



Chairman's Word

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

A frantic and fruitful February

It's been a whirlwind few weeks for me – as soon as I returned from BTME I was making preparations to attend the Golf Industry Show in San Diego.

As well as the exhibition itself, which impressed me greatly with its size, scale and the range of exhibitors on display, I dipped into a few of the educational seminars.

If there was a time when we were playing catch-up with American education, I believe that time has passed and we're now on an equal footing with them.

Education is taken extremely seriously on both sides of the Atlantic – it's great to see, and it's about time.

The International Briefing I attended during the Show was valuable, particularly as I'm now lucky enough to look at it from a Chairman's perspective.

I quickly got the impression that we're not alone with our problems in the UK - various Associations from all corners of the world share similar challenges relating to the economy and also retaining and increasing membership.

We made plans to host an international gathering during BTME 2014, which is a really exciting opportunity.

I also attended meetings with the American and Australian Associations and also with GEO over environmental issues – in particular we focused on sustainability.

We will hopefully see real long-term progress as a result of these meetings.

I also spent a lot of time with the BIGGA Delegation sponsored by Bernhard and Company, and they were equally enthusiastic about the week.

They represented a really good cross-section of our membership with a diverse mix of Course Man-

agers, Deputies and Assistants and I know they got a lot from the week.

There was a particularly good mix of ages and characters and I know this experience will stand them in good stead as they progress in their careers.

The delegation were taken round the fabulous Torrey Pines and La Costa courses and said it was unbelievable – another world.

One major difference was, of course, the weather – their winter is similar to our summer! I was also fortunate enough to see these courses and they were truly stunning.

If there was a time when we were playing catch-up with American education, I believe that time has now passed and we're on an equal footing with them

I also spoke to the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Tom Flavelle who's clearly learning a huge amount from his time in the States.

He's there for a little while longer and I know he'll be appearing in a future edition of Greenkeeper International informing the membership about his experiences.

One thing he said which stuck in my mind was "I wish I could bottle all this up and dish it out to all the young greenkeepers in the UK".

Another highlight was the BIGGA Reception we held on the Monday evening which was a gathering of our members who had travelled to San Diego, and it was so successful we're looking at making it a regular fixture.

On my return from America the Board of Management met which gave us a timely opportunity to review BTME 2013 and put plans in place for 2014 and beyond.

Feedback from visitors and

exhibitors alike has generally been really positive and momentum is already gathering for January 2014.

Towards the end of February the Federation of European Golf Greenkeeper Associations (FEGGA) held its Annual Conference in the picturesque but snowy city of Zurich.

It was fascinating to listen to the challenges faced by the many other Greenkeeper Associations across the continent and realise that they are so similar to those that we face in the UK.

Economic pressure, lack of awareness and appreciation of the profession, legislative/regulatory

issues and environmental challenges were the repeated themes, clearly all Associations need to stand together to help the whole profession overcome them.

During the conference Paul Worster, BIGGA's 2010 Chairman, was elected to the FEGGA Board of Directors, Paul has recently completed a four-year term of office on the BIGGA Board and has excellent credentials and experience to assist FEGGA in their goal to properly represent the profession of greenkeeping at a European level.

Congratulations Paul, you certainly have my support in your new role.

I'm well aware that it's been far from an ideal start to 2013 weather wise.

However, spring is finally just around the corner so let's hope it improves, there's no more snow and we get the dry spell we so badly need.

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Learning & Development

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

Every year I wonder where the first two months of the year go, when my feet finally touch the ground I realise that it's March already. This year it has been especially busy as Lee Strutt and I got married the day after returning from the Golf Industry Show in San Diego! After almost 20 years in the industry as Sami Collins, I'll now be known as Sami Strutt so don't go ignoring my emails and phone calls thinking "I have no idea who that is!"

Golf Industry Show

The Golf Industry Show made a welcome return to San Diego in February. BIGGA were represented by Jim Croxton, Tony Smith (Chairman) and myself along with the BIGGA Delegation in association with Bernhard & Co. Although the weather was not what was expected in Southern California, the show delivered a vast array of education and exhibitors.

Many familiar faces visited the BIGGA stand and with the able assistance of the ten 'boys' from the delegation we handled enquiries about the services that BIGGA offers as well as selling a couple of memberships in the process.

For the delegation it is a full-on week with almost every minute filled. We did however manage to fit in a couple of birthday celebrations one evening for Messrs Norsworthy and Parker, with the able assistance of some Hooters Girls (young and slightly older versions – no comments please boys!!).

The annual meeting with GCSAA's education team was as informative as ever with discussions taking place regarding the education offered at our shows and how this can be enhanced, administration matters (boring for most but invaluable for us!) and exchanges of ideas to improve what we do. A big thanks to the BIGGA delegation for your company and I hope you have now all recovered!



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 manuals.

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BIGGA Delegation at the Golf Industry Show

Future Turf Managers Initiative



Applications for the inaugural Future Turf Managers Conference are now closed with 45 applicants vying for 20 places. The selection process will have taken place by the time you read this and next month I will report on who's been successful.



Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award 2013

This year we celebrate 25 years of the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award. With past winners including Euan Grant from Turnberry and Murray Long from Sunningdale as well as our most recent winner, Thomas Flavelle, this prestigious award is highly sought after.

Applications for the 2013 Award have been sent out to all colleges and training providers offering Sportsturf qualifications. If you are studying for a Diploma in Greenkeeping; Diploma in Golf Course

Supervision; SVQ Level 2 or 3; National Certificate or National Diploma courses and are a resident in the UK or the Republic of Ireland, you are eligible.

To be entered for the amazing opportunity of winning the eight-week Toro Scholarship to study at the University of Massachusetts, visit Toro headquarters and travel to Orlando for the Golf Industry Show, you must be nominated by your greenkeeping tutor. If you believe that you could be the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year 2013, talk to your tutor today about applying.

GI GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL
Celebrating 25 years of BIGGA
15 Weeks to RTME 2013
15.20 OCTOBER 2012

Inside...
CLIMATE CONTROL
Coping with our unpredictable climate
A BRUSH WITH FAME
Karl Parry's new product

Featured
TORO BOY
Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year 2012 is Thomas Flavelle

ALSO INSIDE... DRAINAGE : BASIS POINTS : HORSE CHESTNUT





BIGGA Membership

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

Membership of BIGGA equips members with the resources and connections to progress their career. Thanks to BIGGA's Gold and Silver Key Fund contributors BIGGA are able to allocate funding to enhance professional development by offering financial support, training aids and a CPD scheme to members.

- Save money by receiving your own monthly copy of Greenkeeper International (GI) as part of your membership, a monthly round up of the latest news, views and technical articles from the turf industry.

- Gain access to enhanced member-only content by logging into the members area on the BIGGA website.

- Take advantage of education funding through

- Refund of fees
- Subsidies

- Higher education scholarship

- Take advantage of Assistants Development Seminars – 'So You Want to be Promoted – Essential Skills for your Career Development' is being delivered by experienced Head Greenkeepers/Course Managers across BIGGA's 26 sections. Look out on the Events Section on the BIGGA website for dates and information.

- Register for CPD – by planning and reflecting on your learning experiences you can enhance your development and advance your career.

The benefits of membership are not just there when you are looking to further your career, members also have personal benefits including access to -

- **Legal helpline – access to legal help and advice 24/7.**

When you have a legal problem it can often be a highly stressful time of your life. It is often difficult to know who you can talk to and the cost of getting the advice that you need can often be expensive. As a benefit of BIGGA Membership members have access to the Legal Assistance insurance package



The BIGGA stand at BTME 2013

arranged by Gallagher Heath, access to a comprehensive legal helpline that offers advice on a wide range of legal services.

The legal helpline is provided by Irwin Mitchell, one of the top 10 UK law firms. The helpline is operated by a team of dedicated advisers, all legally qualified to give you the legal advice that you require. The typical areas of law that the legal helpline can give advice on are:

- Family law
- Employment law
- Property law
- Consumers

- **Full Members Personal Accident Insurance**

This insurance provides cover for accidental bodily injury which occurs during the operative time of cover which results in death, loss of limbs or sight, hearing and speech, permanent disability or temporary disability. There are additional payments for medical expenses, funeral expenses, hospitalisation, bodily injury resulting in a coma, retraining and relatives travel travel expenses.

- **Lifestyle Counselling Helpline and Online Support is available to all BIGGA Members and their families**

This upgraded service for all BIGGA Members and members



of their immediate family living at the same address can help with a range of problems from practical everyday matters to sensitive or emotional issues. Specialists will help members deal with personal relationship problems, problems with colleagues in the workplace and other issues affecting their general wellbeing.

Counsellors and information specialists are also trained to help members with practical problems like debt.

The helpline is complemented by a comprehensive online information and support service, through which members can access information and advice on a range of issues and problems which often impact on everyday life. Topics are diverse and include relationships, childcare issues, consumer issues, stress and health and fitness. Information is updated regularly by a team of experienced counsellors and information specialists.

The Lifestyle Counselling Helpline and online information support service can be contacted 24/7. Log in to the members area for details.

With almost 6,000 greenkeeping members can you afford not to be a part of Europe's largest greenkeeping organisation.





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Clive Osgood Jane Jones

OTHER USEFUL NUMBERS
(Full Members only)

Personal Accident Helpline
02075 603013
Greenkeepers Legal Assistance
0800 177 7891
Greenkeepers Support Services
0800 174 319
Debt Counselling Helpline
0800 174319



WIEDENMANN UK'S PLATINUM CHARITY TERRA SPIKE KEEPS OMBERSLEY GC OPEN

What a difference a year makes when you've taken delivery of a Wiedenmann Terra Spike GXi8 HD.

Ombersley Golf Club purchased Wiedenmann UK's charity platinum-painted deep aerator last January, and coincidentally was also celebrating 20 years of operation. In truth, the Kidderminster club would have purchased the Terra Spike a year previously but too many weather-enforced course closures meant they had to delay their investment.

Exactly a year on, Ombersley happily reports that they've had no closures what so ever and that drainage on the course has never been better despite the last 12 months been almost the wettest on record.

Andrew Halfpenny, Course Manager, said: "We've set up a programme to aerate eight days a month on tees greens and aprons. We've pretty much stuck to that in the spring, autumn and winter but got a little bit caught up with other tasks during the summer. From October onwards, when the days became shorter, we really started to reap the benefits of sustained frequent aeration. The transformation in the quality of the turf was evident to everybody.

"We've remained open when others around have had to shut bringing in additional business so our Terra Spike is a machine that's truly earning its keep. I've even been fortunate to take on another member of greenkeeping staff, so from our perspective aeration is truly working and is our key critical task."

BRITISH SUGAR TOPSOIL GUIDE LAUNCHED

British Sugar Topsoil – who recently exhibited at BTME for the first time and have already agreed to return next year – have launched a free booklet outlining how topsoil can be used on golf courses.

They've teamed up with Peter Jones Associates Ltd to produce the eight-page technical 'Essential Guide' which is a must for those involved in the golf course industry. It's freely available as a download from British Sugar TOPSOIL's web site www.bsttopsoil.co.uk or by calling 08702 402314.

KUBOTA ADD PRECISION TO POWER WITH NEW 100-INCH MOWER DECK



Tractor and groundcare specialists Kubota has introduced a new Lastec 100-inch flex mower deck available exclusively on its high performance and market leading F3680 Out Front Mower.


The F3680 is the most powerful out front mower in the Kubota range. With a 36hp engine and Auto-Assist 4WD as standard, it is designed to offer maximum manoeuvrability and versatility whilst being able to tackle the most demanding commercial mowing operations. The F3680 also includes a host of features to increase operator comfort and reduce fatigue, such as hydrostatic power steering, adjustable seat and conveniently positioned operator levers.

Dave Roberts, Kubota's General Manager, commented: "The introduction of this new mower deck is part of Kubota's ongoing commitment to add value to the product and the service we provide our customers to ensure they can complete their work efficiently and effectively.

"The patented Lastec design integrates five 21-inch mower pans, uniquely pinned together and belt driven, giving a 100-inch wide cut with the precision of a 21-inch walk-behind mower. For turf professionals, this means a larger area can be cut in a shorter space of time, saving them valuable time and money."

The 100-inch mower deck, called the 100 EFK, is only available on Kubota's F3680 as this model has the ideal horsepower requirements for a 100-inch cut width. The solution has been designed so all the deck pans articulate independently 15 degrees up and down to follow the ground contour with walk-mower precision which reduces the possibilities of scalping.

Other features include hydraulically fold up outer pans to minimize width for transport and an adjustable deck height ranging from 1-inch to 4 ¾ inches with ¼ inch increments with no tooling requirement. Adjustable internal baffling also allows for standard rear discharge or mulch to optimise performance in a variety of positions.



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The new Lynx™ Control System from Toro Golf Irrigation helps course managers do just that.

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Kubota



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ZD ZERO TURN MOWER



G SERIES MOWERS



Wayne Ganning (inset left)

MOOR HALL GC ROLLS OUT THE RED IRON

Moor Hall Golf Club in the West Midlands has become one of the first in the UK to put Toro's new GreensPro 1200 greens roller through its paces.

Course manager and BIGGA member Wayne Ganning (shown inset above) included the machine in his replacement Toro fleet package after the Sports Turf Research Institute (STRI) recommended greens ironing to help improve the smoothness and trueness of the Sutton Coldfield course's greens.

As he explains: "We didn't get a great deal of use out of the iron last summer because of all the rain, but when we did use it the results confirm that smoothness and trueness improved. Also surface performance achieved near-tournament levels with a significant increase in green speed by two feet, which STRI confirmed in a test. The committee and players also started to notice the difference towards the back end of the summer, so we're looking forward to getting the full benefit

this summer. It's much better than the vibrating rollers we used to use. We're hoping it will help us cut back on mowing, too, which should help improve sward health."

The GreensPro is just one of several new arrivals at the 18-hole parkland course, after the club replaced an eight-year-old Toro fleet reaching the end of its useful life.

Wayne's other new mowers include a Groundsmaster 3500-D and 4500-D, and a Reelmaster 6700-D. "I've particularly noticed that the 4500-D rotary mower has a much quicker grounds speed, which makes us more productive," he adds.

A machine Wayne did get plenty of use out of during the washout summer was the SandPro 3040 bunker raker. "We bought a front plough as an optional extra and it pushed all the sand up despite the rain and really helped us to get the bunkers back into play more quickly after a downpour."

BSH PRODUCES NEW COMBINED CATALOGUE

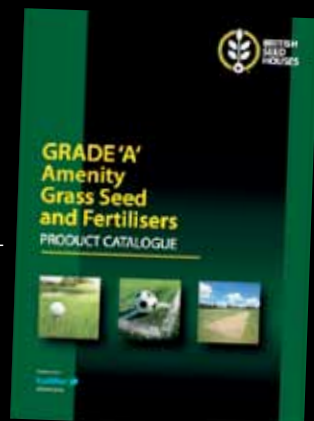
British Seed Houses has produced a new product catalogue which combines its Grade 'A' amenity grass seed and fertilisers in one booklet.

The new-look catalogue details the comprehensive range of products available from the UK's largest privately-owned grass seed company and has been well received by customers.

Amenity sales manager Richard Brown said: "We look to improve the catalogue year on year to ensure it is a well-laid out, informative guide. It was a natural progression for us to combine the seed and fertiliser catalogues together, rather than having separate ones, as it was felt more appropriate for our customers.

"Our products are closely interlinked and our technical sales representatives advise on both seed and fertilisers. They have specialist knowledge and experience to help professionals in the golf, sports and landscaping sectors to find the correct grass seeds and fertilisers to benefit and improve their facilities."

The representatives operate throughout the UK and are also FACTS qualified (Fertiliser Advisers Certification Training scheme). The British Seed Houses product catalogue is available to download at www.bshamenity.com



MOVE FOR MACGREGOR



MacGregor Forest & Groundcare have recently been appointed as the authorised dealer for the Redexim Charterhouse professional Golf and Turf Management machinery range, in the North West Scotland area.

As a well-established business with regional branches in Elgin, Portree and Stornoway, MacGregor Forest & Groundcare work with a host of national names and have an excellent market share in the areas they serve.

Commenting on the agreement with MacGregor Forest & Groundcare Depot Manager Callum Sim said, "the decision to work with Redexim Charterhouse was customer driven as we had noticed an increase in demand from our clients for Aeration, Overseeding, Top Dressing and both natural and synthetic turf maintenance equipment.

Our subsequent market research confirmed the quality and established reputation of the Redexim Charterhouse product range and we have also found the dealer support and back-up to be excellent."

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TORO



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Of course, its superior cutting technology delivers the finest putting surface and playing experience you would expect from Toro; but added to this, the mower is clean, environmentally friendly and, crucially, incredibly quiet. All this, and more, make the eFlex the perfect choice for golf clubs looking for a green solution, especially those with hotels and guest accommodation.

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GREENSMASTER 1000



GREENSMASTER FLEX 21



GREENSMASTER eFLEX



GREENSMASTER 3250-D



TRIFLEX 3400



partners in turfcare



PROFILE

Name: Gordon Kerr
Born: 17 July 1959
Handicap: Nine
Hobbies: Watching football,
playing golf
Favourite sports team:
Dunfermline Athletic FC

It's bonnie by the Clyde

How have Gordon Kerr and his team brought PGA EuroPro Tour events to a course which only opened less than three years ago? And what are the technical challenges associated with such a young course? Steve Castle travelled to Scotland to find out

The “opportunity of a lifetime” is what Course Manager Gordon Kerr calls Mar Hall. For those who have had the privilege to have set foot on the new £4million layout situated on the banks of the River Clyde beneath the striking silhouette of the Kilpatrick Hills, it's easy to see why.

In 2007 Gordon was approached to oversee the creation of an 18-hole golf course within the grounds of the five-star Mar Hall Resort.

With a provisional opening date of 2010 in mind, the challenge was on – and he accepted.

Gordon, who lives just four miles from the course and is an avid golfer himself, recalls:

“It was a dream to be involved in

constructing a course from scratch.”

Gordon and his five-strong team, who moved to Mar Hall from nearby Gleddoch House Hotel and Golf Club, immediately went to work on the plans devised by renowned architect Dave Thomas and his son, Paul, who he says he relished working closely with.

However, though Mar Hall represented a timely opportunity,

construction coincided with the onset of the economic recession. With funds limited, the Course Manager had to rely on ingenuity, local knowledge and, more than anything, the adaptability and effort of his team to deliver on the owner's chief objective - a course that would allow golf all year round.

Unperturbed, ground was broken and Gordon turned to tried and tested local contractors and asked colleagues to take on the roles of dumper truck-drivers and excavators. Together they moved an almighty 160,000 cubic meters of sub soil - mostly stony shingle - and were ready to start building proper.

"We do get a fair bit of rain, but 80 per cent of the course is built on the riverbank's shingle ground. It was a good starting point as far as drainage is concerned.

"We're not permitted to drain water straight into the Clyde so we created an irrigation reservoir and four wetlands as catchments areas. The water regained from the 11th, 12th and 13th holes ensures the course is self sufficient for irrigation water."

The sub-soil was redistributed by the Mar Hall team on their convoy of dumper trucks and then moulded by skilled shapers into greens, surrounds and bunker complexes. Ironically, it was those sand traps that would prove to be Gordon's next 'hazard'.

The original plan was to turf all the bunker faces and install pipe and gravel for drainage. He intended to embark on the painstaking and costly job until, at the last minute, he was introduced to two techniques he'd never seen before - hydroseeding and Aquadyne. They proved to be shrewd alternatives.

"Aquadyne is a sustainable drainage product that removes water as efficiently as pipe and gravel," he explains. "I was a bit sceptical at first but I spoke to a couple of greenkeep-

ers who reassured me it was the best long-term option."

The Aquadyne was soon inserted and connected to the existing fairway drainage during winter without damage to the shaping of the bunkers or what would be the fairways or green surrounds. This meant that all 54 bunkers could be shaped. They were then hydroseeded in just two days, saving a massive amount of manpower, machinery and materials.

"These techniques saved us both money and time without compromising the condition of the bunkers. Can you imagine how time-consuming and expensive turfing would have been in comparison? It also meant we completed all of the required work in just two days."

However, he says that ultimately it took the hard graft of his team to realise the full benefits of the switch to Aquadyne.

"In the winter our guys would dig trenches by hand and connect the Aquadyne to the fairway drainage we'd already put in. It means that you now hardly ever see a bunker with water in it. Both those techniques saved us a lot of money, as did using our own guys on occasions we could have used outside contractors."

With the drainage installed, Gordon turned to a contractor he knew he could trust to carry out the final shaping, Greentech of Stirling. Their experts delivered the finishing touches using vital root-zone prior to seeding. That left the Mar Hall greens staff with another steep learning curve - seeding the greens. He admits the seeding process was the most stressful stage of the whole construction.

"I'd never seeded greens before, and when I spoke to other greenkeepers they told me all sorts of horror stories about the seed blowing away or root-zone being washed out."

