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Jason Dufner celebrates winning the USPGA Championship

A supreme sporting summer

What a summer of sport we've had: Andy Murray winning Wimbledon, the British & Irish Lions' triumphant Tour down under, the Ashes retained comfortably and just recently a thrilling and convincing win for Europe's Solheim Cup team, their first ever victory on American turf.

Additionally the reassuringly comfortably built Jason Dufner taking the USPGA Championship sealed a vintage year for golf's Majors. Attention now turns to the qualifying process for the 2014 Ryder Cup which began at Celtic Manor in August.

It doesn't seem a year since Europe's historic win at Medinah and the next twelve months will pass in a flash for Scott Fenwick, Steve Chappell and all the team at Gleneagles who are charged with preparing the PGA Centenary Course for golf's most exhilarating event. The last few months' clement weather will no doubt have been welcome as the changes made to the course for the event settle in.

Without wishing to usher 2013 too quickly to a conclusion it is now time for the Association to look forward, as registration has opened for the 25th edition of the BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition (BTME) to be held once again in Harrogate in January.

Go to www.btme.org.uk to register for your free entry and ensure you beat the queues on the door.

I am delighted that we are now officially sold out for stand space in all of the four Halls and have actually begun a waiting list for additional interested exhibitors, meaning there is the possibility of expanding into an extra 5th Hall.

The comprehensive and excellent Continue to Learn education programme is complete and will be contained within this magazine's next edition, demand is sure to be high especially for the very popular Turf Managers Conference

which features Ohio State's Professor Karl Danneberger amongst others.

This month entries close for our National Championship sponsored by Charterhouse and Kubota, at the time of writing there were still some spaces left for this 36 hole event to be played over the excellent Red Course at Oxfordshire's Frilford Heath Golf Club, a course that will have played host to the European Tour's Qualifying School only seven days previously. I hope you can take part and compete for the increased prize fund for 2013.

Entries also close soon for the fantastic opportunity provided by Bernhards to be part of the BIGGA Delegation to the Golf Industry Show in Orlando in February. If you are not one of the privileged few to have been a BIGGA delegate in the past I would urge you to apply this time around. The combination of education, camaraderie, networking and industry insight that the Bernhards trip provides truly is an unparalleled career development opportunity.

This month's magazine features a fascinating diary provided by David MacIndoe (page 34) on the trials and tribulations of growing in Belarus's first ever golf course. Once again the adaptability of this industry's practitioners is tested to the maximum with outstanding success. Additionally there is an illuminating insight from Huw Morgan on the challenges of his dual role as Club and Course Manager at Ashburnham Golf Club (page 28).

Enjoy the read.



Jim Croxton
BIGGA CEO

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From Belarus with love

When David MacIndoe was made redundant from his Course Manager role he became a Lawn & Sportsground Consultant – and one of his first challenges was a role as grow-in consultant for Belarus's first ever golf course. It's a nation where temperatures can drop to minus 20 with snow cover for a third of the year – and here he tells GI how he battled language barriers, snow mold and missing home



April 28
After securing a visit I've started work on a three month grow-in for the quiet lovely city of Minsk. I've checked out the course with Mike Collins, owner of Minsk-Golf, who later built many courses in Eastern Europe, along with Head Designer Andy and his partner. It's good to get an indication of what appears to be a first class project and golf course. However, pine and silver birch trees dominate the site, a real headache for us as the trees have seed with good management could be as good as the best landscaped courses that we take for granted in the UK.

The back area is under construction, but the front area which was constructed last year and sown towards the latter part of the year looks like a desert. I've got a feeling this is not going to be successful.

The greens areas with Jacklin bent grass did not survive the winter. Some could have been having snow cover for 119 days? 30 days later some can't even produce. I have to accept plant loss, after 90 days reports the record 50-117 days with one-work there in the middle of August means devastation to 90% of plant cover.

Then, barrows and roughs sown with a best/decide mix survived better, grass cover at around 70%, although some areas are thin, work and drained but at least I have something to work with. Snow mold issues cover all areas of the course, but it's not actually too bad and many with temperatures of 25 to 26 degrees.

Day to day features full covering of the front area to be followed by the front area only. The barrows would be long cut in the shape of plenty of ripples and a quick application of the only fertilizer available – an agricultural balanced with a lovely smell of approximately 1000. Great on barrows not quite so good on grass – but that table is adaptable and get on with it. So the first basic work has ended with grass and trees on the front area all inspected and finished.

May 13
My second week has been a mixture of 22 hours days, but very enjoyable and with temperatures now approaching 20 degrees, work on the irrigation system in the main block. It requires a lot of work, with extremely deep wells and three big concrete pumps. On the main second hole, four hole academy course and during range they have recently been getting out 800 cubic meters a day. I hope they can cope when it rains again and raining.

May 27
I saw my second snake on the course – black with yellow markings. I didn't hang around to take a photo. The last snake I saw in this area was in 2008. It was all ready a bit of pressure off the course and they were shared some food with me.

It's good to be back on the course, things are settling down well. We've established a better routine and are cutting holes 1 to 13 plus the 11th hole and the 17th green. We have received a consignment of 1.2 tonnes of green grade fertilizer. Several 10-20-5 fertilizers and murexium – not my first choice but they are part in a second.

The greens have responded well compared to the agricultural products used previously so, for all you cynics out there, I really don't pay to

May 30
I have secured a second visit until the end of June – via an interesting overnight train journey there.

May 3
I shared an open carriage with three ladies. It was to my wife Sharon that it was all ready a bit of pressure off the course and they were shared some food with me.

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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

Retirement reality hitting home

Having returned from The Open, and after a very busy couple of months for the Association, it dawned on me that this was now the first summer in half a century that I haven't been working on maintaining and improving a golf course.

It is a strange feeling to have no course or staff to manage and no club championships or major events to prepare for. I'm sure anyone who has retired will recognise that slightly unusual disconnected feeling – not only do I miss the work itself and the pride all greenkeepers take in preparing a first-class course, I also miss the daily communication (and fun) with the team, members and visitors.

No longer can I throw myself into course projects, renovations and all manner of other work.

I'm fortunate this situation is on my terms having made the conscious decision to take early retirement from Teesside, but it has led me to think about any of our members who currently find themselves out of work or who feel the potential threat of redundancy or difficulties at work.

I want all members to understand that the Association is here to help, we have specific Member Benefits that are always available - the Legal Assistance Helpline (0800 177 7891) or our Lifestyle Counselling Helpline (0844 770 1036) – but perhaps more importantly we also have a network of staff and members who can offer advice and support.

The first port of call should be your Regional Administrator who can listen to the problem, and help you find solutions. Recently the Association has heard of employment problems when the situation has progressed too far, and sadly the opportunity to genuinely assist and make a difference has passed. If you know of someone in difficulty please bring it to our attention as soon as possible.

The Association is doing all it can within the industry to improve general employment conditions for its members, but individual situations need individual, tailored help which is out there – so please get in touch at the first sign of a problem.

On a lighter note - clearly turf management is firmly in my blood, for as



I want all members to understand that the Association is here to help, we have specific Member Benefits that are always available

soon as I retired I found myself managing bowling greens and am currently in demand for all sorts of lawn consultancy!

By time you read this I will be in Windsor for IOG SALTEX. For a variety of reasons last year's show was considered a disappointment, but I'm hopeful for an improvement this year as the industry needs healthy, strong trade shows.

As always I'm looking forward to meeting Association members, our friends in the trade and catching up with the latest innovations.

For the third year running we have organised some excellent seminars to be held during the event. Whilst SALTEX is mainly aimed at the IOG's Groundsmen membership it is an important date in the general turf management calendar.

We are delighted to support our friends at the IOG and provide an opportunity for our members in the south east to take part in some excellent education.

The presentations are on subjects

as diverse as greens drainage, the management and construction of bunkers on limited budgets and dealing with winter disease on greens and I know it will be an informative and entertaining day.

Once SALTEX ends all the focus switches to our own exhibition, BTME in January. The team at HQ has done a superb job ensuring all the allocated stand space is now sold, and excitement is already building for this the 25th edition of our flagship event.

As we head into autumn after a good summer at last – probably the first decent one since 2006 – I hope you have all enjoyed the warm, sunny weather which we so desperately needed after last year's relentless downpours and have got plenty of work done on your courses.

I'm jealous!

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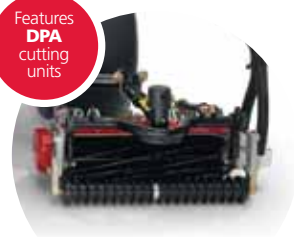
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FULL HOUSE FOR BTME 2014

BIGGA are delighted to announce that all the planned stand space for BTME 2014 next January has been sold – however there are still possibilities for anyone interested in exhibiting.

We've had a superb response from both returning clients and new companies keen to join the unmissable turf event of the year meaning all of the halls we opened last year are now full.

In fact, we're very pleased to announce several new companies making their BTME debuts including: Amenity Sales, County Turf, Etesia, Hunter Industries, JK Sonics, JUB, Mansfield Sand, Sports Metals and Toms Locker.

However, if you are interested in showcasing your products to thousands of movers and shakers across the whole range of the turf industry please get in touch as we are considering opening another hall at the Harrogate International Centre to meet demand.

To add your name to the list or register your interest please call our Business Development Manager Jill Rodham on 01347 833800 or email jill@bigga.co.uk.

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

Registration for BTME 2014 is now open – and it's still free! Simply visit our dedicated website at btme.org.uk and click on the 'Register Now' icon.

NORTH WALES WIN CRICKET BATTLE



The Annual BIGGA cricket challenge match between North West and North Wales, sponsored by Bathgate Silica Sand, was held on 24 July at Ashley Cricket Club.

The North West innings of 154 from 20 overs seemed enough to secure a victory.

However, North Wales battled to victory in a thrilling final over. Captain Paul Morton hit 53, ably supported by our very own Steve Wragg on 33. Steve also scored 6.2 for his dramatic dive to safety to avoid a run out! Man of the match: Steve Hemsley. Thanks to all who attended.

Sandra Raper

NEW FACES AT BIGGA



BIGGA HOUSE CHARITY RUN

Four BIGGA HQ staff have raised hundreds of pounds for charity after pounding the pavements of York on a 10k run.

From left, Membership Executive Elaine Jones joined Business Development Manager Jill Rodham, General Manager Tracey Maddison and L&D Executive Rachael Duffy in a 10k challenge in the city last month.

The quartet had undergone several weeks of training – clocking up the miles in the countryside around Aldwark Manor.

They then had to brave the summer heat on a glorious Sunday morning for the charity run, but managed to cross the line together in an impressive time of 1 hour 7 minutes. They've currently raised just under £700 for Macmillan Cancer Support. It was quite an achievement for the team and you can still donate to this extremely worthwhile cause at www.justgiving.com/TraceyMaddison

GCMA CONFERENCE

The GCMA Conference 2013 will take place between 11-13 November at the Hinckley Island Hotel in Leicestershire.

It will feature all manner of seminars, presentations and debates as well as the new 'Ideas Fair' where attendees can display their words of wisdom on a visual board. Keynote speakers include trained psychologist Philip Hesketh, Steve Otto – Director of Research and Testing at the R&A – and legendary British athlete Steve Backley OBE.

For much more detail and a booking form visit the GCMA's website – www.gcma.org.uk



The Association is pleased to announce the appointment of a new Regional Administrator for the South West/South Wales Region to replace Jane Jones. Tracey Harvey has been appointed on a full time contract. Tracey is a skilled administrator with a strong track record in event organisation.

Originally from Bristol, Tracey spent eight years at Thornbury Golf club as events coordinator, then moved on to have a spell in event management in the hotel industry specialising in weddings. Her previous role prior

to joining BIGGA was a PA for an environmental consultancy.

She said: "I've immersed myself in golf ever since the role at Thornbury. My partner and son are both very keen low handicap golfers, and as a family golf is a major part of our lives.

"Everyone is so welcoming in the industry, and very passionate about what they do, and I can't wait to get to know members in the South West and South Wales. It's terrific to be involved in the sport again and I'm looking forward to the challenge."



We're also pleased to welcome James Whittaker to the team at BIGGA House as Business Development Executive.

James, who completes our Sales and Administration team alongside Jill Rodham and Susannah Williams, has a wealth of business development and sales experience including working within the health club and cleaning industries as well as a spell working for Mercedes Benz.

He's a keen AFC Wimbledon fan and has followed them throughout their journey from the lower leagues back to their rightful place

in the Football League. He's also part of the commentary team for Radio Wimbledon covering some away games and is also a talented amateur footballer.

James said: "I'm delighted to join the team at BIGGA and am already getting to know our client base. I'm confident I can transfer my skills and experience from my previous field-based roles into the turf management industry.

I'm really looking forward to working closely with Jill, the rest of the team, our clients and our members across the country and beyond."

Beetle mania

Last month the Forestry Commission (FC) sent out a press release begging the public to help find populations of the Asian Longhorn beetle/ALB (*Anoplophora glabripennis*) and its close cousin the Citrus Longhorn beetle/CLB (*Anoplophora chinensis*).

Several outbreaks of CLB having arrived on infested Acers (maples), probably imported from plant nurseries in the Netherlands and originally sourced from China, have thankfully been eradicated over the last few years. ALB was found in spring 2012 at Paddock Wood in Kent (Greenkeeper International July 2012), having arrived in wooden crates from China, and was responsible for the precautionary felling of virtually all trees across eight hectares.

Hopefully this single ALB outbreak has also been eradicated since FC and FERA have said virtually nothing on the subject since autumn 2012. However, they are clearly concerned that more beetles could arrive in the country.

Martin Ward, the UK Government's Chief Plant Health Officer, said "Government plant health services cannot do this work alone, and we need the public to act as our eyes and ears in gardens, parks, woodlands and workplaces to help us spot threats quickly before they become a serious problem."

Fat chance, according to a recent Woodland Trust survey 80 per cent of the UK population can't even distinguish a huge ash tree from a huge oak tree and 50 per cent can't even identify an English oak tree – in England!

FC and FERA have finally



woken up to the traitorous activities of the native oak jewel beetle, a buprestid bark boring beetle called *Agrilus biguttatus*. In cahoots with a couple of plant pathogenic bacteria, this beetle is currently killing mature English oaks in their thousands across East Anglia and the Midlands by causing acute oak decline (Greenkeeper International March 2013).

Plant health authorities in North America are keeping a watchful eye on *Agrilus biguttatus* and have already marked it down as a 'quarantine pest'.

And with good reason since a close cousin called the emerald ash borer (*Agrilus plannipennis*) arrived from Asia and is currently destroying all species of native and exotic ash across a swathe of 18 contiguous mid-west, Appalachian and North East states and into adjoining areas of Canada (Ontario and Quebec).

If emerald ash borer ever gets into the UK it will destroy our native common ash (*Fraxinea excelsior*)

before even *Chalara fraxinea* (chalara ash dieback) has a chance to.

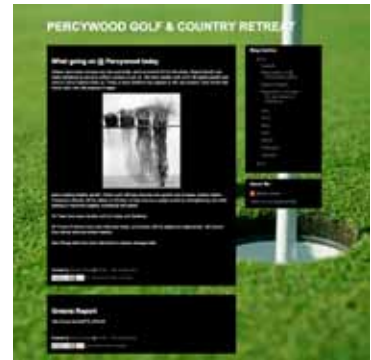
The United States has another *Agrilus* beetle this time a native species called the bronze birch borer (*Agrilus anxius*) which as the common name suggests attacks birch trees.

Native European species of birch have absolutely no resistance to this insect pest which will wipe out our native silver birch (*Betula pendula*) and downy birch (*Betula pubescens*) if it ever becomes established in the British Isles.

And now there is a British, native ambrosia beetle called oak pin-hole borer. Having been given a new lease of life in oak trees flattened by the 1987 Hurricane, the beetle has graduated over the years from a relatively rare insect of British oak woodland into a huge pest problem for the oak timber trade.

This beetle will make a mess of your club's new designer oak wood kitchen before it has even been made.

Dr Terry Mabbett



BLOGGING AT PERCY WOOD

This month's featured blog comes from Simon Olver, Course Manager at Percy Wood Golf & Country Retreat in Northumberland. We've had a great response to this so far with greenkeepers really embracing blogging as a superb tool for communicating with members and visitors alike and helping to remove some of the myths surrounding the greenkeeping profession.

Keep your blogs coming to steve.castle@bigga.co.uk.

Simon explained: "Our blog gives members a detailed up to date diary of what's going on around the course, allowing the team to carry out efficient maintenance work seamlessly and alert our membership to important information. Feedback has been fantastic showing that clear and concise communication is a must for any successful business."

"There has been unanimous appreciation for all the time put aside to keep everyone informed, resulting in greater respect for myself and the team. Since our blog began committee meetings have halved in time as most questions have already been answered."

"Our advice to any greenkeeper thinking about creating a blog is to build up your social network connections first, this will allow you to spread your blog further than you could ever imagine. Also to remember your Blog can enhance your CV, so make sure it showcases your ability."

See for yourself at <http://percywoodgolf.blogspot.co.uk>