

## ROGUE TRADERS CASH IN ON CHALARA CONFUSION

Reports from South East England suggest unscrupulous operators masquerading as professional arborists and tree surgeons are scaring landowners into felling perfectly safe and healthy common ash trees. They are preying on already considerable fears generated by the national media storm over chalara ash dieback at the end of last year. Kent Trading Standards is the latest to warn on this development.

The national media storm appears to have abated for now, but some landowners with ash trees on their properties clearly do not require much persuasion to err on the side of caution as they see it.

Current information from DEFRA says no-one will be forced to destroy ash trees unless they are young trees which are part of a recently planted site identified with chalara ash dieback disease. In these situations the Forestry Commission or another branch of the UK plant health authority will issue a Plant Health Notice. This effectively means that all mature ash trees could (for the moment) be spared. However, this does not take into account any developing issues with public safety which landowners (tree owners) are clearly responsible for.

Such a threat to perfectly healthy fully grown ash trees

from 'cowboy' operators shows the urgent need for FC and FERA to introduce the microinjection of systemic fungicide as a means of ash tree protection, so at least landowners have the option of protecting trees rather than pre-emptively felling them.

Finding a solution should not prove too difficult. North Americans have to deal with a potentially lethal disease of oak trees called oak wilt caused by a close relative of Chalara fraxinea (chalara ash dieback). Oak wilt is caused by a fungus called Chalara quercina. Oak trees in North America have been successfully protected (and in some cases cured) of oak wilt disease by injection of the systemic fungicide propiconazole, a member of the azole (sub group triazole) fungicides, and by mode of action described as a Steroid Demethylation (ergosterol biosynthesis) Inhibitor (DMI). The fungicide is injected into the tree trunk by operators working at ground level and is subsequently transported to all aerial parts of the tree in the xylem (water conducting tissue). There are other different triazole fungicides including tebuconazole which are used in a similar way to protect against and control oak wilt disease.

*Dr Terry Mabbett*



## BLOGGING WITH ROYAL APPROVAL

This month's featured blog is from Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club in Kent, which will host the 2013 Amateur Championship and is one of four venues selected for Final Open Qualifying from 2014 to 2018. The blog was started by Assistant Links superintendent James Bledge shortly after joining the Club last October. It's crammed with information and high quality pictures documenting the greenkeeping team's work including rough management, tee platform renovation, bunker revetting and all manner of winter work taking place on the course.

The Club has already seen several clear benefits from writing the blog. James says: "Take the overseeding for example, we spent a good sum of money hiring an expensive machine to do a specific task. Many golfers were asking what we were doing and why we were doing it. They were able to view the blog and get the information they required. Weeks later we were able to post a picture of the results and we are confident that a good part of the membership now understand why we do what we do."

Links Superintendent Chris Barnard added: "I think the blog was a great idea from James, it's a very useful tool for keeping members informed about current projects on the course. It helps to answer many questions before they're asked giving us more time out on the course to get through this year's very busy winter programme.

"Our members are interested in the work we do and are proud of the course. We wanted to document and share with everyone exactly what we've been doing throughout the winter ahead of what will be a very busy season. James posted a link on the BIGGA bulletin board to see if anyone else was blogging. There were loads of positive replies and it seems a few courses have started blogs as a result. The Cruden Bay and Carnoustie blogs are particularly interesting as well as a few others. Some other blogs have inspired us to possibly try adding extras like video footage. Perhaps our blog inspires other courses to start!

"We're hosting the British Amateur Championship this year and the green staff are doing a lot of work ahead of it. 2013 will be a very exciting time for everyone at Royal Cinque Ports."

Contact Steve Castle at [steve.castle@bigga.co.uk](mailto:steve.castle@bigga.co.uk) if you think your blog deserves to be featured in GI.

Ransomes Jacobsen's three-hole golf course, located at their European headquarters on the outskirts of Ipswich, has been re-certified by the Golf Environment Organization (GEO).

With this latest accolade, the RJ National becomes the first golf course in the UK to be awarded GEO Certified™ status for excellence in environmental performance for a second time.

Following his recent assessment visit, Keith Duff, an independent verifier accredited by GEO said:

"The creation of this small golf course, built and managed to good sustainability standards, has hugely improved the environmental quality of the area. What was once covered in cement and scrub, as part of an industrial park, is now an ecological asset.

"Good areas of semi-natural habitat have been created and are developing well, and there are plans for further biodiversity initiatives.

"Record keeping is exemplary, regulatory compliance is unblemished, and there are very high quality innovative communications, including newsletters and video blogs, to show others how the work is being done and what the benefits are.

"The quality of the playing surfaces is also very high, demonstrating well how playing quality and sustainable management can go hand in hand. I have no hesitation in



# RJ NATIONAL THREE-HOLE COURSE BREAKS NEW GROUND

recommending that this course should be re-certified."

The unique three-hole golf course was the brainchild of David Withers, then managing director at Ransomes Jacobsen and now president of parent company, Jacobsen.

"With the support of some of our industry partners, our parent company Textron, and a tremendous team effort by everyone at Ipswich - spearheaded by Matt Le Brun, our former greenkeeper, the RJ National has been a great success on many levels," he said. "The course is a great asset for testing machinery, showcasing the products we manufacture and is a

facility to demonstrate our environmental leadership to distributors and customers. Hopefully our example serves as an inspiration - showing that creating and maintaining a sustainable golf course can be good for golf and good for business."

GEO's Chief executive Jonathan Smith concluded by saying:

"We are delighted that the RJ National has been re-certified, representing as it does, sustainability throughout their golf environment through a continued commitment to protect and enhance nature, while using resources efficiently and carefully.

"The reduction of waste and other pollutants benefits the surrounding community. Re-certification is a vital point of credibility for all ecolabelling, affirming the important 'continued improvement' principle that makes sustainability a mindset and a journey, rather than a static level to achieve. We are delighted to note all the new activities undertaken in the last three years.

"This also demonstrates that GEO Certified™ can celebrate the achievements of all types of courses, from RJ National's innovative short course to high-profile, internationally recognised facilities."

## GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL SURVEY

Thanks to everyone who took the time to take the Greenkeeper International survey which was emailed to members. It's vital that the magazine continues to evolve and improve to be another real benefit of BIGGA membership, and the survey has thrown up a range of suggestions, ideas and opinions.

We're still going through your feedback and you will start to notice some changes resulting from this in future editions. There was also some particularly useful constructive criticism and observations which we've taken on board.

To take the survey, follow the link from our news pages or visit the education and training forum on the bulletin boards.

It will only take five minutes of your time, and we'll publish some of the results in next month's issue.







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# Learning & Development

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

I was recently bought a cushion with the words "Good Day Sunshine" written on it. This prompted me to look at the lyrics of The Beatles song of the same name where I found the words "I need to laugh, and when the sun is out, I've got something I can laugh about".

Let's hope the sun comes out soon and we can all start having a good laugh instead of looking outside and seeing persistent rain!



## Future Turf Managers' Initiative

By the time you read this article, the inaugural Future Turf Managers' event will have taken place at the Ransomes Jacobsen headquarters in Ipswich.

Jacobsen recognise the importance of preparing the younger generation of greenkeepers to take on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The FTMI has been designed to provide practical tools and guidance to help the candidates to pursue their career aspirations through this professional development conference.

The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following an online application process. The successful applicants are:

Lewis Birch – Greenkeeper, Sunningdale Golf Club

James Bledge – Deputy Head Greenkeeper, Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club

Sean Borrett – Greenkeeper, Ellesborough Golf Club

Lee Brady – First Assistant Greenkeeper, Muswell Hill Golf Club

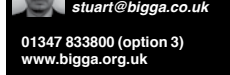
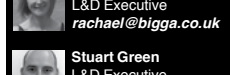
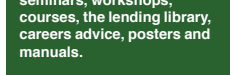
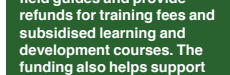
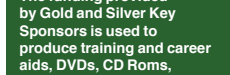
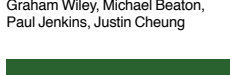
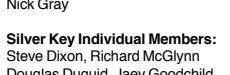
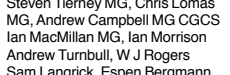
Tom Brearley – Greenkeeper, Sunningdale Golf Club

Paul Carella – Greenkeeper, The Richmond Golf Club

Robin Cheney – Deputy Course Manager, Farleigh Golf Club

Scott Davidson – Greenkeeper, Newmachar Golf Club

Tom Evans – First Assistant



Greenkeeper, Harleyford Golf Club  
Wes Lenihan – Greenkeeper, East Brighton Golf Club

John McLoughlin – Deputy Head Greenkeeper, Grange Park Golf Club

Adam Mitchell – First Assistant Greenkeeper, Tehidy Park Golf Club

Adam Moss – Deputy Head Greenkeeper, Blackwell Golf Club

Rhys Norville – Greenkeeper, Celtic Manor Resort

Ross Ovens – Deputy Course Manager, Roxburghe Hotel & Golf Course

James Parker – Deputy Head Greenkeeper, Close House Golf Club

Leigh Powell – Deputy Course Manager, Hockley Golf Club

Daniel Scott – Greenkeeper, Woburn Golf & Country Club

Ben Scrivener – First Assistant Greenkeeper, Abridge Golf & Country Club

Tom Wood – Greenkeeper, Outlane Golf Club

During the two-day event the candidates will concentrate on topics including communications, budgeting, organisational politics, CV writing and interview techniques as well as taking part in discussion group on subjects such as team management and alternative career paths.

Supporting the candidates are five mentors who will work with the groups during the event and will continue to support them throughout the year.

The mentors are:  
Steve Chappell, Head Greenkeeper, Gleneagles

Matt Plested, Course Manager, Muswell Hill Golf Club

Michael Sawicki, Club Manager, Dulwich and Sydenham Hill Golf Club

Lee Strutt MG, Golf Course Manager, gWest

Stuart Yarwood MG, Course Manager, Lymm Golf Club

Lorna Sheldon and David Bancroft-Turner – who gave hugely successful presentations at

the Turf Managers' Conference at BTME will pass on their extensive knowledge of professional communication techniques and dealing with golf club politics.

A round up of the event will be in the May issue of Greenkeeper International.



## BIGGA Higher Education Scholarships

The latest member to receive a scholarship is Ben Burrill for his Golf Course Turfgrass Management qualification.

Funding is available for those members who are undertaking a higher education qualification. Visit the website for further details: [www.bigga.org.uk/education/funding-opportunities/](http://www.bigga.org.uk/education/funding-opportunities/)



## Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year

Application forms for the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award have been distributed to all colleges and training providers and are also available to download from Education are of the website. The closing date for applications is Friday 10 May 2013.

In the coming months we're changing the content and layout of both the Membership and L&D sections of the magazine, based on feedback you gave in the recent Greenkeeper International survey.

Tell us how our education programme and membership benefits have helped you, and we can publicise all that BIGGA membership has to offer. Contact Communications Executive Steve Castle on [steve.castle@bigga.co.uk](mailto:steve.castle@bigga.co.uk)

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 manuals.

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# BIGGA Membership

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

## CHANGES ARE AFOOT...

**It is with some excitement that I write this last membership column in its current format. There will be some subtle differences from May's issue of Greenkeeper International onwards.**

As most members will be aware BIGGA have been going through some organisational changes at BIGGA House over the last 12 months with new personnel being appointed. Although change can affect us all in an emotional way, this change is bringing with it its own advantages. I think if you ask everyone at BIGGA House what they think of the alterations, they will say they are really positive. This is because the changes have been presented as a means of introducing improvements.

All the staff are very enthusiastic and excited about the future of BIGGA and are looking forward to working with the Board, the Regions, the Sections and you!

I read somewhere that "People don't resist organisational change - people resist being changed!" and I think this is true of many an organisation or even golf club, but most people can adapt to change if managed properly.

### Greenkeeper International Feedback

BIGGA have recently been collecting your feedback on the Association's membership magazine, Greenkeeper International, to find out what you think about it. You've told us what's good, what's not, what's useful, what could do with improving and changing. The results gained via the survey, the Regional Administrators or the recent roadshows undertaken by Jim Croxton, Tony Smith and myself, have given us really useful and interesting feedback.

Thank you to all who took part in one or all of the feedback methods, but mostly thank you for being honest! Most of you provided excellent constructive feedback which we can now analyse, digest



and incorporate in future issues of Greenkeeper International.

This is a great example of how we can work together to change, improve or just tweak benefits and services that BIGGA offer. We hope you like the discreet changes that will be happening over the next few months within Greenkeeper International, please continue to let us know what you think.

### Regional Roadshows

Jim Croxton, CEO, Tony Smith, 2013 Chairman and myself have spent a good majority of March travelling around the five regions talking to members of the section and region committees about elements of BIGGA's current business plan.

From feedback received this has proved a very useful and worthwhile experience and I think it's safe to say that the underlying message coming through was that as a unified group we can take BIGGA forward by working together, from sections to regions to national board and staff. Your section representative can brief you at your next meeting regarding the roadshow and its contents or contact your Regional Administrator.

### Greg Skinner

Good luck to BIGGA member Greg Skinner, Head Greenkeeper at Forest Hill Golf & Country Club who's running the Brighton Mara-

thon on April 14th after already completing the Ashby20 race on March 17th. As if that isn't enough Greg is then going to run in the Woodhouse Challenge on May 6th, (a measly half marathon) and finishing his runs at the KABW Bosworth Half Marathon on May 12th.



Greg is running in aid of Leukemia & Lymphoma Research in memory of a good friend named Paul Glennon who died in 2012 aged only 56.

Greg can be sponsored by visiting [www.justgiving.com/gregskinner1](http://www.justgiving.com/gregskinner1)

### Membership Subscription increase from 1st April 2013

BIGGA have made a small increase in membership subscription from 1st April, they are as follows: -

- Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper - £140
- Deputy/Greenkeeper aged 21 & over - £82
- Greenkeeper aged 20 and under - £82
- Unqualified greenkeeper 21 & over - £61
- Unqualified greenkeeper 20 & under - £30
- International Member - £97
- Affiliate Member - £94
- Student Member - £26
- Retired Member - £32
- Unattached Member - £36





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 You can follow BIGGA on Twitter @BIGGALtd



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**Debt Counselling Helpline**  
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## JOHN DEERE LAUNCH NEW ONLINE SHOP

A new online merchandise shop has been launched on the John Deere website for customers and fans of the brand in Europe. Featuring an updated design and improved user interface - you can visit it at [www.johndeereshop.com/en\\_uk](http://www.johndeereshop.com/en_uk)

## PESTICIDE APPLICATION UPDATE



### The TMSystem™ continues to revolutionise

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We have all been waiting with bated breath for a National Action Plan - a document that each Member State of the EU has to produce to show how the Sustainable Use Directive (SUD) would be implemented in their own country.

When all is said and done, the outcome for the Pesticide Application is disappointing. Due to the current economic climate, the Government was unwilling to 'Gold Plate' EU legislation.

We are now left with a diluted SUD where although training, education and storage are still given prominence, great leaps forward have not been made.

When it comes to accurate Pesticide Application, ALL operators must have gone through PA training to the required standard and should always be able to demonstrate

good knowledge of calibration and understand the product they are using.

Too often, tired specifications are trotted out, only re-dated, and showing little understanding of what is happening in the weed control world. It is now awash with new formulations - Dichlobenil used to give medium longevity control of weeds at 150 kgs per ha. Now, the same level of control can be achieved using a thousandth of this amount - Flazasulfuron at 150 grammes per ha!

We are entering a new era for Pesticide Application, and we must all be armed appropriately to deal with the demands ahead. This will mean investing in people, equipment and associated training, which although expensive, ensures the job is carried out to the highest standard possible.





## TADMARTON HEATH INVESTS IN 'THE BEST' TO GROW MEMBERSHIP

North Oxfordshire hidden gem Tadmarton Heath Golf Club has signed a new five-year agreement with Toro. This traditional private members club is investing in the new machinery as part of a ten-year course improvement plan to retain and grow membership levels.

Course manager Brian Owen – who recently celebrated 20 years of working at the club – is delighted with the arrival of the new fleet, which includes a Greensmaster TriFlex greensmower:

“The new machines will help keep us moving forwards – we want to achieve a lot more for this club.”

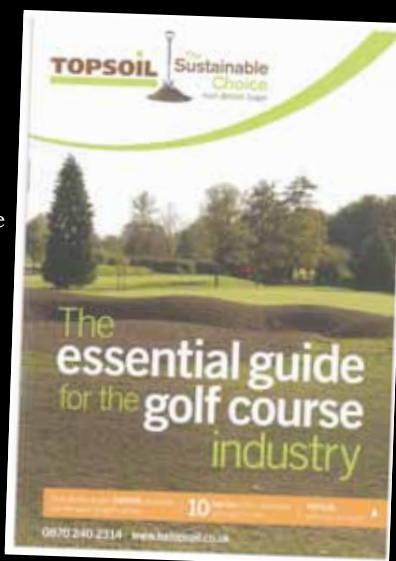
## TOP TIPS FOR GREAT GREENS

British Sugar TOPSOIL, the UK's leading supplier of quality topsoil has teamed up with golf course expert Peter Jones to launch a new course management guide for the industry.

The eight-page technical guide called 'The essential guide for the golf course industry' is aimed at greenkeepers and course managers. It provides useful information and practical advice on using topsoil to improve course quality and performance, along with top tips on golf course management from industry expert Peter Jones.

British Sugar TOPSOIL is a fertile, consistent and traceable topsoil which is derived from prime arable soils to offer greenkeepers a sustainable topsoil solution. Possessing good nutrient and moisture retention properties British Sugar TOPSOIL is perfect for bunker construction projects and non-irrigated areas of a course.

The new guide is available to download from the TOPSOIL website: [www.bstopsoil.co.uk](http://www.bstopsoil.co.uk) or by telephoning 0870 2402314.



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# GI NEW PRODUCTS

The latest products on the market reviewed

## APPLICATION ADVICE AT BIGGA SEMINAR

A new online Nozzle Selector will enable turf managers and sprayer operators to select the best combination of spray nozzle and water volume to optimise turf applications this season.

The simple tool, available at [www.greencast.co.uk](http://www.greencast.co.uk), enables operators to quickly select the intended spray target and the type of treatment or product being applied, to instantly see the appropriate XC Nozzle and water volume to use.

The Nozzle Selector covers the range of fungicides, herbicides and growth regulators, along with associated liquid fertiliser tank-mix combinations that can be included to improve turf health and vigour to counter disease risks.

Syngenta Turf Technical Manager, Dr Simon Watson, highlighted the new XC Nozzles can allow operators to apply at lower water volumes than previously used. This can enable greater sprayer output for more timely application, reduce weight carried on greens and, most importantly, increase product retention on the leaf that can give better results.

Greenkeepers, sprayer operators and students in the south west of England had



the chance to see the new Syngenta XC Nozzles in action and pick up some of the latest tips and information on spray application technology at the BIGGA Devon & Cornwall Spring Seminar, held at St Mellion Golf Club.

Dr Watson detailed how the new XC Nozzle Technology has been engineered to deliver more consistent coverage across the spray boom when spraying slopes on golf

courses, to counter the risk of drift to enable more spraying opportunities and incorporating exclusive design features to enhance all-round coverage of the turf leaf, to get the best possible results from every application.

Further tips provided in Dr Watson's presentation and practical demonstration included sprayer calibration and nozzle height setting - along with advice on calculating the

area of greens and fine-tuning sprayer filling to achieve more precise and accurate application across the course. All the techniques and advice offered by Dr Watson is available from the GreenCast website Application Zone. Thanks to Course Manager and Master Greenkeeper, Mike Bush, and the St Mellion greenkeeping team for hosting the event and assisting with the sprayer demonstration.

## AERATION BRINGS RUTLAND'S GREENS UP TO SPEED



Sitting alongside one of the largest man-made lakes in Europe, Rutland Water Golf Club offers the golfer 18 holes on the championship Normanton Course and nine par three holes on the Hambleton course. The club did have standing water issues on greens, but following the acquisition of a Sisis Javelin Aer-Aid 1500, Head Greenkeeper, Dan Wren reports a dramatic improvement.

The tractor mounted Javelin Aer-Aid 1500 not only aerates with a vertical action, but also injects air into the root zone at a fast working rate, creating thousands of fissures.

Dan says: "Certain greens were holding moisture and it seemed that whatever action we took the problem persisted. The greens concerned were those where the thatch layer was thicker. We did our equipment research and our local dealer recommended the Sisis Javelin Aer-Aid 1500. I was aware of the beneficial effects of injecting air into greens and the improvement in the quality of our greens was achieved very quickly. The moisture retention problem has disappeared and the greens are consistent, firm and dry."



# FANTASTIC FAIRWAYS AT BURGHILL VALLEY WITH HEADLAND AMENITY



“We then applied Multigreen temperature controlled release fertiliser, with Clipless growth regulator and Elevate FE complexed liquid iron in a tank mix,” he adds. “Clipless helps control excess growth while the iron in Elevate FE prevents any yellowing on the edges of leaves and helps carry it into the plant. The results have been an impressive thickening up of growth on the fairways which has filled in the divots so that they look like a carpet.”

Steve comments that the combination of Multigreen, Clipless and Elevate FE is a highly cost-effective solution, which gives the fairways a rich green colour rather than the light green of a growth flush.

Tricure AD is another useful product, he comments: “We don’t have many high spots on the greens, but using Tricure AD ensures that there are no dry patches. It is used in combination with Turfcomplex biostimulant to keep the turf healthy, which is essential as our greens are relatively small and get a lot of use. These are fantastic products and we get great results.”

Dramatic improvements have been made to the fairways at Burghill Valley Golf Club in Herefordshire last year using Multigreen, Elevate FE and Clipless from Headland Amenity.

Head Greenkeeper Steve Lloyd comments: “The course

is on fertile, heavy clay which drains well and the greens were built from a local soil and sand mix. However, 20 years of top dressing and soil exchange using hollow tines have built up a good growing medium which gives an improved root structure for the turf. We have

also reconstructed bunkers and tees over the years to make for more challenging play.”

Most recently the fairways came under the spotlight. The renovation programme began with hollow tining and deep aeration on the fairways before they were scarified in April.

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# Four seasons in one day

There's no getting away from it – the West of Scotland is beautiful, but extremely wet. How do the team at **The Carrick on Loch Lomond**, lead by Jim Brown and Paul McClearn, cater for thousands of corporate clients while battling two metres of rain annually?



## Greenkeeper Profile

**Name:** Jim Brown.....  
**Position:** Course Manager.....  
**Born:** Keighley, 1 January 1965....  
**Handicap:** 18.....  
**Hobbies:** Cycling.....  
**Favourite Sports Team:**  
 Keighley Cougars Rugby League....

**Name:** Paul McClearn.....  
**Position:** Head Greenkeeper.....  
**Born:** Galway, 28 September 1974  
**Handicap:** 13.....  
**Hobbies:** Spending time with two  
 sons, cycling.....  
**Favourite Sports Team:** Ireland  
 Six Nations Team.....