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Sami Collins
sami@bigga.co.uk

Head of Membership Department

Tracey Maddison
traceymaddison@bigga.co.uk

Contact Us

BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Alne, York,
YO61 1UF
info@bigga.co.uk
www.bigga.org.uk
Tel – 01347 833800 | Fax – 01347 833801

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Editorial

Communications Manager / Editor

Scott MacCallum
Tel – 01347 833800 Fax – 01347 833801
scott@bigga.co.uk



Design

**Design and
Production Editor**
Tom Campbell

Tel – 01347 833800
Fax – 01347 833801
tom@bigga.co.uk



Advertising

Sales Executive
Jill Rodham

Tel – 01347 833800
Fax – 01347 833802
jill@bigga.co.uk

Printing

Warners Midlands Plc, The Maltings, Manor
Lane, Bourne, Lincolnshire PE10 9PH
Tel – 01778 391000 | Fax – 01778 394269

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Talent in abundance as we approach a big year

The talent within the BIGGA membership is ably showcased in this month's issue of Greenkeeper International. Not only do we feature the winners of this year's BIGGA Photographic Competition, but also show what you can achieve with hard work, a lot of study, and a scholarship courtesy of Ransomes Jacobsen.

Paul Hope's stunning picture of a four legged visitor to High Post Golf Club demonstrates everything that is good about golf and greenkeeping – golf and nature operating in perfect harmony. It is a wonderful photograph and one which would grace the portfolio of any professional photographer. It just goes to highlight the skills that are inherent within the BIGGA membership. And in Paul's case it's not a one off because he was runner-up in last year's Photographic Competition.

He is just one of a number of BIGGA members who take their hobby seriously and use the wonderful opportunities afforded to them thanks to working early mornings in photogenic surroundings. Congratulations to Paul, to runner-up Adam Grieve and third placed Gareth Anwell, and to all the other entrants.

I am sure that you will be impressed by the quality of the 2012 BIGGA Calendar.

James Hutchinson, of Fairhaven Golf Club, caught the education bug a few years ago and what he has achieved since has been quite remarkable.

He has balanced his home and professional life at Fairhaven, with the considerable demands of studying for a Foundation Degree at Myerscough College as well as becoming the Conservation Greenkeeper of the Year for 2010, in the STRI Golf Environment Awards. James is first to admit that he would not

have been able to move forward with his education if it had not been for the help he received from the R&A, BIGGA and Ransomes Jacobsen, through the Scholarship Scheme which has seen over £125,000 in grants given to BIGGA members to pay course fees. That financial support, from within the industry itself, is absolutely tremendous and certainly not something you would find in many other

When people ask what they get for their BIGGA membership perhaps the opportunity to have a quick word with James would make it a little clearer. You can read James' story this month.

It seems quite remarkable that yet another year has whizzed by and that we are about to enter 2012. When London was awarded the Olympics it did seem a long, long way away, but here we are on the threshold of what should be a momentous year for sport in Britain. That said, a look in the mirror should be more than enough to confirm that nearly six and a half years has passed since that Olympic announcement in July, 2005.

Hopefully, the feel good factor generated by a home Olympics will be infectious and golf, not an Olympic sport for another four years, will benefit from increased participation and clubs will get a much needed boost to their coffers.

I hope you all have a relaxing and enjoyable break over the holiday period.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Scott MacCallum
Editor

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Harrogate week **The ultimate turf management exhibition in Europe** **24 to 26 January 2012**

Continue to Learn 22 to 26 January 2012

at the Harrogate International Centre North Yorkshire, UK

BTME ClubHous Continue to learn

BIGGA's Quarter Century is a reason to celebrate, writes Scott MacCallum

Harrogate Week is always a special occasion for all those who attend, but Harrogate Week 2012 will be particularly so, as it not only celebrates the 25th anniversary of BIGGA Head, but also 100 years since the first surviving recorded minutes of BIGGA's oldest section - the very first greenkeeping Association.

Both events will be recognised during the week with a Celebration Evening to mark BIGGA's Silver Jubilee and an exhibition in the Halls to commemorate the centenary of greenkeeping Associations.

The story of change since 1907, never mind 1912, within the industry has been truly remarkable and Harrogate Week symbolises that.


The industry has often shared Harrogate 2012 would have had NGA's 100th anniversary event (held with amusement in 1907), and there is no sign of progress slowing.

Whatever the tasks which are required on the golf course, there will be a Halls in an R&A Department somewhere, looking at ways of making your professional life better or easier.

The fruits of their labours to date will be there for all to see in one of the four Halls at Harrogate International Centre, while the world renowned Continue to Learn programme ensures that those who take part are in a position to keep on top of all those industry developments.

It is a combination which has proved a very productive cocktail for all concerned over the years and, coupled with the unique Harrogate atmosphere for the Agers Show, it cannot be over the top when it comes to the all who attend.


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James Hutchinson used the support he got from an RJ Scholarship to achieve a Foundation Degree



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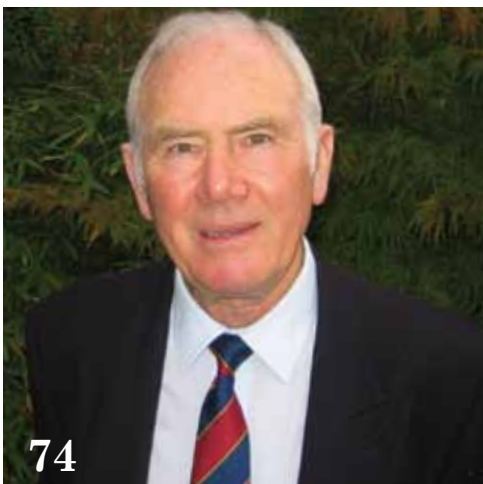
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The official monthly magazine of the British & International Golf Greenkeepers Association Limited.

Sports Turf Conference Success



The 2011 South East Regional Conference was hosted this year by the Essex Section at Stock Brook Manor Golf & Country Club.

Unfortunately the first speaker Darren Baldwin, Tottenham Hotspur Head Groundsman, was called away on business to Belgium, which resulted in a swift change around of the running order. First up, and Chairman for the day, was BIGGA's Chief Executive Officer, Jim Croxton.

Jim got proceedings under way quickly, giving a rundown on how he saw the Association progressing in the coming years.

First of the main speakers was Peter Craig, from the Hurlingham Club. He talked about the maintenance practices of Tennis and Croquet and showed the assembled, a Mallet, Ball and Croquet hoop. The tolerances that they work to are incredible. The hoop width has to be accurate to 1/32 inch for the recently held croquet championship. Additionally, Tennis, Bowls, Golf, Cricket and in and outdoor Swimming pools are all part of this fine club. He explained the cutting and maintenance practice of this renowned club.

He was followed by Past National Chairman Richard Whyman. Course Manager at Burnham & Berrow GC. Richard ran us through his maintenance practices, with a breakdown of fertiliser and chemical usage, topdressing regime and how he dealt with pests like rabbits. He explained the principles of his work programme and the ethics behind them. Richard showed graphs of his records, which he has been keeping over the 10 or so years he has been at the club.

Next to hit the floor was local boy, Stuart Kerrison, Head Man at Essex County Cricket Club, in Chelmsford. To we greenkeepers cricket seems a strange game with the misconception that the wicket is shaved to the root.

Fine maintenance, cutting and rolling are what are involved. Water is also a key factor and Stuart has only a 15mm main water supply to look after all of his ground, and that also has to feed his house and other buildings in the ground! So sometimes things are a bit tight for this fine ground.

He explained the need to keep the foot holes at each end, in good repair during a match and told of how this was achieved, sometimes at other grounds by devious

means. He even explained about the use of glue to stick the cracks in the wicket together.

A delicious lunch, provided by Stock Brook Manor, was warmly received by the 120 plus delegates and speakers, after which we moved to our last speaker of the day. Greg Evans Course Manager, at Ealing Golf Club.

Greg spoke about the problems of maintaining a course built on clay greens and his practices and principles of maintenance. He justified why he cut at 2mm and what he did to sustain the turf at that height of cut. His feeding and topdressing programme and the difficulties he faced throughout the year.

A number of delegates asked questions of the speakers, which then started a debate between the speakers and the floor with some very good questions and answers on a variety of turf related subjects.

The day was wound up by Jim Croxton, who thanked the speakers, the Essex Section and Terry Peachey, the owner of Stock Brook Manor. He then went on to thank all the delegates for attending and the 28 sponsors of the Essex Section who helped make this day possible.

Arnold Phipps-Jones

The Spectrum of Sports Turf Management



The South West and South Wales Regional Conference took place at the new venue of the Oaktree Arena and Conference Centre, Highbridge, with 134 in attendance. The theme for the day was “The Spectrum of Sports Turf Management” with presentations from Cale Bigelow, from Purdue University, in the US, Chris Haspell, from Castle Stuart Golf Links, Huw Morgan, from Ashburnham Golf Club, Craig Richardson, from Bristol City Football Club, and Mark Hunt, from Headland Amenity.

The programme gave an insight into the different aspects of managing sports turf and sports facilities.

These varied from the diverse requirements of a modern football stadium, to presenting a course for the Scottish Open and the problems which have to be dealt with when adverse weather takes its toll.

Along with these speakers the Region was pleased to welcome Jim Croxton the new BIGGA CEO who spent a little time telling delegates about their Association and the future plans.

*Jane Jones
South West and South Wales
Regional Administrator*

St Andrews Certified for Sustainability

St Andrews Links has become the first Open Championship venue to achieve the GEO Certified™ ecolabel in recognition of its sustainability commitment and achievements.

St Andrews Links Trust, which manages the seven courses at the Home of Golf including the Old Course and The Castle Course, has operated a sustainability programme for many years and this approach was described by Mike Wood, the accredited verifier, as being “close to defining an ideal model for sustainable management.”

In the GEO verification report the assessor praised the Trust’s commitment to social responsibility and community engagement as well as the eco-friendly manner in which the clubhouses, retail outlets and other facilities are operated.



They said that not only was the Trust nurturing a 600 year heritage as the birthplace of the

game, it was a “standard bearer for 21st Century good practice in golf management.”

INJURED GOLFER VERDICT

A golf club has been found 30% liable for an accident which resulted in a golfer losing an eye – the judge found that remaining 70% responsibility belonged to the golfer who played the shot which caused the injury.

See Jon Allbutt feature elsewhere in this issue “Golfer loses an Eye. Was this Avoidable?”

Damages have still to be finalised but a figure of around £400,000 had previously been agreed, and Niddry Castle Golf Club, in West Lothian, will be liable for approximately £120,000 of that.

Judge Lord Brailsford ruled that the club’s liability was for its failure to erect proper warning signs on the course.

He said the golf club should have erected signs alerting path users to potential hazards.

‘Experts considered that signs would have been a proper and effective way to draw risk to the attention of golfers and, moreover, that such signs, had they existed, would have been likely to have been heeded,’ he said.

‘I accordingly form the view that the failure to provide signs either at the 18th tee or in the area between the 6th green and 7th tee was a failure of duty’.



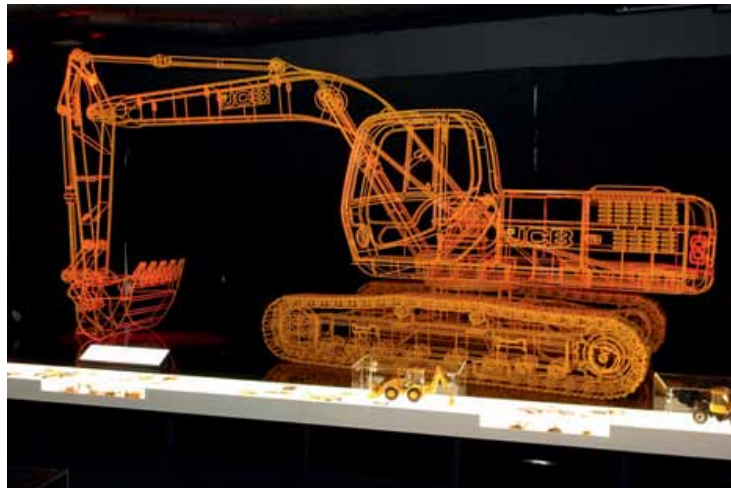
Toro Show Reel

When Chesterfield Golf Club undertook a three-year bunker renovation programme, they knew there was only one piece of kit to conquer the steep edges and sharp contours of their new hazards – a Toro Reelmaster 3100-D Sidewinder mower.

As part of a recently signed five-year deal with Toro distributor Lely UK, the Derbyshire club has invested in two 3100-Ds.

As Course Manager, Mark Crossley, said: “We needed a machine that would get around those hard-to-reach areas, and it does just that and more.”

The club, which has been using Toro machines for seven years, has also added two Greenmaster 1000s, a Groundsmaster 3500-D Sidewinder and a Debris Blower 600 to its fleet. What’s more, Mark is looking forward to the delivery of a further five Toro machines in the near future.



‘STORY OF JCB’ EXHIBITION SET TO GENERATE NEW EXPORT BUSINESS

The doors have been thrown open to a multi-million pound customer attraction at JCB.

The permanent exhibition, called The Story of JCB, has been developed at JCB’s HQ at Rocester charting the company’s links to industry back to the 1820s.

The exhibition covers 2,500m² of floorspace and includes 14 zones which take the visitor on a journey through time, starting in the 1820s, when the Bamford family were blacksmiths in Uttoxeter through to the present day and JCB’s ECO range of fuel-saving machines.

The exhibition is also populated by 10 of the landmark JCB machines through the ages which had to be craned through the roof as the attraction took shape.

The centrepiece of the exhibition is a giant skeletal model of a JCB JS200 tracked excavator built to scale out of 8mm steel rod and created by renowned artist Benedict Radcliffe, some of whose work is currently on display in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. The finished artwork took five months to complete, used around one kilometre of steel rod and weighs around two tonnes – a tenth of the weight of the actual machine it represents.

JCB currently welcomes around 15,000 visitors from all over the world and this figure is expected to rise to 20,000 from next year as a result of the exhibition.

Kingsbarns is Golf Course of the Year

Kingsbarns Golf Links has been voted the Golf Course of the Year at the Golf Tourism Scotland Gold Standard Awards held at the Fairmont, St Andrews Resort.

The St Andrews-based club was named Course of the Year for the fourth time, ahead of some of the leading courses in Scotland including Balcomie Links (Crail), the Carnoustie Championship Course, Castle Stuart Golf Links, Gullane No 2, Machrihanish Dunes, the New Course, St Andrews, North Berwick West Links, Pitlochry, the Old Course St Andrews, the Torrance Course (Fairmont St Andrews), the Ailsa Course at Turnberry and Western Gailes.

The GTS Gold Standard Awards are the only Scottish golf industry honours to be nominated by, and voted for by the industry itself. GTS members cast their votes online in the various categories.

EUROPEAN GOLF BODIES TO PROMOTE GROW THE GAME OF GOLF WEBSITE

A group of Golf organisations which include The European Tour, FEGGA, PGA’s of Europe, CMAE, EGCOA, GEO, EGIA and EIGCA, have agreed to expand and promote Grow the Game of Golf website.

The aim of the website is to encourage and inspire golf clubs and other golf organizations to help develop the game, particularly at grass roots level.

There are various successful ideas on the website you could acquire for the growth of golf at your golf club.

New machinery at Bothwell Castle



Bothwell Castle Golf Club recently signed a six year agreement with local Toro suppliers, Hamilton Brothers Ltd.

The deal, worth over £300,000, represents a significant investment in plant and machinery to ensure that the course at Bothwell Castle continues to be maintained to the highest standards.

Acting Head Greenkeeper Alasdair McDermid said "I am delighted with

the new machinery and thank the club for investing in what I consider to be the best greens equipment in the marketplace"

The 2011 Club Captain, Andrew Braidwood said "it was very important to get the best equipment but also to get the right deal for the club."

He went on to thank Hamilton Brothers Ltd for their assistance in securing this agreement.

The Club's General Manager, Jim Callaghan CCM said that "it is vitally important that the Club continues to invest in its equipment and facilities for the benefit of all its members and their guests.

This agreement demonstrates that the Committee and the Club is focused on providing the best possible playing surfaces on its golf course for years to come"

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Deanwood Park GC win Rigby Taylor Pairs Competition



This year's final of the Rigby Taylor Pairs Competition was contested between Sonning GC and Deanwood Park GC. The teams were blessed with fantastic sunny autumn weather on the day at The Berkshire, which made the course even more pleasurable to play.

A big thank you must go to Ian Morrison and his team for making everyone feel very welcome at short notice.

Sonning GC took an early lead with a 30 footer on the 1st. but the Deanwood Park team got there heads down and put in a performance worthy of past champions.

It was a very close fought battle and they were all square going to the last but with the threat of extra holes looming David Lyons (left) and John Bowness from Deanwood Park GC (right) won the hole, making them the 2011 Rigby Taylor winners.

Gareth Acteson, Rigby Taylor Area Sales Manager



Jim McKenzie Receives MBE

Celtic Manor's Jim McKenzie looks resplendent in a tartan suit when he visited Buckingham Palace to be presented with his MBE by HRH The Prince of Wales.

"It was fitting that it was Prince Charles who made the presentation as I'd met him during the Ryder Cup itself," said Jim.

He was awarded the honour following last year's Ryder Cup when he led his team of Celtic Manor staff and volunteer greenkeepers in overcoming the horrendous weather conditions which came close to causing the historic match to be postponed.

Working every available hour the match – one of the most exciting in the Ryder Cup's history - was concluded on a precedent setting fourth day, with Colin Montgomerie's Europe team clinching a narrow victory.

BIGGA SOUTH WEST AND SOUTH WALES REGION SPONSOR PLACES TO HARROGATE WEEK 2012

This year the Regional Board of the South West and South Wales Region has decided to sponsor one place from each of the four Sections on the Region's Harrogate Week accommodation package giving four people the opportunity to attend the show and seminars.

Each committee has been asked to select someone from their Section who they feel would benefit from the experience. This opportunity has been made possible due to the RA's work in

stabilising and growing the financial position of the Region and the support of the Region's Patrons.

Thanks go to Patrons - Ransomes Jacobsen, Irritech Limited, Countrywide, Avoncrop Amentiy, W T and R J Jones, Farmura, Huxley Golf, Martyn Lane Golf, Everris, and Sports Metals for the support they give to the region through the Patronage Scheme.

Following their experience each of the four winners will be asked to write a small

piece on their experience of Harrogate Week for the magazine.

Together with these sponsored places the region's subsidized accommodation package is also available to members and is for three night's bed and breakfast at The Cairn Hotel arriving Monday, January 23, 2012 and departing Thursday, January 26. Any member of the region interested should contact BIGGA Regional Administrator, Jane Jones on 01454 270850 or mobile 07841948110.