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DEALER OF THE MONTH

The series aimed at celebrating the great work done by dealerships up and down the country

FAROL LTD

Location and size: Key services offered:

Five depots (Head office near Oxford, Daventry, Hungerford, Hinckley and Midhurst). Turnover is around £50M p.a.

Employees and size of premises:

35 employees. HQ is on a seven acre site just off JCT7 of the M40.

Number of service vans:

35 Mobile technicians (42 Technicians in total)

Brief history of company:

Farol Ltd was started in 1976 by George Vellacott selling new and used agricultural equipment, and today the business is headed up by George's son Matt as well as other directors who have joined the business over the years. Originally a Fiat tractor dealer, then taking on Case tractors in 1988, Farol expanded steadily, and built a reputation for excellent aftersales support.

When they were awarded the John Deere dealership in 2004 the growth came rapidly and although Farol operated predominantly in the agricultural industry, in January 2011 they were awarded the professional turf product range by John Deere. Complimented by several other key franchises, Farol are now a major groundcare dealer throughout central England in addition to the continually growing agricultural business. Farol have always maintained an extensive export business for used equipment and sell machines across the globe.

Parts and service specialists at each depot offer round the clock support to all Farol customers, with an extensive selection of key parts stocked across the five branches and menu pricing for servicing.

Sales specialists can offer expert advice, and provide demonstrations of a comprehensive range of products so customers can ensure they get the right machine for the job.

Specialist services offered:

Farol tyres offer a full range of replacement tyres for horticultural, agricultural, plant and HGV vehicles, with a team of 14 mobile tyre fitters available 24/7 for repairs or replacements.

Farol are also an NSTS sprayer testing station, can offer Dynamometer testing, as well as being JD AMS specialists and vehicle security specialists.

How has the dealership changed over the years?

Products have become more advanced to improve customers efficiency and productivity, so more informed and expert advice is required.

Farol have invested heavily in training all key staff to very high levels of competency and put teams of dedicated specialists in place to ensure that we can provide the best solutions for today's very competitive market place.

This investment is only viable



in a large commercial operation, so Farol has expanded significantly over recent years to make sure that they are well positioned and adaptable to cope with the changing trends.

What would you like to see changed?

Apart from the obvious "wishes" i.e. improved economic environment and consistent weather patterns, it would be good to see an increase in the profile of the Horticultural and Agricultural industries improved from a careers point of view.

Although industry bodies are doing their utmost to attract youngsters into the industry, it needs more emphasis at national government level.

The skill levels and diverse range of careers available have a broad appeal but attracting new talent into our trade is a constant challenge.

Although having a large business with structured career and education paths is critical to attaining and retaining quality staff.

Do you support customers who have in-house service facilities?

A number of our customers operate their own workshops, and we are always on hand to offer service advice and support when needed, as well as supplying parts support. All of our branches have showrooms stocked with all the necessary sundries and tools that our customers may need, so we are well equipped to support customers at all levels.

Major customers:

Some of the better known clubs in our region who deal with Farol are The Belfry, The Forest of Arden, The Oxfordshire, Moor park and Frilford Heath.

Franchises

- John Deere, Wiedenmann, ALLETT, Stihl, Campey Turfcare, Trimax, AS Motor, and many more.

To nominate a GI Dealer of the Month contact Scott MacCallum with your reasons why the dealer of your choice should be featured...
Email scott@bigga.co.uk

Recruitment

TURRIFF GOLF CLUB

HEAD GREENKEEPER

The Club seeks applicants with the following skills, to maintain our 18 hole, parkland course:

- At Least 3 years as a Deputy Head Greenkeeper
 - Qualified to NVQ3 or equivalent
 - Spraying Certificates PA1, 2 & 6
- Proven Strong Supervisory and Communication Skills
- Understanding of Parkland Courses & Ecological Management

Salary is negotiable based on previous experience

The Club also seek: **A Qualified Greenkeeper**

Closing Date for both positions 25th November 2011

Please Apply in writing to: The Greens Convener
Turrieff Golf Club, Rosehall, Turrieff, AB53 4HD

Or e-mail secretary@turrieffgolf.sol.co.uk



Greenkeeper

A 9 hole links course situated in the North West Highlands wish to appoint a hardworking and conscientious Greenkeeper to work with the minimum of supervision. Candidates must be competent in all greenkeeping tasks

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Application by letter to
The Secretary, Gairloch Golf Club, Gairloch IV21 2BE
or email to gairlochgolfclub@hotmail.co.uk

Or telephone 01445 731 193
www.gairlochgolfclub.co.uk

Closing date for applications 30th November 2011

Assistant Greenkeeper

Hersham Golf Club is a 18 hole parkland course adjacent to Hersham railway station.

The Course Manager is seeking to appoint a full time Assistant Greenkeeper as part of his team. The successful candidate must be proficient in all aspects of golf course maintenance procedures, be hard working and have a minimum of 1 years experience.

Full uniform and PPE will be provided.

Salary will be from £13,000 subject to experience.

Applications by e-mail or post with a covering letter and CV to:

Kevin Day, Course Manager, Herhsam Golf Club, Assher Road, Herhsam, Surrey, KT12 4RA or email hershamgolfclubltd@btconnect.com



THE GOG MAGOG GOLF CLUB

Cambridge

Head Greenkeeper



The Gog Magog Golf Club is seeking to appoint an experienced and highly motivated Head Greenkeeper.

Located on the outskirts of Cambridge and overlooking the city and its surrounds, the Club boasts two fine 18-hole chalk downland golf courses and extensive practice facilities.

The Old Course (1901) hosts The Lagonda Trophy and the Wandlebury Course (1997) is a Regional Qualifying Course for The Open. Other prestigious competitions are held on the courses, including various national events.

The successful applicant will be responsible to the Management Council of the Club via the Club's Secretary Manager and will be joining a Club committed to its staff and their on-going development.

Responsibility will be for all aspects of the Club's 390 acre estate, except the Clubhouse.

Applicants for the position, in addition to being experienced and highly motivated, should possess the following attributes:

- A senior position at another golf club with experience of presenting high quality courses both for top level tournament play and for the membership.
- Leadership and man management skills to motivate the current experienced green-keeping team.
- Financial awareness and the ability to compile and control budgets which will require computer and literacy skills.
- Appropriate agronomic experience and the ability to develop efficient and effective course management strategies in line with the Club's Course Policy Document.
 - Good knowledge of current Health & Safety & COSHH legislation.
 - A generous and tolerant attitude to staff and the Club's 1200 playing Members.

The remuneration package offered would reflect the importance of the position and is negotiable, dependent on experience.

Initial on-site accommodation is available if required.

Please send your CV with covering letter detailing your experience and marked 'Private and Confidential' to:

Kevin Mader, Secretary Manager, The Gog Magog Golf Club, Shelford Bottom, Cambridge CB22 3AB

by post or preferably e-mail to kevin.mader@gogmagog.co.uk

Closing date for applications is Monday 28th November 2011

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Eight Directors have been appointed to the Board of the Fife Golf Trust - with representation from the Royal & Ancient (R&A), St Andrews Links Trust and Elmwood College as well as 3 elected members from Fife Council.

The Golf Courses Manager will support the Golf Services Manager in driving forward the delivery of quality public golf courses that exceed traditional municipal expectations .

Highly motivated, inspirational and professional you are an experienced people and budget manager with a track record

of achievement. You should have a passion and understanding for the best traditions of the game of golf and a keen awareness of the financial and cultural challenges that face the sport today. Organisational, technical and communication skills will be crucial in ensuring that improvements are delivered and changes are well communicated to all key stakeholders.

With significant experience as a Head Greenkeeper/ Course Manager or equivalent you will possess appropriate qualifications and have an ability to mentor and encourage skills development.

For more information and an Application Pack email : golf@fife.gov.uk

Applications to be received by Wednesday 30th November

Assistant Greenkeeper

Lingfield Park is a unique Country Club environment offering in addition to a beautiful 18 hole championship woodland course and Golf Academy, horseracing and a Marriott Hotel.



We are looking for an Assistant Greenkeeper to join our established team. An NVQ2 in Sports Turf Management or equivalent as well as PA1, 2a & 6a are an advantage but not essential for the right candidate. A full clean driving licence is essential. Salary dependant on experience.

To apply please send a CV, plus salary expectations to:
Mrs Anne Graziano, Deputy Human Resources Manager,
Lingfield Park Racecourse, Lingfield, Surrey, RH7 6PQ
agraziano@lingfieldpark.co.uk

Closing date for applications: 18th November 2011

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On the Soapbox

As part of a mini series, people from the industry discuss what they have gained from attending Harrogate Week. This month, Past BIGGA Chairman, Billy McMillan, reminisces...

I attended the very first Harrogate and can particularly recall the Royal Hall where the education was held. It was an eerie place and I distinctly remember the echoes.

Education was absolutely the main focus of why I was there and I remember Jim Arthur as a speaker, as was my dad and Walter Woods.

If I'm honest, we couldn't see the images on the screen, and the acoustics were poor because the IT at the time wasn't the best, but it was a very exciting time for a young greenkeeper.

Once a speaker had finished I used to rush out, run round the stands and get back to hear the next speaker, sneaking in the side door trying to not be found out.

Today we've found a wonderful balance of ensuring an audience for the Continue to Learn programme as well as a footfall for BTME.

This has not just happened but is the culmination of a lot of hard work and know-how.

The IT, which backs up the education nowadays, is exceptional and certainly on a par with anything else I've seen anywhere.

In fact many other bodies have said to me that they had learned a lot on how to set up their own conferences.

We have certainly done a lot of good things at Harrogate during the past number of years.

Outside of education the one thing, more than any other, that I get from Harrogate is the camaraderie.

This has grown beyond my wildest dreams and I can't think of any other industry where you can go, sit down with your peers and share time.

Frankly we learn just as much out of the Educational programme in the restaurants around the town at night then ever we do in the formal setting.

We are blessed, aren't we?

I've made so many friends, and not just in the UK. I've now got close friends in Scandinavia, Canada, America, all over the world in fact, and not just greenkeepers, there are Professors and experts in their field.

They are all accessible, give freely of their time and don't limit it to the podium to chew the fat.

This is a very personal industry and we are an extended family.

Even with the trade I have made as many friends from all the companies which show at Harrogate over the years, never mind

greenkeepers being passionate, they possess every bit as much love for the business as we do.

That's not to say that everyone agrees, but what strikes you when two people don't agree is that a healthy debate that takes place and at the end of it, there they would be in the bar having a drink together.

No malice and 99% of the time the reason for the argument would be agronomic.

A difference of opinion and a bit of passion is a wonderful thing to behold.

Some of the machinery that I have seen for the first time at Harrogate is wonderful.

There is no substitute for touching, feeling, seeing and discussing.

I can still remember seeing the latest innovations covering every area of golf course equipment we could ever wish to use on show at Harrogate.

If it is market leading and worth having, invariably it has been at Harrogate.

It is an exciting place to be on the product front and also and you can always expect to see the latest materials on show around the halls from seed to soil and everything in-between.

Today we've found a wonderful balance of ensuring an audience for the Continue to Learn programme as well as a footfall for BTME

After I'd experienced around 15 Harrogate's, and never getting much sleep, I introduced a basic rule some years ago.

I would try to get to bed on the same day as I got up.

I'm not a drinker, but what I am is a hoarder of information and I'm hungry to absorb everyone's views.

But there is never enough time and although I introduced this new rule it has never actually worked.

I still find myself starved of sleep during the course of a week.

I remember one year I accumulated nine and a half hours sleep over the entire week.

It wasn't uncommon for me to look at my watch and realise that it was easier for me to go to breakfast than it was to go to bed.

I'm not sure if people quite appreciate how much we take over Harrogate town during the week.

If you walk down any street or pop into any restaurant you will find that it is full of greenkeepers, sometimes upwards of a hundred of them.

I've been strolling through the town and got chatting to someone on a street corner and ended up there for an hour talking about the benefits of bent over fescue, or red machines, over orange machines over green machines or deep aeration over shallow aeration.

As for my own personal highlights I have too many to mention but I can particularly remember my year as Chairman – handing out prizes and representing the Association.

That year was the highlight of my career representing greenkeepers at our show what a treat that was for me personally.

For those people who have never been all I can say is that it will exceed your wildest expectations.

If you are not a social animal you can always tag along, not say a word and earwig.

You will still learn a tremendous amount. I learn more in four days than I could learn in years and you can't get close to the buzz I get driving home.

My life would be a sadder place without Harrogate, of that I'm pretty sure.



BIGGA Past Chairman, Billy McMillan, enjoying a desert at last year's Social Night

Billy McMillan

The views expressed within On The Soapbox are not necessarily those of Greenkeeper International



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