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GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

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



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Association, and no responsibility is accepted
for such content, advertising or product
information that may appear. Circulation is by
subscription. Subscription rate: UK £50 per
year, Europe and Eire £65, Rest of the World
£95. The magazine is also distributed to BIGGA
members, golf clubs, local authorities, the turf
industry, libraries and central government.



100% recycled paper



ISSN: 0961-6977

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Greenkeepers Association Limited



Open support

Ernie Els was rightly hailed for his brilliant back nine that piled pressure on Adam Scott and brought him his first major for ten years, but congratulations must also go to Paul Smith, his team and all the volunteer greenkeepers including the BIGGA Support Team who fought the elements to provide a first class examination at Royal Lytham & St Annes Golf Club for the 141st Open Championship.

Last year's Open passed in a bit of a blur for me coming so soon in to my time with BIGGA so this year it was immensely gratifying to have the chance to be involved with the Support Team from the very beginning and to witness the extraordinary teamwork and determination from all concerned first hand.

The Open is a great opportunity to remind the golf industry of just how vital quality course management and the thousands of skilled practitioners who provide the excellent playing conditions are particularly bearing in mind the standards that modern golfers have come to expect.

Recently though we have spent too much time counseling and advising members facing redundancy at golf clubs that are undergoing financial hardship. The golf industry is not immune to the effects of the global recession but it is surely a false economy to place at risk the effective management of a facility's prime asset – its course.

Deterioration in course condition, as we have read in previous editions, has a major downward impact on club revenue so golf clubs are placing their very existence in jeopardy by making skilled, educated, professional course managers and head greenkeepers redundant.

Attending the Championship at Lytham provided the opportunity to make

representation to many industry bodies that can attempt to influence decision makers at club level and I am delighted that our message was heard loud and clear and was well received. We continue to work hard with our various industry partners on this crucial issue.

As Andrew Mellon departs for warmer climes we welcome Tony Smith as BIGGA's 25th Chairman and look forward to working closely with him and his Vice Chairman Chris Sealey to continue to implement the Board's vision for the Association.

Both men have considerable experience in the industry and at Board level and I know they are hugely committed to the success of BIGGA.

With The Open behind us it is now time for the team here at BIGGA House to begin the detailed planning for BTME in January 2013.

In this edition we preview the Turf Managers Conference which is shaping up to be a must attend event for next year for all course managers and head greenkeepers. Pencil Monday 21st January in to your diary now!

Enjoy the read.



**Jim Croxton,
BIGGA CEO**

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The BIGGA test

The BIGGA National Championship 2012, sponsored by Charterhouse and Kubota, will be played at the glorious Irvine Golf Club, at Bogside, in Scotland. In this 25th year of BIGGA, Irvine GC is 125, so the championship in October should be a celebration to remember. Jim Cook returned from the trip north with splendid photography and words to match.

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BTME

The BIGGA Turf Management

incorporating:

BIGGA Seminars & Workshops

20-23 January 2012

Continue to learn



Continue to learn

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TORO

Toro Student of the Year 2012

The National final

The finalists for the annual Toro Student of the Year competition, held at BIGGA House, have been now been chosen.

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Six of the best

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Change at the top for BIGGA

New BIGGA chairman Tony Smith officially took the reins from outgoing Andrew Mellon on the first afternoon of the Open Championships.

Andrew Mellon, who is departing to become general manager of Hydroturf in Qatar, handed the badge to current vice-chairman Tony Smith, of Teeside Golf club, who has been a member of the Board of Management since 2007.

Tony thanked the now ex-chairman for his terrific efforts during his tenure, adding: "I hope to keep the flag flying for the Association."

Andrew said: "The members are the strength of the Association. The work you do can't be underestimated – without you there wouldn't be any golf courses."

"We've got a fantastic, diverse and passionate team and wish you all the best for the future."

The Board have formally elected Chippenham Golf Club's Chris Sealey, who has been the Board Member representative of the South West and South Wales Region for four years, to be Vice Chairman in support of Tony Smith. Chris (right) is delighted to accept and has the full support of his Golf Club who are thrilled with his appointment.



A Technical Move for BIGGA L&D



As the focus of BIGGA continues to be on developing the Learning and Development pathway for members it has moved to strengthen the L&D Department.

Stuart Green, formerly of Askham Bryan College, has joined as L&D Executive.

He joins long serving L&D Manager, Sami Collins and L&D Executive, Rachael Duffy.

Stuart brings a wealth of technical greenkeeping knowledge alongside his

valuable experience within the greenkeeper education system having had more than eight years service as a greenkeeper including time at Gleneagles and Bushey Hall Golf Club."

"I'm really looking forward to working for BIGGA," says Stuart.

"Education is fundamental to the professional standing of greenkeepers and BIGGA is at the forefront of delivering and supporting its members.

"This is where I want to be."



11th hole at Carnoustie Golf Links

A Hole in Honour

As reported in last month's Greenkeeper International, Carnoustie Golf Links has made the momentous decision to honour the work of John Philp MBE, recently retired Links Superintendent, by naming a hole in his honour.

On Friday 29 June the 383 yard par four 11th hole on the Championship Course, host to seven Open Championships, was officially renamed John Philp. The 11th hole was chosen as it is close to the Greenkeepers' Maintenance Facility, the nerve centre of John's operation for the past 27 years.

Carnoustie Golf Links Management Committee chairman Gordon Wilson said: "I think everybody knows how important John has been for Carnoustie and bringing The Open back here.

"There was a lot of talk about hotels, access and improved facilities, but the most important thing was the condition of the golf course.

"He is the man who secured that."

Greenkeepers, caddies, the Golf Links Management Committee, friends and family joined chairman Gordon Wilson to express the great depth of appreciation felt for Mr Philp and his contribution to golf.

Colin McLeod, golf services manager at Carnoustie Golf Links, said: "This is a rare thing in golf and even rarer on an Open Championship course.

"The last renaming of a hole on the course was in 2003, which marked 50 years since Ben Hogan won The Open Championship at Carnoustie."

BIGGA Chairman, Andrew Mellon said, "I am so pleased to see John's lifelong efforts recognised

with such a significant honour. I have met and talked with John several times in the last few years, and his passion for greenkeeping is always apparent.

"His kindness and willingness to share his experience and knowledge with you also knows no bounds. I've been fortunate enough to attend several events at Carnoustie and I have not seen better turf condition anywhere."

During his speech at the 11th hole John thanked many people including his mentor and greenkeeping legend Walter Woods BEM who was present and the late Dalhousie Golf Club captain Jock Calder, who played a leading role in bringing The Open back to Carnoustie.

He also highlighted the role played by the links staff. John said: "I accept this tremendous honour on behalf of everybody on my team, because at the end of the day it is a team effort, and I am just a team leader.

"That is what has made it all possible, along with the investment of the management committee over the years."

He was a spectator during the 1968 Open at Carnoustie, and explained he had no idea where his love of golf would lead him. He said: "Little did I know when I came here in 1968 to the Open Championship to watch Gary Player in the final round that I would end up here.

"It's been a great privilege and pleasure working at Carnoustie, just as I did at St Andrews.

"I have a great many happy memories from my career and a lot of them are from here in Carnoustie."



BIGGA Member hits the Headlines in Local US Newspaper

International member, Sean Sullivan, golf course superintendent at Billings Country Club in Montana, north USA, was featured ahead his involvement in the BIGGA Open Support Team this July.

The coverage shows the interest that being part of this prestigious event can generate, and one of the many rewards being a BIGGA member can bring.

Congratulations to Sean for making his local media aware of his involvement, and of the contribution from the entire BIGGA support team

A full review of the Open, from Royal Lytham & St Annes, featuring photographs and quotes from the support team, is on pages 32-37.

Turf Science goes Live!



Turf Science Live, held at De Vere Carden Park in Cheshire last month (3-4 July 2012), provided a practical, hands on, in-sight into some of the latest technologies and pioneering future developments geared to managing sports turf and enhancing the playing experience for users.

Organised by Everris, Jacobsen and Syngenta, the event focussed on exploiting the potential of integrating all facets of turf management.

Syngenta Turf & Landscape Manager, Simon Elsworth, said: "Turf Science Live brings together three like-minded companies, where investment in research and development is integral to the creation of effective and efficient new products, along with the knowledge to put them into practice."

104 Course Managers and Groundsmen from across the country attended the event, experiencing seven showcase presentations and picking up 2.25 BIGGA CPD credits in the process:

- Turf Application on Target
- Wetting Agent Technology

Unravelling

- Where did my Nutrients Go?
- Innovation in NPK
- True Measure of Reliability
- Clip Rate Masterclass
- Integration in Action – an integrated turf management approach to improve plant health and reduce disease



The informative day was topped off by an excellent evening of hospitality from Everris, Jacobsen and Syngenta allowing all attendees the opportunity to meet and network with their peers and key players within the industry.



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BIGGA Announce Seminar Programme for SALTEX 2012

BIGGA is delighted to have once again, been invited by the IOG to present a series of seminars at SALTEX 2012, from The Grandstand, Royal Windsor Race Course, on Wednesday 5 September 2012.

The line-up is as follows...

10.15 am – 11.15 pm: Managing Winter Kill, David Cole, Golf Course/Estate Manager, Loch Lomond Golf Club

In the winter of 2009/10 the greens at Loch Lomond suffered from devastating winter kill. This session will give an insight to the damage that occurred and the precautions that were taken in

2010/11 to prevent similar problems.

11.30 am – 12.30 pm: From Grazing to Scottish Open Status in Five Years: Chris Haspell, Course Manager at Castle Stuart Golf Club

In this session Chris will discuss his experiences of building a links golf course and it's grow in. He will also describe the journey towards the Scottish Open 2011, the event, the rain and the recovery.

1.00 pm – 2.00 pm: Organic Matter – Friend or Foe, Paul Lowe, Technical Sales Manager, Symbio

Measuring organic matter levels is becoming very popular, almost an industry standard procedure. This

information can be invaluable to green keepers and grounds men.

However, how do we decipher between thatch and organic matter and why it is important to do so. This seminar will discuss the various differences between problematic thatch and beneficial organic matter, the problems with working to a figure, the difference between drainage and percolation rates and how you can turn the thatch to your advantage.

BIGGA CPD Credits - 0.5 CPD credits are available for each seminar. A CPD register will be available at the end of each seminar.

ONCE AROUND THE PARK AND HOME, JAMES!



Oake Manor Golf Club course manager James Williams, left, and deputy course manager Ian Larcombe with their new Toro mowers.

A popular course in Somerset, managed by BIGGA member, James Williams, has bought two new Toro greensmowers to help maintain its 18-hole golf course.

After a competitive demonstration to James, Oake Manor Golf Club in Taunton invested in a Greensmaster TriFlex Hybrid 3420 riding greensmower and a Greensmaster 1000 pedestrian greensmower.

TriFlex is one of Toro's

newest innovations, with its all-electric cylinder drive system – virtually eliminating hydraulic leaks – particularly appealing to James.

"Our greens are the most important thing to us," he says, "so we don't want to jeopardise them by risking hydraulic leaks. We felt we could use the TriFlex on the greens with confidence, making it a better investment for us than a hydraulic machine."

And having invested in the

very latest greens-mowing technology, James is appreciative of Toro's commitment to building the TriFlex from the ground up and incorporating customer feedback.

"Toro have built their machines with the likes of me in mind. They listen to feedback from the people who are out on the course every day and have then created brilliant products that are comfortable and easy to use."

But whether he's using the newest model or a popular classic like the Greensmaster 1000 – another new addition – it's the whole-life costs and long-term retention of his fleet's value that keeps James coming back to Toro.

"The robustness of a Toro is second-to-none," he adds. "Whenever I renew my machinery I get demos from the top manufacturers, but Toro has always been a leader of the pack."

Glen Gives Verti-Drain the Seal of Approval



Faster operation with great quality results from the Verti-Drain 7215 is getting the thumbs-up at Felixstowe Ferry Golf Club.

The fifth oldest club in England, the 27 hole complex near the major port of Felixstowe, Suffolk features the 18-hole undulating Martello Course, a 6379 yard Par 72 next to the sea with stunning views over the East Anglian coast and Deben River.

The nine-hole Kingsfleet course of 2986 yards Par 35 is available for 'Pay and Play' visitors, offering views across the River Deben and marshes and is as challenging as the Martello course, having two Par 5 holes.

The course is currently being returned to its original links condition, with firming up the greens an important task.

Head Greenkeeper Glen Rayfield explains: "We had a 7316

Verti-Drain for 13 years which was an excellent machine, but when it came up for renewal I was looking for a quicker operation, so the 7215 is ideal. Depending on the size of the tine used, we can save 2-4 hours on 18 holes."

He adds that the 1.5m working width 7215 can be used with a variety of tines from 10-22mm diameter, which he rotates throughout the year to achieve the optimum shattering effect, getting air into the turf and creating fissures which get water away and keep greens in play in the wettest of conditions.

"The extra speed makes a big difference, but the Verti-Drain can still work to 25cm (10in) deep and produce a really good quality, consistent hole, which other high speed machines can't achieve," he comments. "It is also very competitively priced."

Glen praises the build quality of the Verti-Drain, adding that he finds parts easily available and the machine simple to maintain.

"I would expect to get at least 10 years out of this machine – we will work it a bit harder than the previous Verti-Drain which is still going strong and has been kept as a back-up," he says.

Felixstowe Ferry Golf Club has also enjoyed an excellent relationship with local dealer Tomlinsons.

"Adrian Brown and his team have been fantastic, so it was an obvious choice to have another Verti-Drain supplied by them – they have always given us good support in the event of a problem or query.

"The Verti-Drain is a simple and effective machine – it does exactly what it says on the tin."

Calling all BIGGA Members

Have you changed any of your contact details since you last gave them to us? If so, please get in touch with us at BIGGA Membership.

Our email address is membership@bigga.co.uk

Contact details can include your email address, phone number, change of address, change of club etc.

Thanks in advance, for keeping us up to date!

An Open return



Head Greenkeeper Paul Smith, Royal Lytham & St Annes, explains the importance of the clubhouse in the championship.



The clubhouse is a key feature of the championship, providing a central point for players and spectators.

An Open Return

Last month's preview of The Open Championship at Royal Lytham & St Annes, was written by Head Greenkeeper, Paul Smith. The splendid photography which accompanied it was provided by BIGGA Affiliate Member, Alan Birch.

Unfortunately, due to an error on our behalf, Alan was not captioned within the piece. GI wishes to apologise to Alan and thank him for his contribution, and for the many other occasions he supplies BIGGA with complimentary photography.

