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### GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

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



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ISSN: 0961 – 6977

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Some of the STRI Environmental Awards winners on the 18th at Wentworth

## A thirst for innovation

**Writing this column from the BMW PGA Championship where, sadly, off course issues are overshadowing the one and only Tour event to take place in England this year, it is fantastic to see the world's best players playing a beautifully manicured British course and it feels like the 2013 golfing season has finally begun.** Congratulations to Kenny Mackay and his team at Wentworth for getting the West Course into such excellent condition after such a tough twelve months.

As always an excellent team of BIGGA volunteers assembled at the event to provide support to the home team and I know Kenny and all involved in the event were extremely grateful for their hard work and enthusiasm.

During the event a reception for the winners of the 2012 STRI Environmental Awards took place in the iconic Wentworth clubhouse and it was fascinating to chat to those assembled and hear some of the challenges that have been faced by our members all round the country. There is no doubt that everyone has had to be extremely dedicated and very innovative to get the nation's golf courses playable over the last few months. The innovative approach that our members bring to problem solving and overcoming weather, technical or agronomic issues is something that has really struck me during my two years in this role. It was certainly an issue that I was keen to highlight in a recent article in Golf Monthly that discussed the impact of the last year's weather on the whole golf economy.

This is something I'm keen to celebrate so on that note please see Innovation Corner (page 45, part of the Woolley Park course feature) – which aims to celebrate some of the more unusual approaches to greenkeeping. Additionally we really want to use the pages of this magazine and our website to highlight any successful new methods you have brought in at your facilities. This industry has always grown through the sharing of good practice and new ideas and I hope we're able to continue that

growth through our communications with you the membership.

**As a member's association it is incumbent on us to also be innovative and forward thinking with our benefits and services to you.**

This month we highlight changes to our Continuing Professional Development (CPD) scheme that are intended to make the scheme both more user friendly and suitable to the needs of the modern greenkeeper (page 16). This includes a more modern approach to the different styles of learning that we all undertake as well as extending the qualifying period from the overly onerous annual requirement to a rolling three-year programme.

**This month we also say a fond farewell to one of BIGGA's longest serving employees;** Jane Jones has been the administrator for the South West & South Wales region for over eight years and has served the membership with great enthusiasm and integrity. Her excellent attention to detail combined with a charming manner have made her a joy to work with, we wish her well in her new ventures in the industry.

This edition features articles on a wide diversity of topics, from combining agriculture with greenkeeping (page 42) to the benefits of lightweight rolling (page 30) via the second and final part of Kevin Munt's excellent feature on the keys to career advancement (page 50).



**Jim Croxton, BIGGA CEO**



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## Bernhard delegates ...where are they now?

If you're still undecided about applying to join the next BIGGA Delegation to America, read on to find out how much influence the trip had on delegates from the last few years

Jaime Ariza, 2012 Delegate, TIFD Head Greenkeeper, Workbury Golf Club

"I had no idea it would be such a big trip and it has given me the confidence to bid my own personally. It has pushed me to move to the next level. A few months ago I was offered a new job and took on the challenge of running a busy proprietary club set in several parks on a private estate. The show, seminars and site visits we all attended in the States gave me a real boost to improve myself."



In August Greenkeeper International will again be asking for members to apply to become a member of the Bernhard's Delegation heading to the States and the Golf Industry Show in January. It's a fabulous shared experience, an opportunity to build new friendships and make new business contacts, but most importantly an priceless tool for learning, education, networking and growing. But don't just take our word for it. Go up to some of our delegates from the last decade to find out how much the trip influenced them professionally and personally.



Richard Jenkinson, 2013 Delegate, TIFD Deputy Course Manager G West NCGW, Sainsbury's

"It was the most unforgettable experience I had in my career. One real highlight was the tour around Toney House and La Cote. It was fascinating to see the difference between them even though they are only 100 metres apart. The management style is similar but the terrain and composition of the courses are completely different. I now understand why previous delegates described it as a very tough but life-changing week."

Rob Sandilands, 2011 Delegate, TIFD Deputy Head Greenkeeper, Elskam Golf Club NCGW, Head Greenkeeper, Grange-over-Rands Golf Club

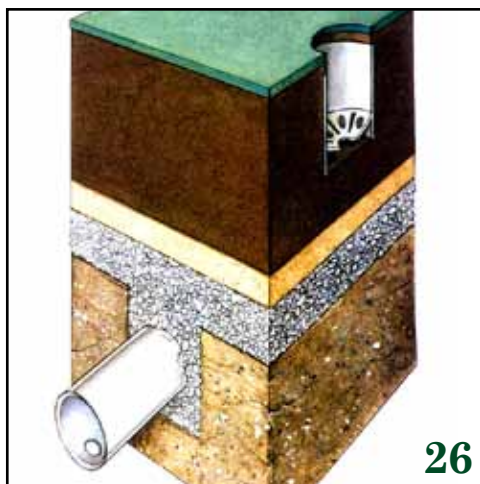
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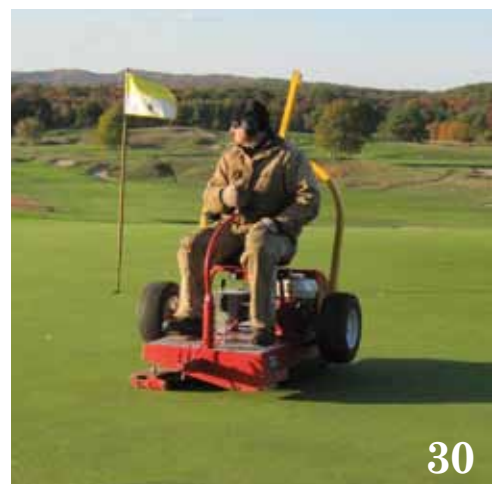
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The official monthly magazine of  
**British and International  
 Golf Greenkeepers Association**





# Chairman's Word

National Chairman, Tony Smith, gives his thoughts for the month

## Support at Wentworth, and a sad farewell

**I have now officially retired, leaving my position at Teesside Golf Club after 32 terrific years. It seems ironic that I've left after the wettest year anyone could remember, when we had a sewage pipe burst twice and were forced to close on so many occasions.**

Now I've left the sun is shining – maybe it was me! It was a very cold spring – although it was a little drier – but fingers crossed the recent warmer weather will mean you lucky members are all out there preparing your courses with pride as I know you love to do. I say lucky because I am already missing preparing the course at Teesside.

I wish you all a good summer that will help you continue to produce the superb standard of courses which are admired throughout the world by other turf professionals.

At the end of May I was fortunate enough to attend the BMW PGA Championship at Wentworth for two days, more for business than pleasure. It was the first to be held with Kenny Mackay overseeing course preparation.

I have to congratulate Kenny and his team on the fabulous presentation of the course. As ever, conditions were not ideal with largely dank and overcast conditions during the week, but Kenny and his team dealt with all the challenges superbly.

I'd also like to congratulate the members of the BIGGA Support Team who gave up their own time and made their own travel arrangements to back up the efforts made by the Wentworth team. Well done – your superb contribution did not go unnoticed.

The Wentworth tournament is the only time the European Tour International Schedule will visit England this year but it is a huge event on the golfing calendar and provided us with the chance to catch up with many industry bodies and individuals during the week.

These challenging economic and climatic times make working together even more essential if we are to ensure the industry survives.

2013 has been hectic year so far for BIGGA and for me in my travels around the Regions and Sections, so a slightly quieter month has come as a welcome change. I was pleased to have the opportunity to attend a Midlands Region board meeting



STRI Environmental Awards winners on the 17th at Wentworth

### I am grateful to all the members who give so much of their precious time to help the Association function

meaning I have now had the chance to spend time with all five Regional Boards during my first ten months as Chairman.

I am grateful to all the Section and Regional officers and board members who give so much of their precious time to help the Association function and remain focused on the needs of the membership.

A sad event last month was the semi-retirement of our South West & South Wales regional administrator Jane Jones, she has served the Association with great commitment and will be missed by many as she takes half a step back in her career.

I am delighted that she intends to stay in touch with the golf and greenkeeping industry and hope that our paths continue to cross. I'm sure all of you, particularly the members of her Region, will join me in wishing her well.

We have recently launched the 2013 BIGGA National Championship, which this year will be held on the Red course at the first-class Frilford Heath Golf Club in

Oxfordshire. This fabulous 54 hole facility is maintained superbly by Sid Arrowsmith MG. Through generous sponsorship from both Kubota and Charterhouse we have been able to significantly increase the prize fund on offer particularly for the overall scratch competition, whilst we have also reduced the entry fee. I want to see a packed field contesting for the various prizes on offer so hope to see you there in October.

Last year's event at Irvine Bogside was a huge success (apart from when I used up about eight shots in bunkers on the 18th) and I'm sure this event will be too, so get your entry form in quick.

As always I am happy to discuss any matter with BIGGA members, my contact details are below.

#### Contact details

Tony Smith / 07988 838956 / tony.smith48@ntlworld.com



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Duties will include, but are not limited to: course preparation and maintenance – mowing, raking, planting, irrigation, operating and maintaining machinery – and tournament support. Accommodation will be provided and full support is guaranteed throughout.

If you are aged between 18-30 have a full, clean driving licence and want to know more, call or email today. J1 Visa Programme terms and conditions apply as well as programme fees.

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## BILLY MCMILLAN LAUNCHES COURSE CONSULTANCY

Former BIGGA National Chairman Billy McMillan has formed an independent golf course management consultancy, with services ranging from project management, staff training and development, and locum greenkeeping support.

With over 38 years' experience in the golf industry, he is offering help and support to any club that has ambitions to fully realise its potential in a competitive market.

Having spent many years at the forefront of greenkeeping and having also run golf clubs as a General Manager, Billy aims to bring a balance to the aspirations of Course Managers and clubs, helping to make a difference out on the golf course.

"I'm bringing something different to the table", Billy explains. "Looking at the club from both perspectives, I'm adept to change and meeting the demands of members, guests and visitors."

"Sometimes a fresh pair of eyes, constructive

feedback, and delivering practical solutions to overcome issues can make a huge difference.

"I hope to help clubs achieve a quality product tailored to most levels of available budget."

Having worked at many fine clubs, Billy has an extensive knowledge of many different course types, from clay-based to sandy heathland and everything in between, each coming with their own and sometimes very demanding issues.

He can evaluate current golf course condition and work alongside the club's greenkeeping team to help with planning for future success.

Billy is keen to take a hands-on approach and never shies away from getting involved at the grass roots to help others develop their personal skills.

Billy McMillan Associates Limited can be contacted on 07774 632747 or by email at [contact@billymcmillanassociates.co.uk](mailto:contact@billymcmillanassociates.co.uk).



## NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RETURNS

This year's BIGGA National Championship sponsored by Charterhouse and Kubota will be held at the superb Frilford Heath Golf Club on October 7-8, with a fantastic first prize of £500 worth of vouchers.

The two-day event will be held on the Red course, a classic heathland test. This was designed by five-times Open Champion JH Taylor, and hosts European Tour final qualifying the week before our visit. It's an authentic challenge at 6,912 yards, with fast and true greens and fairways that demand accurate drives. The stretch between holes five and nine is particularly notable, featuring a memorable par three hitting over a pond.

We've also cut the entry fee to just £90 which includes a round of golf on each day, plus lunch on both days and dinner on the Monday evening. Please note there is no accommodation provided.

To enter please fill in the application form on page 24 of this magazine, or email your details to [rachael@bigga.co.uk](mailto:rachael@bigga.co.uk) - ensure you receive confirmation of entry by return email.

## COURSE WORK STARTS AT CHERKLEY COURT

A historic site near Leatherhead has been given the go-ahead for an exclusive golf course. Plans for a golf course, luxury hotel and spa were held up by campaigners

who are objecting to the development. But after a hearing at the High Court last week a judge permitted the removal of topsoil and other works to begin.

The par 71, 7000 yard course has been designed by David McLay Kidd, creator of Queenwood, The Castle Course at St. Andrews and Machrihanish Dunes.



# HISTORIC CHANGE AT BRORA



Head Greenkeeper James Macbeath (second left) watches course record holder Jim Miller tee off at the 11th with Jim Casey from Clyneish Distillery and Club President Alistair Risk

A Head Greenkeeper's desire to modernise a historic course has led to a significant and historic change of yardage at Brora Golf Club.

James MacBeath, Head Greenkeeper at the club – which is situated some 50 miles north of Inverness - recognised that the back nine was more difficult than the front nine so recommended it be extended by 50 yards, to ensure it became a par five.

James said: "I play off quite a low handicap and I found that in the prevailing wind, the back nine and front nine were not balanced. Also, there are not many par 69s around these days. We get many American visitors who are looking for a par 70, so I really felt it was time to modernise.

"I brought my idea to our greens committee and it all went from there. Inevitably there were some objections at first, particularly as there have been very few changes since the course was laid out in 1924, but when it eventually went to a vote the members were in favour."

Over the winter James and his team worked to build the new tee on the James Braid designed course, and also extended the fairways to allow for the extra yardage.

To mark the occasion the club and Clynelish Distillery, the sponsor of the 11th hole, invited course record holder Jim Miller to hit the first drive from the new tee.



Chris Thomas, Mike Mayer, Alex Matthews, Craig Campbell

## 100-HOLE CHARITY CHALLENGE

BIGGA member Craig Campbell is joining forces with four pals this month to attempt the incredible charity challenge of playing 100 holes in a single day.

Former Celtic Manor greenkeeper Craig will head to Ridgeway Golf Club in Caerphilly on 21 June with club members Chris Thomas, Mike Mayer and Alex Matthews, and have worked out they have around 16 hours of daylight to succeed – all in aid of Cancer Research Wales.

Craig is now a groundsman at Cardiff's magnificent Millennium Stadium, but golf is very much in his blood.

He worked at several clubs including South Winchester and Stratford Oaks before

moving on to Celtic Manor. He has retained his BIGGA membership as he explains: "Everyone can benefit from what other turf guys are doing. The Millennium Stadium provides a unique working environment, which means we are always looking for ways to improve and take on board ideas from all areas of turf management.

"Regarding the challenge, if we can go round in 998 minutes and play to our handicaps for the whole day this would equate to a shot every 34 seconds!

"We're looking forward to raising significant funds for Cancer Research Wales."

Donations can be made at [www.justgiving.com/RidgewayGolf2013-100HoleChallenge](http://www.justgiving.com/RidgewayGolf2013-100HoleChallenge)



Aerial spraying against OPM first forecast in April's GI got underway in early May. Within hours it was headline news in The Guardian and The Daily Telegraph. Micron Sprayers confirmed aerial application would be carried out by a Robinson Helicopter equipped with Micronair AU 7000 atomisers.

The target is the 10-hectare Herridges and Broom Copses near Pangbourne (West Berkshire) to be sprayed twice with *Bacillus thuringiensis* subsp. *kurstaki*. Stewart Snape at Forestry Commission (FC) said "We know there could be OPM in the woodland environment because we found a nest last year."

Dr Martin Warren, Chief Executive of the charity 'Butterfly Conservation' said: "Blanket aerial spraying of a designated wildlife site sets a very bad precedent and is an extremely crude control mechanism – the approach is akin to using a 'sledgehammer to crack a nut'. We believe a far better method would be to conduct a detailed survey of the conspicuous nests and spray them individually as they have done in other areas."

The charity is concerned for rare butterflies in this woodland including silver washed fritillary (*Argynnis paphia*) and white admiral (*Limenitis camilla*), as well as the purple emperor

# AERIAL SPRAYING ...ON TIME (IF NOT ON TARGET)



A small nest typically located on the underside of a branch. Picture courtesy RBG Kew.

(*Apatura iris*) known to be on sites nearby.

Early May featured strong winds and falling temperatures slowing oak re-foliation even more. Calm conditions for accurate deposition of droplets are required. And 40-60 per cent leaf expansion, to ensure sufficiently good leaf coverage and a lethal dose of Bt insecticide through larval ingestion.

Wind turbulence and insufficient tree canopy cover increase chances of droplets landing on non-target plants. Dog violet and honeysuckle both common woodland and hedgerow plants are the food plants of silver washed fritillary and white admiral, respectively.

Pangbourne appears a strange choice of place to begin aerial bombardment with insecticide. After three years of ground spraying only three nests were found last year.

One surprised observer told Greenkeeper International: "If FC wanted maximum impact against OPM they could have closed down Richmond Park for a day to treat the area's high OPM infestation."

This would clearly assist sites nearby. OPM has been successfully controlled on Richmond Golf Course (GI January 2012) but threats from female moths flying in to lay their eggs remain.

*Dr Terry Mabbett*

## FAREWELL JANE JONES

Jane Jones, who left her position as Regional Administrator for the South West & Wales on 31 May, was presented with a series of gifts by everyone at BIGGA House to thank her for eight and a half years of sterling service. She's intending to remain in the golf and greenkeeping industry. Everyone wishes her well and hopefully she will continue to attend events within the industry and keep in touch with many of the members, particularly in her Region.



## TORO/LELY MATCH

B,B&O triumphed 4-1 over Kent in the annual Toro/Lely Home Counties Football Final at Upton Park, home of West Ham United.

Kent Section secretary and part-time goalkeeper (!) Rob Holland reports: "It was truly a game of two halves. B,B&O scored four quick fire goals between the 12th and 20th minutes despite the heroic actions of the cat-like keeper.

"We scored a penalty in the second half and relentlessly pressed to narrow the scoreline. Unfortunately time ran out. Well done to Ben Adams, Russ Bain and Adam White who were superb in Kent's rearguard.

"Many thanks to B,B&O for a great game played in a very friendly spirit. Thanks especially to Larry Pearman and Toro/Lely for sponsoring - your generosity was very much appreciated. Thanks too to West Ham and particularly Head Groundsman Shane O'Brien for the quality of the pitch. Finally thanks to Kev Morris for arranging everything from organising the players, transport, sideline heckling, post match speeches and evening beverages back at Redlibbits. Thanks for the great company and another amazing day guys."