

Chairman's Word

BIGGA National Chairman, Tony Smith, writes with his regular update

European support

Firstly, I'm delighted to say the board and I recently enjoyed hosting the **Board of the Federation of European Golf Greenkeepers** Associations (FEGGA) at **BIGGA House**.

We have many members who work in different countries across Europe and there are many areas that affect greenkeeping that are governed by the European Union.

It is therefore important to BIGGA that FEGGA has our strong support and as the largest association within Europe we do all we can to ensure our members are well represented. As part of our meeting we welcomed the FEGGA board for a joint session which was positive and constructive on both sides.

As the frosts begin to set in it's a sure sign that BTME is getting closer, and I'm urging everyone to get in gear for BIGGA's showpiece event.

After such a successful event last year, we need everyone to be supporting and promoting the trade show, the seminars, the workshops and everything associated with BTME. If you're coming - and if not, why not? - you need to be sorting out your travel plans and booking accommodation, it will come round before you know it.

We want you not only to attend, but to encourage as many other people to attend as possible and bring them along. Everything you could possibly need is on our dedicated website at btme.org.uk

I know everyone thoroughly enjoyed the 2012 BIGGA National Championship. It was an exceptional event on a traditional golf course, immaculately prepared by Derek Wilson and his team. I'd like to thank the captain David Moore and the entire Irvine Golf Club for their hospitality, and also the sponsors Charterhouse and Kubota who once again offered excellent support for the event.



Many areas that affect greenkeeping are governed by the European Union

although I seemed to spend most of the tournament in a bunker on the 18th. I thought I was going to bury myself in the first one, then managed to escape but landed right in another. My misfortune apart, it was a wonderful couple of days.

During the presentation dinner I took the opportunity to mention one subject that I want to be a recurring theme of my time as Chairman and beyond - communication. We all know that course management can be a lonely business at times and when the weather is inclement as it has been this year it can also be quite a thankless task.

we stick together and also make sure we talk regularly with our peers and friends. It's a cliché to say that a problem shared is a problem halved but there is no doubt that words of support and advice are always welcome.

So I urge all of you to make sure Summer turned up at last, you pick up the phone and give

Tony next to the now infamous bunker on the 18th at Irvine GC

each other a call or a text and share your problems and successes.

On my own course, it's been very hard work this summer as I know it has been for everyone. We're working on improving the drainage as the wet weather has highlighted problems in certain areas of the course. We're also continuing work on the long-term tree management programme.

I was very fortunate to attend the Ryder Cup on behalf of BIGGA what a fantastic experience. It was a privilege to meet Medinah's Director of Golf Course Management Curtis Tyrrell and see the knowledge Steve Chappell and Lee Strutt were gaining ahead of the next tournament at Gleneagles. BTME offers a unique opportunity to hear their reflections on a stunning event and share their knowledge - don't miss out.

As always, I'd be delighted to hear from BIGGA members. I'm available on 07988 838956 or at tony. smith48@ntlworld.com.

At times like these it is vital that





Learning & Development

Sami Collins, BIGGA Learning & Development Manager, with an update on education issues

As we leave our wonderful (!) summer behind us, let our thoughts turn to training and the BTME in January. By now you will have received your Continue to Learn brochures and are thinking about which seminars to attend. Let us whet your appetite with a summary of what to expect.



Continue To Learn

Bookings are coming in thick and fast for the Continue to Learn sessions. The advice is to book early to avoid disappointment! Each month, until BTME, we will focus on a different area of Continue to Learn, providing a brief summary of what is available. This month, it is the turn of the Focus On sessions. On Tuesday and Wednesday, the Focus On seminars are designed to provide 'bite-sized' learning opportunities which delegates can combine with their visit to the trade show.

The sessions last up to two hours and offer a range of subjects from soil and grass science to updating computer skills.

Tuesday 22nd January

Assertiveness - Janet Watling, In Step

What's in a Soil Analysis? - Simon Barnaby

Excel - Essential Calculations for Greenkeepers - Jacky Lowe, Training Gem

Improve Your Powerpoint and Presentation Skills - Jacky Lowe, Training Gem

Managing Difficult Situations -Janet Watling, In Step

Disease identification - Ruth Mann, STRI

Use Microsoft Project to Help Plan and Organise Your Medium and Long Term Project Plans

- Jacky Lowe, Training Gem Participating and Managing

Meetings - Janet Watling, In Step

Grass Identification - Andy Newell, STRI



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Gold Key Individual Members: Steven Tierney MG, Chris Lomas MG, Andrew Campbell MG CGCS Ian MacMillan MG, Ian Morrison Andrew Turnbull, W J Rogers Sam Langrick, Espen Bergmann, Nick Gray

Silver Key Individual Members: Steve Dixon, Richard McGlynn

Douglas Duguid, Jaey Goodchild, Graham Wiley, Michael Beaton, Paul Jenkins, Justin Cheung

The funding provided by Gold 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 manuale

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Wednesday 23rd January

Ecology in Focus - Bob Taylor, STRI

Master Greenkeeper Certificate Workshop Stages 1 & 2 – Les Howkins/Kerran Daly/Lee Strutt

Working to Increase Nature Without Compromising Golf - Bob Taylor, STRI

Master Greenkeeper Certificate Workshop Stage 3 – Les Howkins/ Kerran Daly/Lee Strutt

So You Want To Be Promoted – Murray Long, Course Manager, Sunningdale GC and Stuart Yar-

wood, Course Manager, Lymm GC Ecology and the Business Work-

ing Together - Bob Taylor, STRI For further information and an up-to-date programme for Continue to Learn, visit www.btme.org. uk/education/seminars

Assistants Development Programme

Following on from last month's launch, the 'So You Want To Be Promoted' sessions continue with the South East Regions', to be held at Sunningdale Golf Club on Tuesday 20th November, presented by Murray Long, Sunningdale Golf Club and Matt Plested, Muswell Hill Golf Club. Further details can be found in the events section of the website. This is an exceptionally worthwhile event to attend for any greenkeepers wanting to progress in their chosen career and are unsure of the skills they will need.

Library

The library has been offline whilst the selection of books has been updated and re-categorised. Thanks should go to John Deere for their generous donation to the library fund.

It has provided the opportunity to remove some of the older books and increase the stock of the more popular ones.

Careers

For those of you who have been using the website recently, you will find the Careers section has changed slightly, with more resources added.

You will find information about apprenticeships, grants, minimum wages, links to colleges and other essential websites. Again, John Deere are kindly providing the sponsorship for this section. If you have any suggestions for the Careers section, please get in touch.



BIGGA Membership

The membership team reflect on current news and affairs affecting you, the BIGGA member

We are pleased to be able to repeat the tastecard offer exclusively for BIGGA Members (time limited -Friday 9th - Wednesday 28th November)

BIGGA has once again negotiated an exclusive deal with tastecard, the nation's largest dining club, to give BIGGA members an exclusive discount on annual membership, helping save a fortune when dining out

A tastecard membership card gives you access to the most incredible deals at over 6,500 dining establishments nationwide. Restaurants range from La Tasca, Pizza Express, Cafe Rouge and GBK to Malmaison and everything in between! Each restaurant featured offers 50% off the total food bill or 2-4-1 across all courses (even for groups of more than two diners in most cases).

BIGGA Members can join for a full year membership at an exclusive BIGGA rate of £29.95 (RRP £79.95). Be quick, as this offer is only available from November 9th to November 28th 2012.

There are no catches, it is just a great deal, and an opportunity for all 'foodies' to save a small fortune on eating out over the next 12 months. Stuck for Christmas present ideas, why not treat someone to tastecard membership, a truly unique gift that will be used all year round, or purchase one for your son/daughter who has gone off to University?

For more information on the tastecard visit www.tastecard. co.uk

How to purchase your tastecard

From November 9th BIGGA Members will be able to purchase a tastecard via the Members Area of the BIGGA Website by paying online or by telephone by contacting BIGGA HQ directly. This exclusive deal is not available directly from the tastecard website.





As a BIGGA Member you can access a fantastic study resource in the Turfgrass Information File (TGIF) where members can gain access to a vast collection of turfgrass educational material.

This is a great benefit for all members who are currently in study, so whether you are studying at Level 2, 3 or 4 or studying for a diploma or degree this is definitely a resource you will find useful.

To access the TGIF log in to the members area of the BIGGA website, select 'Member Resources' from the options on the left hand side, scroll down to Turfgrass Information File (TGIF)' and download the Getting Started Guide or just click on the link which will give you access to the file directly.

BTME 2013 registration is now open – avoid the queues

Visit the BIGGA website www.bigga.org.uk

Click on the BTME banner at the top of the page and select REGIS-TER NOW!

Continue to Learn – Discount for BIGGA Members

Continue to Learn offers a host of seminars and workshops, from 20-23 January 2013. Book now to avoid disappointment.

Turf Managers' Conference

50% OFF

or 2 FOR 1

across all courses

Held on Monday 21st January 2013 at The Crown Hotel, Harrogate. Dr Thomas Nikolai - The Doctor of Green Speed' from Michigan State University will head up a fantastic programme.

Visit www.btme.org.uk

Uniform Tax Relief - are you eligible for a tax rebate?

If you wear work uniform, whether a simple polo shirt with logo or full attire like nurses or police officers, and have to wash, repair or replace it yourself you may be able to reclaim hundreds of pounds in overpaid tax from the past four years.

Can you answer 'Yes' to ALL of the following to be able to claim tax relief:

1. You wear a recognisable uniform that shows you've got a certain job, like a branded T-shirt.

2. Your employer requires you to wear it while you're working.

3. You have to pay to clean, repair or replace it yourself. However, you can't claim if your employer washes your kit, provides facilities to do so (even if you don't use them) or pays you for doing this maintenance.

4. You paid income tax in the year you are claiming for.

For details contact the Tracey or Elaine in the membership department for details on how to claim.



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C INDUSTRY UPDATE The latest turf industry news from around the globe



Bernhard Opens New Factory and Training Facility

Movers and shakers from across the golf industry attended the grand opening of Bernhard and company's new factory and training facility – with a former BIGGA chairman doing the honours in unveiling the plaque.

Peter Todd, from the London Golf Club, joined forces with Pat Finlen from the Olympic Club in San Francisco at the event at the hugely impressive new base in Haverhill, Cambridgeshire.

As well as representatives from BIGGA, FEGGA and AGCOA various leaders from golf associations across the world travelled down for the historic day – joining other industry figures, course owners and members of the press.

Before lunch, Stephen Bernhard outlined the company's fascinating history and added how excited he was at the new development.

He said: "We started our business way back in the early 1800's and it's grown year on year in the same group of ancient Victorian buildings. We really had to expand and upgrade the facilities.

"The training and education

side of our business is growing all the time so we needed a dedicated area for that as a well as a demonstration area for user and staff training. It's a massive step for a small British company to make in the global turf industry.

"Despite all the economic challenges that we face as an industry, we move into this building with confidence in the market and we are determined to grow the business."

Bernhard Manufacturing Manager Shaun McCarthy added: "The building was designed to a very high spec. It is efficient and eco-friendly. It was important for us to have flexible space and it can be adapted which will allow us to adapt to the changing needs of the market.

"We also wanted to incorporate something of our heritage so the reception area reflects a hint of the old Victorian sheds. The effect works well."

BIGGA vice chairman Chris Sealey attended and commented: "It's very, very impressive. What strikes me most is how modern and comfortable it is, and the working conditions are first-class."



BLEC show off equipment at Ransomes Jacobsen

Two days of Open House events at Ransomes Jacobsen's European head office at Ipswich gave BLEC Global the chance to show off some of their sportsturf and landscaping equipment while creating a new trials area for tees and greens.

Gary Mumby, managing director of BLEC, and demonstrator Tom Shinkins showed a wide range of machines to visiting greenkeepers, groundsmen, contractors and local authority ground managers.

"We had a tremendous couple of days," says Gary, "and seeing the machinery in action on the new golf site gave visitors a practical demonstration of capabilities."

Using Iseki tractors supplied by Ransomes Jacobsen, Gary and Tom prepared and seeded three trial plots with machinery including the BLEC Laser Grader, the Smithco three-wheel bunker rake, the BLEC Box Scraper and the Cultipack Seeder with Honda ride-on unit.

On the static display they showed the tractor-mounted disc seeder, the 1.5m Multivator, the tractor-mounted Multiseeder and the walk-behind power box rake.

The Ipswich tented village featured industry partners of Ransomes Jacobsen including the AEA, CMAE, IOG, BIGGA, FEGGA, STRI, GEO, Scotts, Syngenta, Bernhard, Rain Bird, Ryan, Turfco and Smithco.

Gary said: "We were delighted to be part of the Ransomes Jacobsen days. Some of the industry's top people were there and we met many old friends and customers."

BTME is back for its 24th year at the HIC, 22-24 January 2013



DENNIS AND SISIS EXHIBIT

Dennis and Sisis have held an exhibition focusing not only on their machinery but their vision of the future.

Members of the turf press headed to Brailsford Golf Club, close to the company's base in Kirk Langley, Derbyshire, to view their range of natural and synthetic turf maintenance equipment.

This also gave certain members the chance to operate some of the machinery – leading to some erratic results on the club's 18th green!

On the second day of the event, Managing Director Ian Howard led a tour of the impressive factory on site, giving the attendees the benefit of learning the process of building a new machine from the design stage on computer to the construction and delivery.

Customer Manager Roger Moore then explained the ethos behind the firm and their future plans.

RYDER CUP VARIETIES AVAILABLE IN THE UK

British Seed Houses had an extra reason for celebrating Europe's greatest ever comeback in the Ryder Cup.

As holders of exclusive rights in the UK to two grass seed varieties used at Medinah Country Club, BSH is hoping it will prove a 'driver' for sales in this country.

The tournament course greens were seeded with creeping bentgrasses 007 DSB and SR1119 and the fairways were also renovated using both varieties to ensure they were in excellent condition for the world's greatest golfers and the intense media spotlight.

Richard Brown, Amenity Sales Manager at BSH, said: "Europe's Ryder Cup victory against all the odds was amazing. It was fascinating and thrilling to watch but we also took a particular interest in the look and performance of the course as we are the exclusive agents for 007 DSB and SR1119 in the UK, Ireland and Scandinavia."

SR1119 creeping bent has been bred for its dark green colour, exceptional disease resistance and excellent green spread, all qualities required to produce top-performing golf greens.

The versatile 007 DSB creeping bent can be used on greens, tees and fairways, as a complete reseed or for overseeding. One of the 'super bent' varieties, it is widely adaptable to deliver the same results all over the world, from extreme heat to harsh cold conditions.

Offering superior turf quality, it eliminates winter stress discolouration and is highly competitive against poa annua. It has high disease resistance especially to Anthracnose, Fusarium and Snow Mould.

New Holland Network in at New FA Facility

St George's Park, the FA's brand new £105 million training facility, played host to New Holland's dealer network this month.

New Holland used its Groundcare Convention to showcase the popular range of Boomer Compact Tractors that has been further extended and upgraded with the introduction of six new Boomer models. This complete Boomer offering now delivers powers spanning 23–51hp with a range of specifications to suit every need.

The convention included a behind-thescenes tour of the facilities, a presentation from the FA's award-winning Head Groundsman Alan Ferguson, and a chance to play football on the pitch where the England men's team will be training this week.

The New Holland Groundcare Convention follows on from a recent deal which has seen New Holland supply the FA with a Boomer 2035, Boomer 3045, T4020 and T4050 to assist with the on-going maintenance of the 12 elite pitches at St George's Park.

Alongside the new Boomer Compact range, the entire New Holland Groundcare



product portfolio was on offer, including the TZ series, Rustler 120 Utility Vehicle, T1560 and T1570, T3000, T4000, T4 Powerstar and T5.

Dick Spencer, New Holland Marketing Manager, commented: "Following the

successful launch of our new range of Boomer Compact Tractors, this was the perfect opportunity to show both the New Holland Dealer Network, and groundcare trade press exactly what the new machines can do."

Visit www.btme.org.uk and click the Register Now icon



Golden Browning

Steve Castle reports from Ayrshire on a glorious **BIGGA National Championship 2012**, sponsored by Charterhouse and Kubota



Kuporo





BIGGA National Championship 2012

Oly Browning, assistant greenkeeper at Stocks Golf Club in Hertfordshire, blazed round the formidable links at Irvine Golf Club in Ayrshire to claim the title of BIGGA National Champion 2012.

67 players flocked to the extremely challenging course from as far afield as Ireland and the South Coast all dreaming of glory.

Incredibly, after a miserable summer across the UK, Scotland enjoyed what BIGGA Chief Executive Jim Croxton described as "the best two days of weather imaginable" with unbroken sunshine teaming up with the rolling countryside to provide a breathtaking vista for play.

Theoretically, the tremendous weather should have led to perfect conditions for play – but the course still proved difficult throughout with a number of players posting no returns, mainly due to the heather and gorse waiting to gobble up slightly errant drives.

Even triumphant Oly did not enjoy two trouble-free days as he explained while proudly clutching the BIGGA Challenge Trophy.

He said: "I four putted on the 17th, but I kept it on the fairways and didn't take any chances – I only got my driver out three times over the two days.

"I think the key was hitting the

greens – I hit a lot of them which was pleasing. It's a difficult course but despite that, it can still be forgiving in some places."

Playing off scratch, the modest 23-year-old explained he has won minor events in the past but this was the proudest moment of his golfing career.

"This is probably the biggest trophy I've ever won. It's the fourth time I've entered, I came fourth last year so it feels really good to get my name on the trophy at last.

"I drove up with my brother, it's been a real pleasure to play here. I'm not going to drink to celebrate because I'm teetotal, but my name on the trophy is enough.

"The golf itself was terrific but it's also been really good fun, I had a good laugh with all of my playing partners."

Steve Mason, his Course Manager at Stocks, said: "Oly has won Club Championship four years on the trot, a feat I'm sure will not be repeated.

"He had spoken about turning pro but tried a Europro event and was disheartened by the outcome as he was 24 shots off the lead after 36 holes of qualifying.

"But he has gained strength from this experience and goes out after work every day whether it be practice or playing.

"To win the event is a massive boost for him, we all hope he can use this to build his confidence and achieve his dream of becoming a star on the big stage."

Ryan Binns from Roundwood Golf Club in Barnsley had the honour of striking the first tee shot on a bright October morning.

At the end of the first day's play, Oly led the way with a magnificent par 71, establishing a two-shot lead over Gary Burgess from Grange Park and George Morgan from The Mendip.

The Monday evening saw the competitors, sponsors and BIGGA team enjoy excellent hospitality in the traditional clubhouse, with a three-course meal and speeches from Jim and BIGGA Chairman Tony Smith.

Both made a point of thanking the sponsors Charterhouse and Kubota, who once again offered first-class support for the annual event.

Once again the Scottish sun rose over the course on the second morning, eventually clearing the

cool crisp frost from the fairways, paving the way for another spectacular autumn day.

Almost every golfer returned to the BIGGA registration area with tales of woe – including Tony who wrecked a potentially respectable



ABOVE: Head Greenkeeper Derek Wilson tees off

TOP RIGHT: David Nelson, Sam Fuller, Kenneth Mitchell, Oly Browning and Gary Burgess















round with eight shots in a bunker on the 18th.

But they were delighted by the challenge, and hugely impressed by the quality of the course – indeed Head Greenkeeper Derek Wilson and his team were overwhelmed with congratulations.

Simon Woolley, from Brickendon Grange Golf Club, said: "The course is absolutely gorgeous, it's in fantastic condition. Everything about it is superb. The greens are brilliant. If you don't hole a putt it's your fault!"

Gavin Robson, from Burton-on-Trent Golf Club, said: "It's an awesome course, the greens are beautiful and true. It's a true heathland golf course and a true test of your golf. You can't stray off line because if you do, you're in the heather and you're in trouble.

"But the real highlight for me has been the camaraderie. It's a great opportunity to catch up with old colleagues and also meet new people from across the industry."

Derek Wilson himself enjoyed some rare relaxation time with a couple of rounds of golf in the sunshine.

He commented: "It's been a very good couple of days, everyone's thoroughly enjoyed it - not just the golf but the evening do was a great night. "I played alright on the first day, not so well on the second. I don't think I had any advantage knowing the course – there are too many bushes on it which I found!"

The excitement grew during the second afternoon as the returning players enjoyed a well-earned drink in the clubhouse.

However it soon became clear that overnight leader Oly was in no mood to relinquish his slot at the top of the leaderboard as his 75 ensured a memorable victory - a gross score of 146 enough to win by three shots.

Carnoustie's Duncan Cairnie and Cathkin Braes' Gordon Sangster were his nearest challengers on 149–Duncan claiming the runnerup spot by virtue of a superior second round.

Kenneth Mitchell from St Andrews won the Challenge Cup for best nett score with 141.

As the sun set on a hugely successful tournament, thoughts turned to next year's venue -Frilford Heath Golf Club in Oxfordshire. Keep an eye out for how to enter in forthcoming issues – it's a competition not to be missed.

Thanks to Derek Wilson, his team, everyone at Irvine Golf Club and all the competitors who flew or drove vast distances to play.

BIGGA National Championship 2012

BIGGA CHALLENGE TROPHY

(Best gross score over 36 holes) 1) Oly Browning (Stocks) 146 (71, 75) - £100 prize 2) Duncan Cairnie (Carnoustie) 149 (75, 74) - £50 prize 3) Gordon Sangster (Cathkin Braes) 149 (74, 75) - £25 prize

BIGGA CHALLENGE CUP

(Best nett score over 36 holes) 1) Kenneth Mitchell (St Andrews) 141 (70, 71) - \pounds 100 prize 2) Gary Burgess (Grange Park) 145 (70, 75) - \pounds 50 prize 3) George Morgan (The Mendip) 151 (73, 78) - \pounds 25 prize

BIGGA CHALLENGE PLATE (Stableford) Sam Fuller (Lewes) - £50 prize

BIGGA CHALLENGE BOWL (Affiliate) David Nelson (Nelson & Vecchio) – £50 prize

DAILY HANDICAP - DAY 1

+2 - 5 Gary Burgess (Grange Park) 70 6 - 12 David Nelson (Nelson & Vecchio) 71 13 - 24 John Wilson (Irvine) 73 DAILY HANDICAP - DAY 2 +2 - 5 Kenneth Mitchell (St Andrews) 71 6- 12 Iain Barr (Largs) 72 13 - 24 John Wilson (Irvine) 76









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