going on throughout the Industry), it has made judging the Awards a challenge to say the least. In the end, however, we agreed that the following 10 clubs had stood out in this year's Programme:

Overall Achievement Award – St. Andrews Links Trust

Conservation Greenkeeper of the Year – Matt Worster – Minchinhampton Golf Club

Regional Winner (Scotland) – Carnoustie Golf Links Management Committee

Regional Winner (Northern England) – Fairhaven Golf Club

Regional Winner (Southern England) – Burhill Golf Club

Regional Winner (Wales) – Aberdovey Golf Club

Conservation & Biodiversity Management Award – The Bedfordshire Golf Club

Integrated Turf Management Award – Lymm Golf Club

Waste Management Award – Loch Lomond Golf Club

Water Management Award – Penlanlas Golf Club

Case Study – St. Andrews Links Trust

The Overall Winner of this year's programme is St. Andrews Links Trust who are awarded a study trip to the United States, to visit several high profile clubs during excursions aimed at further enhancing knowledge and understanding of greenkeeping issues.

The diversity and scale of works undertaken at St. Andrews in recent times is truly impressive. Large scale gorse clearance has been carried out across the coastal dune system and a diverse and ecologically

rich grassland sward has been restored in its place. By opening up the dune landscape the team at St. Andrews has managed to revert much of the course landscape back to its original form.

In addition to this work, the club has actively encouraged nesting sand martin within an on-site quarry via the creation of clean sand faces, assisting in an increase in populations here in recent years. Skylark are also being encouraged via an ongoing grassland management programme in key areas.

A further high profile project undertaken in 2009 has been the construction of a comprehensive reedbed system to cleanse waste washdown water. This environmentally friendly method of complying with waste water legislation has been constructed 'in-house' to an extremely high standard and will, once fully established, no doubt become a feature of the course.

The amount of environmentally directed projects, coupled with a general enthusiasm and clear desire to be considerate to the surrounding environment, has made St. Andrews a worthy winner of the overall prize in what has genuinely been a closely fought contest.

Case Study - Conservation Greenkeeper of the Year – Matt Worster, Minchinhampton Golf Club

As with the Overall Winner, The Conservation Greenkeeper Award brings with it the highly desirable prize of a trip to the United States.

This year's winner of the Award is Matt Worster, from Minchinhampton Golf Club. Matt undertakes all standard greenkeeping duties in addition to developing and initiating ecological projects at the club which are both numerous and extensive. As a result, the club awarded Matt the title of Ecology Coordinator in recognition of his enthusiasm and drive towards improving wildlife interests on the course.

Matt's career at Minchinhampton began in 2002 as Assistant Greenkeeper.



Matt Worster of Minchinhampton

Since that time, he has completed a BSc (Hons) in Rural Environmental Sciences, producing a final year dissertation on the impact of golf course practices on Minchinhampton's Old Course.

On the course, Matt's influence has impacted greatly on the ecological management work undertaken. Large scale grassland management work has been carried out including the trialling of highly successful hay strewing experiments to increase grassland wildflower content. Hedgerow planting and maintenance work has been extensive and pond management, creation and restoration work has been undertaken to an extremely high standard.

Reflecting on the balance between golf and wildlife, Matt concludes, "Golf courses provide stable habitats and multiple opportunities for habitat creation and protection. Sound ecological management of these features and the wider golf course encourages flora and fauna to thrive, creating sanctuaries for wildlife and increasing the quality of the golf course for the players and public to enjoy".

Thank you

In addition to the two top accolades, four 'Best in Region' Awards have been presented, with each recipient receiving a free ecological advisory visit from an STRI consultant; and four further clubs have been recognised for a 'special initiative', each receiving free

admission for two delegates to STRI's Ecology Training Courses held in October.

All prize winners have undertaken a wide array of worthy ecological and environmental projects and while it is impossible to cover them all in this article, case studies of the winning clubs can be found on the Awards website at www.golfenvironmentawards.com – here, you will also find details on how your club can get involved in the 2010 Programme.

The Golf Course Environment Awards have shown that there is a considerable amount of positive environmental work going on in the golf industry and it is important to recognise that while this work is improving conditions for wildlife and reducing the impact of the golf club on the environment, it is also improving the golf club as a product.

Management work on the golf course is undertaken to maximise its playability by producing a course that is aesthetically pleasing and strategically interesting – two key elements to the enjoyment of the game. STRI and the Awards sponsors would like to thank all clubs involved in the 2009 Programme and look forward to what we hope to be successful 2010 for all concerned within the Industry.

Richard Stuttard, STRI Ecology and Environment



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Davy Cuthbertson,
Course Manager Rockliffe Hall



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Chairman's Word

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

As the season draws to a close and winter approaches there is more time to accommodate additional staff training and education into the diary. It's important to review the team each year and plan a programme of training and education that will expand their skills.

We all need to develop experienced, well motivated greenkeepers and this can't be achieved without investing time and money.

I think of staff as the club's biggest asset, not the buildings nor the machinery and so allocating time and funds each year to improve the team is always a priority and a good investment.

Learning and development is such a broad subject when related to our industry but for planning/budgeting purposes I tend to look at it in several distinct areas.



Peter listening intently during a Workshop at this year's Harrogate Week.

Make the Most of Learning and Development Opportunities

On operator training, what we must do - essential certificated training such as NPTC pesticide application that is required under regulations, what we would like to do - certificated training such as NPTC ride on mower operation that is desirable but not obligatory and in house training.

Greenkeeping education can be delivered from a wide range of sources including in house learning, college courses, seminars and BTME and Continue To Learn during Harrogate Week.

Spreading the opportunities across the whole staff and meeting all their different individual needs is the challenge, working within budgetary constraints.

Many forms of education are available at minimal cost other than the time commitment, ranging from in house learning to visiting fellow greenkeepers at other courses and attending seminars sponsored by the trade.

We are hosting one at the club this month with key speaker Karl Danneberger, Turfgrass Professor at Ohio State University.

BTME and Continue to Learn during Harrogate Week this year provided a whole range of workshops, seminars and opportunities to improve you and your staff's knowledge including many of which were available at no charge to BIGGA members

or at a reduced cost. Lots of you took advantage of these and more is planned for this January with an expanded programme to accommodate the increasing uptake.

Every year there are many opportunities to be a volunteer at a number of golf tournaments up and down the country which can provide staff with a valuable opportunity to experience course preparation for professional events and mix with greenkeepers from lots of courses at the same time.

Taking all your team on visits to other courses helps them gain an understanding of different conditions, resources available and expectations.

These visits are easier to fit in during winter and can also be reciprocal arrangements with other clubs.

Swapping staff with other courses both here and abroad can also broaden their horizons or allowing staff unpaid leave in winter to work for several months in the warmer parts of the world can all help with their development.

This sharing of ideas, experience and knowledge with each other is one of the key ways that we all learn and improve. Creating opportunities for all your staff to meet other greenkeepers can bring the same learning benefits that predominantly Head Greenkeepers and Course Managers gain from their contacts.

When dealing with an issue or problem on your own it can be a great relief to know that you can call another greenkeeper and talk it over.

Having regular contact with others gives you the chance to keep things in perspective, get someone else's opinion and keep you open minded to all the options available.

Particularly during times when everyone is under pressure to deliver more for less it is useful to benchmark with others and discuss solutions.

Don't isolate yourself - get along to seminars, BIGGA events etc and take all the opportunities you can to meet and learn from others.

Harrogate Week this January will be a great opportunity to meet with fellow professionals - the Continue to Learn programme is available to book and I looking forward to joining as many of you as possible in what is always a great week and time well spent.

Peter Todd
National Chairman



Greenkeepers Training Committee



David Golding, Education Director,
with a monthly update from the GTC

The last few months have been hectic in trying to protect the greenkeeping sector as the Government are determined to introduce a new system for vocational - work based qualifications for England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

I will try to explain the changes highlighting the key titles which will be worth remembering.

Firstly, every country within the European Union is been encouraged to review and align ALL qualifications into a EUROPEAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (EQF).

Each country will have a slight variation on titles to align to the EQF:

England has the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF)

Scotland has the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)

Wales has the Credit and Qualifications for Wales (CQfW)

On behalf of the sector I attend meetings to ensure the National Occupational Standards (NOS) are consistent across all countries, in other words the skills sets and knowledge requirements are the same.

The National Occupational Standards for greenkeeping are set at three levels:

Golf Greenkeeper – Golf Course Supervisor – Golf Course Manager

It is from these standards that the various qualifications are developed which can either be work based (vocational) or academic, college based.

For many years the GTC has battled at the highest level of Government to ensure our specialist sector has relevant qualifications. We must never fall back into a “by- product” of horticulture or even worse agriculture in terms of education, training and qualifications.

GTC Approved Centres are currently adjusting their various programmes to the changes which are as follows:

SCOTLAND: This is the easy bit (for now), work to align the SVQ's,

NC, HNC-D is underway but there are no current changes to any of these qualifications.

ENGLAND & WALES: From September 2009 NVQ's are being replaced in the majority of industries by new work based Diplomas.

Learners currently registered on NVQ's will have time to complete their qualifications but all new learners will be registered on the new qualifications.

WHY do we have to change titles I hear you ask?

Any readers who have been involved in NVQ's may have experienced issues with some learners struggling to achieve the full qualification due to a variety of reasons.

Well one of the main reasons for the changes (as highlighted in the Leitch report to Government) is that many employers require short courses for their staff, therefore the Government has promised funding will be made available to Centres-colleges to offer short courses, using the Units from the new Diplomas as well as the full qualifications.

The NVQ Level 2 Sports Turf (Greenkeeping) will be known as the Diploma in Greenkeeping

There is no change to the content of the new qualification and the gtc training manual will still be the appropriate document to record learners evidence. A new index has been developed for centres in England and Wales.

Every Unit within the new Diplomas has been given a CREDIT VALUE, each Credit equates to 10 hours. This is the average number of hours it should take to train a new learner, support/mentor and assess them as competent e.g. Prepare and operate a tractor and attachments Unit has a CREDIT VALUE OF 5 (50 HOURS).

Depending on the Units CREDIT VALUES learners will gain an Award or Certificate for achieving Units from within the Diploma qualification.

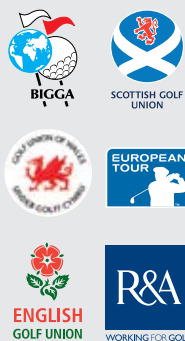
The NVQ Level 3 Sports Turf (Greenkeeping) will be known as the Diploma in Golf Course Supervision

There are changes at this level

In Brief

After nearly 20 years of industries trying their best to adopt and implement National & Scottish Vocational Qualifications (N/SVQ's) the Government has decided to change the title NVQ. David explains why it is an absolute minefield, especially now as devolution of power to the various countries and Parliaments within the UK, is starting to affect education.

The GTC is funded by:



designed to give better flexibility to employers and learners by the introduction of mandatory and optional Units to make up the full Diploma.

Rather than list all of the new Units and Credit Values here I will post them on the GTC website.

The N/SVQ Level 4 Sports Turf Management remains unchanged but will become the Diploma in Golf Course Management once the Units have been through the review of content and credit value process.

All of the more academic higher qualifications within Sports Turf, HNC-D in Scotland and the Foundation Degree & B.Sc remain unchanged.

I feel I should apologise for what for many might feel is an unnecessary change in qualifications and could easily lead to confusion for employers, learners and even Centre staff but the GTC will continue to try and maintain standards of education, training and qualifications and make the transition as painless as possible.

Finally, whilst there should be more flexibility with the forced changes there is even more reason for employers to seek the subsidised courses.

Please be reassured, the GTC will continue to maintain standards for our sector in partnership with its representative bodies, the British Home Unions and BIGGA and through its Approved Centres network.

I will close as I started by mentioning Europe, it is the new revised Units which have been adopted by the pan-European greenkeeping standards working group and this is true recognition for all of those involved in supporting the GTC with its ongoing work.

Contact Details

David Golding
GTC Education Director

01347 838640
david@the-gtc.co.uk

GTC
Aldwick Manor
Near York
YO61 1UF

www.the-gtc.co.uk

David Golding
GTC Education Director

Learning & Development

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



Unbelievable, how can it be October already? Saltex and the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award are the key events that mark the beginning of the Autumn/Winter season and have both been and gone. All roads now lead to Harrogate Week!

TORO

Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award 2009

The seven finalists attended the National Finals at BIGGA House on Sunday 13 and Monday 14 September. The finalists were grilled by the four judges during a 45-minute interview and had to produce a report on 9 holes of Aldwark Manor Golf Course.

Competition was fierce and all of the finalists performed to the highest standards making it a very difficult decision for the judges. After much deliberation the decision was made and the 2009 Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year was awarded to:

Rhys Norville, from Newport Golf Club, and representing Coleg Gwent Usk Campus

Rhys will be attending the Winter Turf School at the University of Massachusetts commencing in January 2010. Congratulations go to Rhys and a representative from Coleg Gwent, who wins a trip to the Golf Industry Show in San Diego, California.

The runners-up, who win a trip to Harrogate Week 2010, were: Benjamin Burrill, from Ilkley Golf

Club, representing Askham Bryan College. Adam Wise, from Richmond Golf Course, representing Myerscough College. Our congratulations go to all of the finalists.

Continue to Learn at Harrogate Week 2010

The Continue to Learn at Harrogate Week 2010 programme is now available. The printed brochure includes all Workshops and events that must be pre-booked. In an effort to increase our green credentials we have chosen to list all of the Seminars that are taking place during the BTME and ClubHouse Exhibition on the official Harrogate Week website: www.harrogateweek.org.uk.

The workshop programme will include:

Four two-day workshops:

Golf Course Design
Moving into Management
Practical Management of a Safety Management System
Preparing and Delivering Powerful Presentations

Nine one-day workshops:

Finance and Accounting for Golf Club Managers and Course Managers
Emergency First Aid
Irrigation: Planning, Installation and Water Management
Drainage: Theory, Practice and Realities
How to be an Outstanding Manager
Basic Golf Mechanic Workshop
ROLO Health and Safety Course



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

Sami Collins
Head of L&D
sami@bigga.co.uk

Rachael Duffy
L&D Administrator
rachael@bigga.co.uk

01347 833800 (option 3)

www.bigga.org.uk

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All of the workshops and pre-book seminars can be booked online via the Harrogate Week website or by contacting the Learning and Development Department on 01347 833800 and select option 3.

L&D Updates



Higher Education Scholarships
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The most recent scholarships have been awarded to Paul Handy - On Line Foundation Degree - Sports Turf

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.



Wiedenmann UK's Sales Team Host Interactive Business Sessions in Germany

Wiedenmann UK's sales team has hosted around 50 dealer staff in two days of interactive business sessions at their worldwide HQ at Rammingen, near Stuttgart, Germany.

"We were able to cover so much; from a very informative factory tour to quite detailed sales sessions where we updated dealers with news of sales aids, literature, pricing and product specifications," said David Rae,

Wiedenmann UK's Managing Director.

The party got a first look at many new machines including Terra Spikes, seeders, sorer rollers, salt spreaders and snow blades.

Wiedenmann now has its widest ever range of aerators, maintenance systems, sweeper collectors, material collection systems, mowers, blowers, snow and dirt machines and artificial turf maintenance equipment.

"Such sessions are a great opportunity for everyone," continued David.

"They create strong bonds between the dealer network and the manufacturer.

"The dealers can see first hand how we're looking to the future and pushing technical boundaries," he said, "and we benefit from the dealers' enthusiasm and feedback."



In New Territory

SISIS has appointed Mark Mitchell as Territory Manager for Bedfordshire/Cambridgeshire/Essex/Hertfordshire/Norfolk/Suffolk

Mark started in the turf industry in 1978 so has a wealth of experience and will be well know to many customers.

Mark lives with his partner Elaine and 4 daughters. His hobbies include ice hockey, which, until recently he played, but now gives encouragement from the side lines.

Mark can be contacted on 07970 642549 or email on: mark.sisis@btinternet.com

Appointment

Campey has strengthened its links with Sports grounds, golf clubs and local authorities in Ireland following the appointment of new Product Specialist, Brian O'Shaughnessy.

Brian, 46, who is based in north County Dublin, joins the company from IAM Groundcare. Prior to that, his background is in grass cutting machinery maintenance in both the domestic and commercial markets. Brian O'Shaughnessy can be contacted by phone on 00 353 87 927 4521, or by email at: brian@campeyturfcare.com

JOHN DEERE EXTENDS PATRON AGREEMENT WITH LADIES EUROPEAN TOUR

John Deere and the Ladies European Tour (LET) have extended their original patron agreement for two more years, during which Deere will enjoy the designation as the Tour's 'Official Supplier of Golf Course Machinery.'

"John Deere is very pleased to announce that we have added two more years to what has already been a fruitful relationship with the Ladies European Tour," said Nicole Chase, Director of Sales and Marketing for golf products in Europe.

"John Deere is proud of its longstanding relationship with the US PGA Tour and is confident its relationship with the LET will continue to grow."

Through this agreement, LET tournaments will be supported by John Deere equipment and irrigation products.

Deere officials will also continue to work closely with the LET's agronomists, with the goal of helping to produce better quality playing surfaces.



Separatorsplus and Waste-Away

Highspeed Lubricants Ltd created the Course Care brand in 1989 as a division of the company and the name is now established in the turf maintenance field.

Since a management buyout in 2001, the company has expanded its product range and services under the leadership of joint Managing Directors, Andy Vincent and David Mears and is also now fully licensed as a Waste Transfer Station.

Recently two new divisions have been formed: Separatorsplus and Waste-Away. It was felt that as lubricants only now form part of the portfolio, the company name did not truly reflect all activities.

It was decided to emphasise the now diverse product and services range and so Highspeed Lubricants Ltd recently became Highspeed Group Ltd.



Ransomes Spider is the Answer

Royal Belfast has taken a pioneering approach to managing its steep banks and slopes with the introduction of a Ransomes Spider II remote controlled mower from local Ransomes Jacobsen dealer Broderick (Northern Ireland) Ltd.

With the introduction of more rigorous Health and Safety standards, Course Manager Jim Eager, had to find alternatives for mowing

the steep banks that frame the lawn in front of the clubhouse.

Previously these were maintained with hover mowers, but this practice is now forbidden under tighter HSE rules.

“From the clubhouse members have an unspoilt view across the lawn to the Lough and the distant Antrim hills beyond.

When we were unable to

maintain the banks to the normal high standards we were under pressure to find an immediate solution,” he said.

“I spoke to Broderick’s and they quickly provided a demonstration of the Spider for the Greens Committee and my greenkeeping team.

It was immediately obvious that this was the ideal solution and with the committee’s backing, we placed the order.”

Princes Golf Club

Troon Golf has added Princes Golf Club as the newest member to its portfolio of managed courses.

The newly lengthened Championship course will also host final Open Qualifying in 2011 when the Open returns to neighboring venue Royal St. Georges.

“Princes Golf Club is one of the most traditional and esteemed golf clubs in England whose impressive history is hard to surpass. We are thrilled to be working with such an established name in golf and look forward to forging strong partnerships with the team there,” commented Bruce Glasco, Troon Golf’s Managing Director, Europe, Middle East & Africa.

Troon Golf is the world’s largest golf management company, overseeing operations at properties located in 31 states and 26 countries.



Indian Summer

A glamorous Bollywood siren, a major premium whisky brand and an international golfing initiative came together in India last week, when details were revealed of India’s largest-ever golf event.

The announcement, which comes hard on the heels of recent PowerPlay GolfR launch events in New Zealand and Canada, signals another step in the global expansion of golf’s new ‘two flag’ format.

Indian model and actress Neha Dhupia joined PowerPlay co-creator Peter McEvoy OBE at the media launch of the Signature Club Golf Championship 2009 in Mumbai, India.

The event, which covered 20 cities in 2008, will expand in 2009 to cover 30 cities across India, and will be played to PowerPlay GolfR rules throughout.

Best of Both Worlds

Scott MacCallum experienced two countries at the same time when he travelled to meet Allen Lewis at Llanmynech Golf Club.





You often hear the comment regarding big hitters that they can, "Hit it into the next county". Well, at a golf club near Oswestry every member can justifiably say that they can, "Hit it into the next country".

Now that's not to say that Llanmynech Golf Club is awash with John Daly or Laura Davies clones – the mind boggles at the very prospect – but that it is the only golf club in the world to straddle two countries, boasting three holes in England and 15 in Wales.

The course sits on Llanmynech Hill and has stunning views deep

along with his elder brother and their mum and dad, who were both Captains of the Golf Club, while his younger brother, Gareth, is now Course Manager at Oswestry Golf Club. Allen actually was a guest at Ian's *This Is Your Life* programme.

Woosie also grew up, and played, with Allen Lewis, the Course Manager, who has been at the club, man and boy, since 1972, when the course had only just grown from nine to 18 holes, but was still shared with sheep who enjoyed grazing rights on the Hill.

As we sat in his excellent maintenance facility, which sits close to the clubhouse but set down



into north Wales in one direction and Shropshire in the other while the area is so renowned for its beauty that it was chosen as the location for the 1995 Hugh Grant film, "The Englishman Who Went Up A Hill but Came Down a Mountain".

But let's not get carried away with the thought that Llanmynech's main claim to fame is its looks and not its substance. The course is certainly testing, testimony of which has been the number of high quality golfers who have come out of the club.

The current pro, Andy Griffiths, came through the junior ranks while there are a number of Welsh Senior team members currently playing out of the club.

Oh yes, it was also where a certain Ian Woosnam learned his golf. That's Ian Woosnam, the former Masters Champion, World Number One and European Ryder Cup Captain - not many clubs in world golf can boast of setting someone on the road to that calibre of greatness!

Ian grew up on Llanmynech

out of sight, Allen displays enormous affection for the club as he describes the progress and pitfalls that he has witnessed over the last 37 years.

"I left school at 15 with thoughts of perhaps joining the police force or entering the construction industry, but they had just stopped taking on apprentices, and jobs were rare.

"A job came up here and I met the Greens Chairman, who was working on the 12th green at the time, and I was offered the job. There was only two of us and 200 sheep at the time," recalled Allen, an Englishman with a Welsh accent.

A significant moment came when the club purchased the grazing rights in 1978 and the sheep were evicted, leaving the club to continue to develop and improve.

In 1979 an automatic watering system was installed, thanks in part to a grant from the Welsh Develop-



ment Board – the club, although registered under the Shropshire Union, has always been very good at attracting money from both sides of the border!

"The club raised the majority of the money for the irrigation system by offering a five year fixed membership fee at £250, limited to the first 50 members who took advantage of it. It meant that with

INSET ABOVE: Allen, third from the right, with a young Ian Woosnam fourth from the right (Courtesy of Llanmynech Golf Club, 75th Anniversary 1933-2008 publication)

INSET LEFT: Allen Lewis, Course Manager, sits on the tee of a unique hole.