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Head of Learning & Development

Sami Collins
sami@bigga.co.uk

Head of Membership Department

Tracey Maddison
traceymaddison@bigga.co.uk

Contact Us

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

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Editorial/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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High Post Golf Club, this month's Course Feature, taken by the winner of last year's BIGGA Photographic Competition, Paul Hope

Changes (also in the weather)

They say the British are obsessed with the weather and in my experience that is also true of the greenkeeping profession!

Last month I wrote of drought orders in the midst of about five weeks of constant rain, and this month we bring better news on the irrigation front whilst the sun absolutely 'cracks the flags'. The dramatic changes and extreme weather patterns we are experiencing make the need for highly trained, committed greenkeepers even more important, if we are to ensure that golfers have courses that are fit to play on.

The bright sunshine may be not what the water authorities are looking for but I was delighted that the European Tour's flagship event, the BMW PGA Championship was played out in stunning conditions.

It provided a glorious end to Chris Kennedy's epic career at Wentworth.

A tournament won by a British world number 1 in superb style was a fitting climax to the 52nd Tour event to be held under Chris's stewardship. Now retirement awaits, enjoy it Chris, you've certainly earned it.

Having watched Luke Donald show us all how it is done our attention turns to finding out who will be BIGGA's Champion Golfer of 2012.

I am delighted that Kubota and Charterhouse have once again chosen to support the BIGGA National Championship as title sponsors.

The event will take place on 8th and 9th October with the excellent Irvine GC on the West coast of Scotland providing the examination for all those bidding to succeed Jason Hunt to be engraved on our prestigious trophy.

The entry form is available now on page 58, and at www.bigga.org.uk

Entries are limited so don't delay.

Many of you will be aware that we have been going through a period of change at BIGGA House as we seek to ensure the Association is, to use the modern vernacular, fit for purpose.

The Board of Management and I have been working closely together to produce a Business Plan to provide direction over the next three to five years. The principles of the Plan will be made available to members on www.bigga.org.uk in the near future.

This month we welcome two new additions to the staff replacing the recently retired long standing Regional Administrators.

John Young from Gourock has taken over the reins from Peter Boyd in Scotland and Sandra Raper fills the sizable shoes of Peter Larter in the Midlands and North.

Both brought great energy and ideas to the recruitment process and will I am certain serve the needs of the membership with great diligence.



Jim Croxton
Chief Executive

JUNE 2012

FEATURES

20 Preparing Slaley Hall (Part Two)

The second of our three part feature, offering an insight in to the preparations for the ISPS Handa PGA Seniors Championship at Slaley Hall, continues this month, as Nathaniel Sylvester of the PGA, meets up with Course Manager, Steve Cram



24 A life changing trip

The Toro Student of the Year in 2011, Matt Perks, tells the tale of his trip to the US, a reward for his success

28 Protecting turf pesticides in the marketplace (Part Two)



Dr Terry Mabbett continues his look at European Threats. Once more, for Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers

34 High hopes

Jim Cook visits High Post Golf Club, in Wiltshire, the subject of the 2011 BIGGA Photographic Competition, won by it's greenkeeper, Paul Hope



40 Algae in ponds and lakes

Basis points at the ready for those of you wishing to get more on the board, thanks to Graham Paul



High hopes

Jim Cook takes a trip to Wiltshire, to meet the team at High Post GC, a club with ambition as high as the level of beauty it entails

Last year, Paul Hope, a greenkeeper at High Post Golf Club, won BIGGA's 2011 photographic competition with a stunning shot of a deer prancing over the course at first light.

After a visit to the club, one of the striking features was how much of an oasis, or even haven, this picturesque Wiltshire course offers for many other types of rare and elusive wildlife as well as deer.

It was a warm day in mid-May when I met with Course Manager, Lachlan Morrison and the team at High Post. Lachlan was keen to speak about the importance of ecology to this club and said:

"We're in the process of progressively clearing scrubby areas and regenerating our grass areas. We've so planted grass in new areas and it's looking quite impressive, with new plants growing through where we cleared. We've also exposed a grass

tree next to the 6th tee which was previously covered and some holly trees."

Paul Hope said: "The wildlife is abundant out there as well. Of the birds, we've had red kites over the course for the first time in several years and sparrowhawks, kestrels

Getting another wildlife shot at High Post Golf Club

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



Organisational Changes At BIGGA House

Following the completion of a Strategic Review of BIGGA's activity and resources the Board of Management have approved a Business Plan designed to ensure the Association is best positioned to support its members over the coming years.

The Plan has at its heart a commitment to building on the excellent work done by the Learning and Development department whilst taking steps to make sure the Association is commercially sustainable.

Both of these aspects are vital as the Association works closely with the rest of the golf industry to promote the profession of greenkeeping and to continue to raise standards.

With the sport being strongly affected by economic pressures it is important that greenkeepers have a membership association that will work at all levels to ensure the importance of course management and maintenance to the future health of golf is recognised.

BIGGA has reached a new stage in its development and with the Business Plan approved the Chief Executive has been tasked with ensuring that the Association has the necessary staff and resources to implement it and achieve its objectives.

A staff consultation period has taken place with full professional advice and two positions have been made redundant.

As a result, after all redeployment options for the individuals affected were considered, Pauline Thompson and Scott MacCallum have left the Association by mutual agreement. Both were employed by the Association for in excess of 17 years and we wish them well in their future endeavours.

Over the next few weeks we will be recruiting people to fill the following roles: Learning and Development Executive, Commercial Manager, Communications Executive and Assistant Accountant.

Board Chairman, Andrew Mellon explained, "We have

examined very closely how we operate to best serve the needs of our members. In doing so, we have spent much time consulting with all our stakeholders before formulating our plans, and of course some difficult decisions have had to be made. This new business plan will enhance our Chief Executive and his team's ability to focus on developing the delivery of vital member support services, particularly our Learning and Development programme. The Board is totally confident that they will continue to engage the membership through efficient and effective communications."



Rogue Rider Wreaks Havoc for O'Hara

Leven GC Head Greenkeeper and BIGGA Member, Andy O'Hara, was left devastated last month when a motorbike-driving vandal ripped up greens on his course. It could take months to recover.

The damage was caused to the putting surfaces on the 1st and 18th holes at Leven Links Golf Club and further damage continued at the 18th of Scoonie Golf Club.

The damage to the greens is extensive with much of the turf dug out by the motorbike's tyres. Leven Links has had to carry out repairs to make them useable for the 900 members of Leven Golfing Society and Leven Thistle Golf Club, who both play on the course.

Mr O'Hara has ruled out fencing off the course despite this being the second time it has been attacked in the space of a month, saying, "We would like to appeal to whoever is doing it to stop. If anybody has any information then get in touch with us, or the police."

"Fencing the place off is not what we'd like to do. It would cost us a fortune and take away the natural beauty of the place."

Local Community Inspector Donald Jenks said: "Additional patrols will be operating in the area to deter further offences and gather information that will help identify those responsible."

Farewell from Peter Larter, BIGGA Regional Administrator

At the end of May 2012 I retire from the post of Regional Administrator for the Midland and Northern Regions of BIGGA.

In September 1996, after 35 years in the RAF, I took over the post of Regional Administrator for the Midland Region of BIGGA and, a few years later became full-time, also looking after the Northern Region.

During my 16 years with BIGGA I have worked with many members, BIGGA HQ staff and the Trade, and I am very grateful for the support and friendship I received from all I came into contact with.

I have had the great experience of working at BTME, and in recent years I have had the honour to work with our members at The Open Championship.

As I head into retirement I will miss the friends I have made during my time with BIGGA. However, I will be fully occupied with grand children, rugby, golf and, like Peter Boyd, my wife's "to do" list.

I wish BIGGA and all I have known throughout the last 16 years success in the future.

Good Luck,
Peter J Larter



Pete Larter, in his prime, playing for Northampton Saints!

BIGGA Appoints New Regional Administrators

The Association is pleased to announce the appointment of two new Regional Administrators



John Young

Following the retirement of Peter Boyd, John Young has been appointed on a full time contract, to cover Scotland.

John is a skilled administrator with a strong track record in event organisation and has been heavily involved with the management of Gourock Golf Club, where he is a full member with a handicap of 13, John will commence his post on Monday 28th May 2012.



Sandra Raper

Due to the retirement of Peter Larter, Sandra Raper has been appointed on a full time contract, to cover Northern and Midland Regions

Sandra was previously employed by BIGGA in an administrative role and has good experience in many aspects of Association business.

During her time with the Association she developed an excellent rapport with members and suppliers alike. Sandra will commence her post on Monday 18th June 2012.

BRAEMAR EXTENDS COMMITMENT

Braemar Golf, the international golf services provider, based in the home of golf, St Andrews, Scotland is delighted to announce a new commitment to sustainability across all development and operational projects within the Braemar Golf portfolio.

Selecting the programmes and guidance provided by the Golf Environment Organization (GEO) as preferred solutions, Braemar has asked that all clients enrol in the GEO OnCourse™ programme to achieve the international ecolabel for golf, GEO Certified™. Additionally, Braemar will help new development projects integrate sustainability into planning, design and construction according to comprehensive new guidance developed by GEO in collaboration with a number of golf industry groups.

Braemar Golf has for many years been implementing environmental best practice

as part of their standard operating procedures but recognise the benefits of participating in such recognised and worthwhile programmes.

Jonathan Pendry, Golf Courses Director for Braemar Golf comments "Our project teams have driven this through their efforts and desire to manage their facilities in an environmentally sustainable manner.

"After discussions with our clients, both in development and operation, there is overwhelming support to ensure that with the guidance provided by GEO we can build and manage golf facilities to the highest environmental standards.

"We recognise not only the traditional environmental benefits but also the financial and efficiency savings that will be made and we are delighted to be involved to such an extensive level".

This commitment to GEO programmes as a practical and rewarding approach to sustainability underlines our conviction that sustainability is a valuable pursuit, for resource efficiencies, environmental and social benefits, and a strong reputation for individual clubs and the game.

GEO's Chief Executive, Jonathan Smith, added: "We are very pleased that our guidance and programming is providing a platform for Braemar Golf to re-affirm their commitment to sustainability and to support their clients efforts.

"It makes good business sense for every golf course and development to be a responsible, resource efficient business set in an ecologically rich landscape, and this leadership by Braemar Golf and the clubs and developments in their portfolio will bring tangible benefits and serve as a good example for others."

Kent take Challenge Crown at Home of The Hammers



At the ground of West Ham United, recently reinstated to the FA Premier League, Challengers, The Kent Section tasted victory at the hands of last year's winners, the Essex Section, in this challenge football match organised by Lely UK (Toro). A keenly contested match played in good spirit finished 3-2 to Kent.

On a damp but perfect pitch Essex made a bright start with Ben Scrivener firing just over the bar from long range and two minutes later had a shot well saved by Rob Holland in the Kent goal.

After some good football and missed shots by both teams Mark Todd beat the Essex offside trap on the left passing to Lee Austin to cross a great ball beating keeper Dan Crow and allowing Wayne Syres to score the first goal for Kent. Shortly after

this there was a mix up in the Essex defence allowing Kevin Morris to intervene and nod the ball on for Lee Austin put Kent two goals up. Early in the second half Kent had plenty of possession, but against the run of play and after an error by the keeper, Mark Turner scored for Essex to make it 1-2. Frequent substitutions were now being made by both sides to rest tired legs. After a succession of corners Stewart Rogers latched on to a shot from 30 yards to level the score 2-2.

Plenty of action followed with the Kent keeper tipping a shot over the bar and Adam Marrable having a good game in the Kent midfield.

The winner came from a powerful shot from just inside the box by the great 'Zaffa' to make the Score 3-2 to the Kent

Section. In the end after a hard fought and thoroughly entertaining game the Kent team held on to win the game.

Final Score Essex 2 v Kent 3. After the match players and supporters enjoyed the hospitality in the Billy Bonds Lounge where Larry Pearman of Lely presented the Trophy to the winning Kent Team and Roger Lupton from Toro Irrigation awarded the Man of the Match Trophy to Ben Adams from the London Club.

Special thanks to Larry Pearman helped by Richard Freeman for making all the arrangements and organising the day so well. All commented on the immaculate condition of the pitch, after a long hard season. Hopefully this event will take place again next year with more Sections being involved.

Calculate your savings from the Ultimate Fairway Programme

Greenkeepers and golf club managers can now find out exactly how much money they could save on their course from taking advantage of the Primo Maxx Ultimate Fairway Programme. A new interactive calculator on the GreenCast website enables them to enter their current costs and routine of fairway mowing, and gives an instant answer on the cost savings.

A recent independent survey

of fairways on a range of golf courses revealed the average area was 14 hectares - taking just under 11 hours for each cut. For courses cutting fairways three times a week, the use of Primo Maxx to eliminate one cut per week through the season would see a cost saving of over £3650 per year.

The calculation takes into account details of the individual club's costs

including mower operator and mechanic's wages, machinery repairs, fuel and depreciation, along with their replacement policy for fairway mowers. Fuel costs at the time of the survey averaged 74p/litre, but a 20% rise in the intervening time now equates to an additional £51 a year saving from Primo Maxx use on the fairways alone, reports Syngenta Business Manager, Rod Burke.

"We did notice a thicker

sward and better water utilisation during the dry periods, which I can only attribute to the Primo Maxx,"

Rod Burke believes that the turf quality enhancements that greenkeepers have seen will be equally as important as the cost savings. "Our survey identified that having their ball sit proud on a consistent fairway surface was the single most important factor that they want."



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Elmwood Go Digital

Elmwood College, Cupar, Scotland, through a licence agreement with The Greenkeepers Training Committee (GTC), is extending its greenkeeper training provision by embracing the latest eportfolio technology.

The college will be offering students the opportunity to use the eportfolio recording option and this will include the highly acclaimed GTC Greenkeeping Training Manual.

Rick Bond, Head of Faculty, Golf, Land & Environment at the college says, "the eportfolio provision is already available for students studying for a management qualification and we see the new additions supporting learners such as apprentices and students across the world looking to be part of the Elmwood College Sports Turf learning experience."

Carol Borthwick, Director of Golf and International Affairs at Elmwood adds, "the college has for

many years been involved with the GTC and we see this agreement as an opportunity to expand our provision beyond our traditional methods of delivering greenkeeper and groundsmanship education and training."

David Golding, of the GTC, says, "Elmwood College, as a GTC Quality Assured Centre, has for many years been a major provider of sports turf education, training provision offering the range of qualifications from work based to Higher Education. The license agreement between Elmwood College and the GTC will certainly embrace the technology now available to allow employers and students to consider if this option may be better suited to their needs, while the traditional delivery of courses will still be available".

Elmwood College can be contacted via email: mclark@elmwood.ac.uk or phone: 01334 658969

BIGGA EVENT UPDATE

This year's BIGGA Midland and Northern Region Golf Management events, sponsored by Tacit Golf UK for the second year, will take place at the venues below:

MIDLAND REGION

North of the Region: Gay Hill Golf Club on Thursday 12th July; South of the Region: Verulam Golf Club on Thursday 9th August.

NORTHERN REGION

East of the Region: Bingley St Ives Golf Club on Wednesday 25th July; West of the Region: Birchwood Golf Club on Wednesday 22nd August 2012.

This 4-man team event must include a member of the Green Staff, who must be a member of BIGGA. The other team members may be chosen from the Golf Club Secretary or Manager, Club Captain or Vice-Captain, Chairman of Green or Golf Club Committee Member. Entry forms will be sent to golf clubs in the appropriate part of each Region.

If you wish to enter a team please contact: Until 31 May 2012 - the BIGGA Midland/Northern Regional Administrator Peter Larter on 01476 550115; 07866 366966 or email petelar972@aol.com.

Thereafter, contact Rachael Duffy on 01347 833800 ext 522 or email rachael@bigga.co.uk

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