



SOUTH EAST GOLF DAY

The South East Region's hugely popular Annual Golf and Dinner Day took place on the Old Course at Walton Heath Golf Club on the Old Course – with Michael Buck from Rushmere Golf Club emerging as the overall winner.

Michael clinched the Ray Day Memorial Trophy with a 71. Full results:

Ray Day (Memorial): Michael Buck (71) – Rushmere Golf Club

0-10 handicap 1st: Gavin Kyle – Knole Park Golf Club
2nd David Langheim MG – Wimbledon Park Golf Club

11-24 handicap 1st: Mark Ogden – Drift Golf Club
2nd: Graham Hurren – St Clements Golf Club

Guests: 1st Jon Douglass – Liphook Golf Club

2nd Rocco Cippiolone
Greenkeeper/Club Official: Ian McMillan Trophy

1st: Antony Kirwan and Paddy Hanvey – Playgolf Colchester

2nd: Phil Barton and Phil Bastion

Team Challenge Salver (best 3 scores make a section team)

East Anglia: Graham Hurren, Andy Baker, Michael Buck (1.11)

Trade: Dale Searles – Golf & Turf (37)

Longest Drive: Richard Hall – West Surrey

Nearest the Pin: Eddy Oliver – Liphook Golf Club



FEGGA IN SUNNY SPAIN

The Annual FEGGA Conference and AGM took place in Spain recently. 24 Greenkeeper Associations were represented by some 80 delegates and Patrons, included Chris Sealey and Jim Croxton, as well as Rhett Evans, CEO of the GCSAA.

The first day of the two-day conference was held at PGA de Catalunya which is Spain's premier golf complex comprising 36 holes of Championship golf set within a secluded location 15 minutes from the historic city of Girona.

The Superintendent David Bataller gave an enthusiastic account of the establishment of the club, whose business mantra is "ski in the morning, play championship golf in the afternoon", and took us through fascinating maintenance plans and future development plans.

Ransomes Jacobsen gave

us a full tour of the course and ecology work, John Deere challenged us to look at the industry and answer some searching questions, Syngenta took us through sprayer maintenance and calibration while Campey and Toro brought along some of the latest golf course aeration and mowing equipment.

PGA Catalunya boasts the finest practice facility in Europe with a 2000 square metre chipping and pitching facility which incorporates recreations of some of the world's most famous bunkers such as the Road Hole bunker, an Augusta bunker and even a volcanic sand bunker.

Day two saw a classroom type conference which included a real "I Was There" session when Rhett Evans, CEO of the GCSAA defined exactly what it is we should be striving for as Associations:

1 Work out an achievable coherent Vision and then clearly communicate it

2 Meet/exceed your customers or stakeholders needs through 'superior operational execution'

3) Make your organisation easy to work with and in

These tenets are so simple and we can apply them in all our various Associations - and even back in our Sections e.g. clear communication with our members, meeting our members' needs, and making it as simple as possible for a member to be involved in Section events.

It was a really positive and useful couple of days. FEGGA would like to thank PGA Catalunya, and major partners Ransomes-Jacobsen, Toro, John Deere, Syngenta, and Campey.

Paul Worster

GI NEWSDESK

Golf competition? Course walk? New appointment? Charity cycle?

Drop Steve Castle a line, with all your news - steve.castle@bigga.co.uk



DEVON AND CORNWALL AWAY DAY

Mike Ellis, Deputy Head Greenkeeper at The Point at Polzeath, reports on a section visit to Ealing Golf Club, The Richmond Golf Club and Twickenham.

Our section was lucky enough to visit two golf clubs and a rugby stadium in two days this month. Firstly we went to Ealing where we met Course Manager Greg Evans. He gave us a presentation on why he cuts his Poa greens at 2mm. Only a few courses in our section can cut greens that close, but as Greg explained there are nine courses within five miles of Ealing. He must make his course stand out from others and producing quick greens is necessary to attract golfers.

Next, Keith Kent gave us an insight of his role at Twickenham, where alongside being Head Groundsman he also visits other rugby clubs up and down the country from grass roots up, giving them advice on how to improve their pitches within the clubs budgets.

He looks after a Desso pitch which is 3% artificial - but it's 100m long and 70m wide and has 48000km of Desso grass master fibres. It has a total of 35 pop-ups, 15 on the pitch and 20 along the sides.

Keith told us he feeds often and yearly puts down 800kg of N and 1200kg of K.

The next visit was to Richmond Golf Club and met Course Manager Les Howkins MG.

He gave a presentation on the bunker renovation the club has been working on. All bunkers were worked on, either filled in, moved to different locations on the same hole or new ones constructed. With 660 tons of sand and a lot of man hours, Les and his team have done a great job.

A big thank you to Greg, Keith and Les for their time and effort. Also a big thank you to Colin Webber who made the trip possible. We look forward to doing this all again sometime soon.



SUPPORT THE ENGLISH

Asa English, greenkeeper at Rothley Park Golf Club, is putting on his running shoes again to compete in the Brighton Marathon in April.

Amazingly, it will be Asa's fifth Brighton Marathon and he will again be running for charity - this time in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support.

He will be hoping things go more smoothly than last year when he tore a thigh muscle with 12 miles still to go.

To sponsor Asa please go to his Just Giving page: www.justgiving.com/asa_english.

NEW LOOK IOG INDUSTRY AWARDS

The date and venue has been announced for the first IOG Industry Awards to take place in partnership with BIGGA.

The 2014 event will take place on Thursday 4 December at MK Dons FC Stadium in Milton Keynes, and after IOG and BIGGA recently agreed to cooperate three new greenkeeping categories have been introduced.

The new awards are expected to recognise the achievements of greenkeepers the length and breadth of the UK, whether they are employed at large multi-course facilities or smaller venues.

BIGGA CEO Jim Croxton said: "The IOG Conference and Awards event has developed into a fantastic occasion during which we celebrate great achievement in the Groundsman-ship industry. I'm delighted that we are partnering with the IOG to bring Greenkeeping awards into the fold.

"The sponsors and supporters of the event see great value in the opportunity to bring the entire Turf Management Industry together to reward the remarkable achievements of its practitioners."



DRONES TARGET OAK PROCESSIONARY MOTH IN GERMANY



You can always bank on Germany to come up with innovative ideas and new strategies like the use of drones to target oak processionary moth in areas unsuitable for use of full size helicopters.

This is clearly something for UK plant health authorities to chew on, especially since virtually all current oak tree infestation with OPM is in urban and suburban areas which includes an increasing number of golf courses. What's more the German government actually pays for OPM control, unlike here where central government leaves local authorities, golf courses and householders to pick up the bill even though it was government incompetence which allowed the OPM to enter the UK in the first place.

This latest German initiative involves aerial application of insecticide by small unmanned remote controlled helicopters to closely target individual infested oak trees in towns and cities.

OPM shows no distinction in the oak trees attacked, which means many are in urban and suburban areas and thus unsuitable for standard aerial spraying.

The Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR), the Julius Kühn Institute (JKI) and the BAM Federal Institute for Materials Research and Testing have initiated a joint research project which started with an OPM infested tree near Paplitz in southern Brandenburg. If the trials prove successful, OPM control can be closely targeted on individual oak trees especially in

built up areas.

With such high degrees of accuracy more potent and broad spectrum chemical insecticides, not normally permitted for use in aerial spraying, could be used.

Scientists selected a solitary oak tree with no buildings within a radius of 300 metres and used a UAV (unmanned aerial vehicle) to spray a coloured dye dissolved in water and of proven safety for humans, animals and the environment. This was used to identify the distribution of spray deposit over the tree crown and to see how far spray droplets had spread out beyond the actual oak tree target as spray drift.

They captured data on how natural air movement (wind) and the air current generated by the rotor blades had influenced the spread of the water droplets away from the target tree. Whether these small helicopters can better meet the health and safety requirements for operators, passers by and residents, compared to large manned helicopters will be the focus of this research. In addition, their effectiveness will be compared to ground spraying techniques and others carried from a MEWP (cherry picker).

The scientists say that small and maneuverable UAVs can be used to fight OPM in more targeted ways and can therefore be used safely and effectively even in densely populated urban areas. The small helicopter used weighs 65 kg and can carry up to 24 litres of spray liquid.

Dr Terry Mabbett

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Membership News

The latest news from BIGGA

Following the Greenkeeper International survey, we've revamped the Membership pages – and we want you to get involved.

As before, this section will high-

light the many benefits BIGGA membership gives you, but will feature you, the members.

We want to hear your stories and experiences – so whether you've found a new job through BIGGA,

got help through our Legal Helpline or Lifestyle Counselling, worked at a high-profile tournament or even won a golf competition we want to hear from you!



We launched our Xtra Benefits package on the opening morning of BTME 2014 – and with summer on the horizon (at last!) now is the time for all full members to really take advantage!

It's a great way to save time and money, whether at work or in your own leisure time. We've already heard members mention how much they've saved on trips to Legoland, Warwick Castle and glasses at Vision Express!

One big benefit is money off various attractions in the Merlin Entertainments Group which includes several venues across the UK, including Alton Towers, Madame Tussauds, Blackpool Tower, Thorpe Park and Chessington World of Adventures.

These benefits really are superb so we wanted to highlight them in the Membership column this month. Here's a rundown of just some of the offers and discounts available:

- Save up to 58% on your next cinema visit
- Claim a £40 voucher for Naked Wines
- Discounts on various gym memberships
- Holiday savings through Superbreak and other operators
- Great value Life Insurance through LifeSearch
- Great savings on a wide range of Apple products

To follow other members in taking advantage of these superb offers, and if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call our dedicated line on 0845 0716394.

* Terms and conditions apply to all benefits. Offers and prices subject to change without notice. All insurance is subject to underwriting



BIGGA BENEVOLENT FUND

Don't forget that green wristbands supporting the BIGGA Greenkeepers Benevolent Fund are available from BIGGA House, all the RAs and at Section Events. The minimum donation is £2. Look out for more information on the Benevolent Fund coming soon!



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OTHER USEFUL NUMBERS

(Full Members only)

Personal Accident Helpline
0207 2048952

Greenkeepers Legal Assistance
0800 177 7891

Lifestyle Counselling Helpline
0844 770 1036
www.arclegal.co.uk/carefirst



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L&D News

The latest from the Learning and Development department at BIGGA



Individual Contributors: Steven Tierney MG, Chris Lomas MG, Andrew Campbell MG CGCS, W J Rogers, Sam Langrick, Espen Bergmann, Nick Gray, Steve Dixon, Richard McGlynn, Douglas Duguid, Jaey Goodchild, Graham Wiley, Michael Beaton, David Barker



GREATER RECOGNITION FOR BIGGA'S COMMERCIAL PARTNERS

BIGGA has created a series of new packages aimed to improve the recognition given to the Association's invaluable supporters. For many years the Gold and Silver Key sponsorships have been the only vehicle for recognising the huge support given to BIGGA's Learning & Development activity by our many commercial partners. Over time this support has developed and now includes far more than donations to the Learning & Development Fund.

We have introduced the title of BIGGA Partner for those organisations who actively engage with BIGGA's education programme through scholarships and other initiatives as well as contributing important funding. Many of the former Gold Key sponsors fall into this category.

Additionally we have created BIGGA Education Supporters to give recognition to those companies previously known as Silver Key Sponsors. These companies financially support the Learning & Development Fund on an annual basis.

BIGGA CEO Jim Croxton said: "The original Gold and Silver Key packages needed updating to ensure all our loyal supporters receive appropriate recognition and value for their support of the Fund, and our wider educational activity such as Student of the Year, Continue to Learn and Scholarships. These new categories better recognise this outstanding support."

"The Learning & Development Fund has been instrumental in aiding BIGGA members to develop their skills and

knowledge. Our many supporting sponsors have, through the Gold and Silver Key programme, provided hundreds of thousands of pounds to be used specifically for greenkeeper education.

"The Fund is utilised at all levels; individual refunds of fees, Section/Regional subsidies and National initiatives as well as to fund the production of learning materials and building our impressive lending library."

BIGGA are hugely grateful to all Partners and Education Supporters - and the many Individual Contributors - as the funding they provide goes a long way to underpinning our Continuing Professional Development programme and all educational activity.



We Need YOU

Interested in presenting an education event at BTME 2015?

- Submit your 'Proposal to Present' through the link on the BIGGA website
- The BIGGA Membership will vote on all of the viable proposals
- The most voted for proposals will be included as a "Members Choice" event in the Continue to Learn at BTME 2015 programme
- Closing date for all 'Proposal to Present' applications is 25 April 2014

HUNDREDS LOG ON TO NEW CPD

Our new CPD system really seems to be catching your imagination as new figures show how members have made nearly three thousand claims since the improved scheme was launched last year.

Stuart Green, BIGGA's L&D Executive (Technical), explained: "Since turning the system on in November, 773 members have made 2,729 claims, which averages out at approximately 4 claims per member. Of these claims, a total of 15,303 credits have been claimed since 1 July 2013.

"The reason for the difference in the dates is a member can claim back to when we launched the new programme on 1 July. So that's nearly 3,000 claims in four and a half months!

"The new system makes it easier for members to claim credits and more opportunities to claim credits."

Members can't fail to have noticed BIGGA's increased focus on CPD with articles in



Greenkeeper International, input at the Regional Conferences and many other initiatives.

This is just the start, we will keep increasing CPD visibility and ensuring the message gets across that it's absolutely vital for your professional and personal development.

Stuart explained exactly how to claim credits in February's Greenkeeper International (BTME 2014 review edition).

Anyone with any questions about CPD can also contact any member of the L&D team – contact details are shown right.

BARONNESS

SCHOLARSHIP FUNDING

Thanks to generous support from Baroness, Scholarships for BIGGA members undertaking their Level 3 qualification in Sportsturf are available.

Designed to help greenkeeper members of BIGGA gain their technical and supervisory qualification, the scholarships may be awarded to those studying for the following:

- Level 3 Work-based diploma in Amenity Horticulture (Greenkeeper).
- SVQ Level 3 Sports Turf Management.

For more details and to apply, visit bigga.org.uk/education/funding-opportunities.



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CONTROL THE WEATHER

BTME 2014 was a roaring success and everyone left Harrogate with a spring in their step anticipating the new season with relish. Alas, the weather has been playing its part again in spoiling thoughts we had of an early start to the season. Here Alan Abel from Complete Weed Control gives his views.

“There is nothing but sadness for all those flooded out of their homes recently. As far as our industry is concerned, all involved in turf husbandry are struggling either to make surfaces playable, or get anything done whatsoever. The ground has been like a sodden sponge, where just walking on it has a marking effect.

“We need two or three weeks with a dry easterly wind to help with the drying process and enable much needed fertiliser programmes to start.

“These recent conditions have led to swards that are hungry so now is a good time to get soil samples done and analysed. With the correct programmes put in place when the ‘big dry out’ does eventually happen, turf should recover quickly.

“On a happier note, temperatures are remaining quite reasonable, but this is leading to a lot of early growth of weeds. The temptation is for an early spray, but as previously said; it’s economically advantageous to wait till the real season starts.

“The other problem is moss and the weather has only exaggerated the problem we all have with this invasive nuisance. Talking of invasives; because of all the flooding, courses near water should be vigilant for the germination of Himalayan Balsam. This pink flowered weed looks very delicate just now and for a few weeks to come, before becoming a real issue on river banks, whilst being capable of spreading very quickly.

“Another invasive that may be taking advantage of the lousy weather is Japanese Knotweed, as this also spreads through flood ravaged areas. Remember, a piece weighing 0.062 grammes can be viable and grow into a mature plant.

“The chafer grub population this year is also high along with the leatherjacket count. Additionally worms are causing unsightly casts and providing weeds with a ready-made seed bed. I’m not trying to sound like a harbinger of doom, with pestilence around every corner, just bringing these problems that may be lurking into focus.

“Complete Weed Control has over 40 Amenity Assured Standard franchisees in the field, ready to help all turf managers’ deal with any of the problems outlined above. Please call for a survey of nuisance plants, a soil sample service, and a price on worm, leatherjacket or chafer control.”



NEW DEALER FOR CHARTERHOUSE

Charterhouse Turf Machinery has taken on GGM (Gibson’s Garden Machinery) as their dealer for West & South Yorkshire. GGM Groundscare is a specialist supplier of tractors and high quality professional land-based equipment together with after-sales support.

Probably best known for its iconic Verti-Drain® aerator, Redexim products have constantly evolved and expanded to not only offer aerators, but also top dressers, overseeders and scarifiers for natural turf as well as a growing range of machines for Synthetic surfaces.

Andy Melville, GGM Commercial Director, said: “For over 30 years Charterhouse Turf Machinery has been providing turf managers with professional maintenance machinery. The addition of their range of products will strengthen the expanding range of groundcare products that we at GGM already have to offer.”

CAMPEY TAKE DEMO TO HART



Hart Common Golf Club was the venue for the first UK demonstration of the VHR Top Changer - a tractor mounted injection process that can inject fluid and small particle materials, in this case 7" into the playing surface leaving very little playing surface disruption afterwards.

Combining aeration and sanding in one action, the VGR Top Changer introduced by Campey Turf Care is designed to encourage rapid, healthy grass growth. Over time the process can completely change the top surface without any interference to play.

The VGR has a working width of 1.6m and produces a closely spaced row of holes that are immediately filled with sand to allow a path of air and water to penetrate the top layer of the soil and be absorbed by the root zone. Nutrients, wetting agents, liquids and soil improvers can also be placed directly at the roots.



DON'T RISK A 'WILL-FIT' THIS SPRING

Spring is a key time of year to consider your turf equipment and its performance, but never more so than this year after the wettest winter on record. With the ground in better shape and spring course renovation underway, Lely says it's imperative users' Toro equipment is up to the job of looking after that all-important new grass.

Well-maintained bedknives are vital in producing a quality cut and genuine Toro bedknives are the best there are, outperforming 'will-fit' inferior quality parts.

Recent research at Toro headquarters in America proves this point. In tests focused on many physical characteristics, in particular the flatness of the knife and positioning of the chamfered mounting holes, results showed that competitor bedknives failed in over 50 percent of Toro quality specification standards.

Dull bedknives damage grass, affecting after-cut appearance and the long-term health of the turf.



HOW TO IDENTIFY THE WIEDENMANN AERATOR FOR YOU

Wiedenmann's Terra Spike brand markets no fewer than ten machines so there is quite literally an aerator to suit everyone. But who buys what? According to the Wiedenmann UK sales team, the starting point generally depends on two things - what do you want to achieve and what size is the tractor? The filtering process then moves to factors like required depth, speed, size of site, versatility and budget concluding normally with a match of one or two Wiedenmann aerators that often can be demonstrated in situ.

Mostly purchasers have already identified they have issues with compaction or thatch or a combination of both.

Solid tining is the traditional route to resolve compaction. Usually clients volunteer where their specific problems lie, typically somewhere in the range of 100 mm to 300 mm below the surface. As Wiedenmann Terra Spikes operate down from a very competent 220 mm to a handsome 400 mm, most machines remain in the frame. If thatch is severe then perhaps the aerator's focus will be hollow coring. Depth here wouldn't be as big a concern as thatch normally occurs in the top 50 mm of the soil layer but a faster machine could be favoured as it produces optimal hollow coring results.

Early recognition of the tractor employed is essential because obviously the larger the aerator the more hp is required. Tractors from approximately 25 hp to 60 hp can all accommodate one or more aerator. Importantly, the aerator's working width should be slightly wider than the tractor wheel span preventing issues with tyres tracking over newly tined ground. Wiedenmann's fleet goes from working widths of 1.35 m right the way up to 2.1 m so contractors or those with considerable territory to cover, like estate managers, might start by looking at the widest machines first.

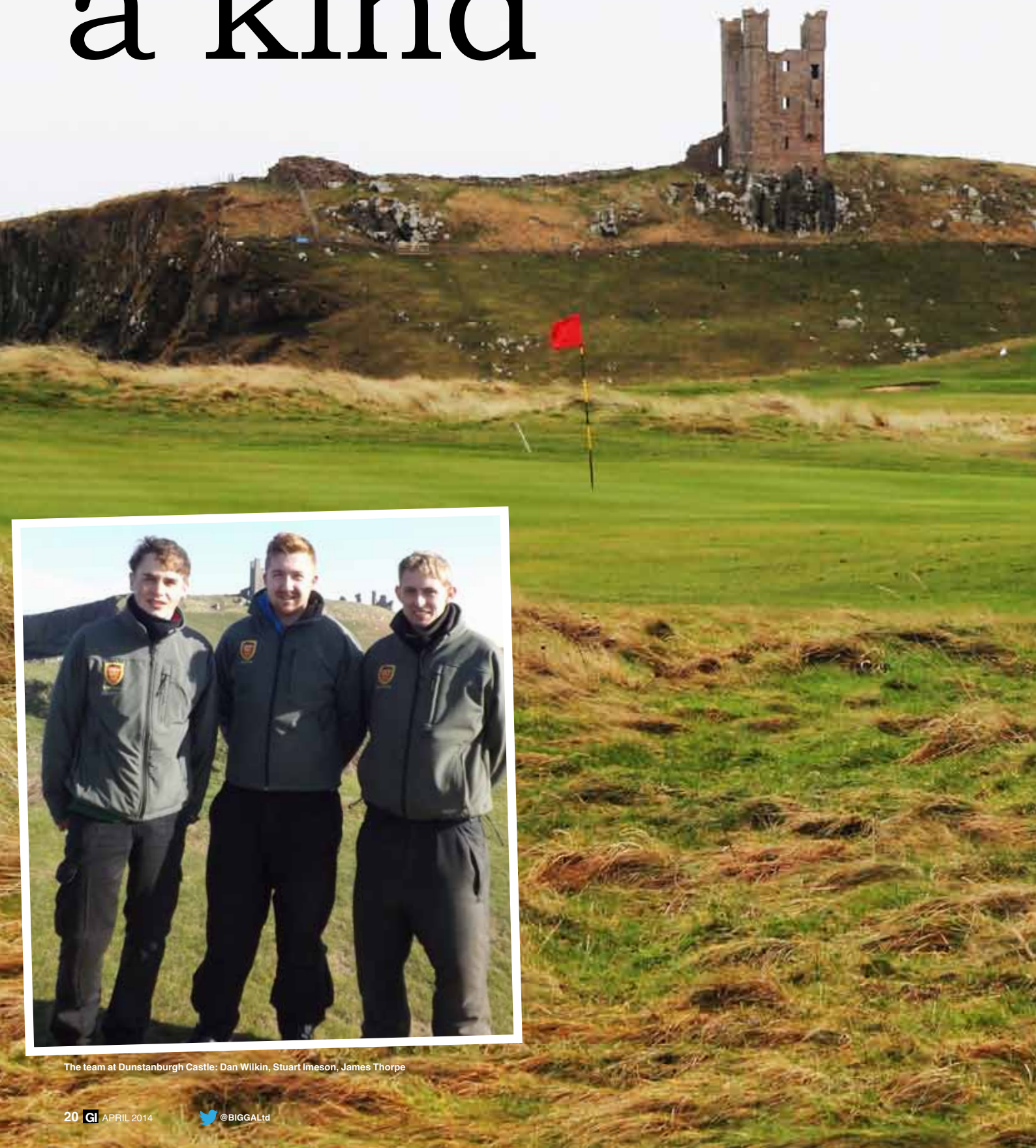
The name badges attached to the Terra Spike fleet give a clue to each area of machine speciality - the extra fast XF, the extra deep XD, the extra penetrative XP while the 'G' prefix on the GXi relates to its suitability to greens and fine turf areas.

All Terra Spike aerators have easy to operate controls for depth and heave settings that are tool free. Changing tines takes less than 15 minutes. By using a variety of tines in combination, soil decompaction and soil exchange can be done cost effectively using only one machine.

An excellent anti-vibration system significantly reduces any vibration through the tractor to the operator. Another advantage a Wiedenmann delivers is the consistently regular hole pattern and clean finish. Wiedenmann machines prove daily that aeration can be done quickly and effortlessly without leaving tell tale signs.

Versatility is the key with all the Terra Spikes, the XF, the XD and the XP models in particular, have "access all areas" status so can be seen widely on golf courses, municipal sites and club pitches.

Three of a kind



The team at Dunstanburgh Castle: Dan Wilkin, Stuart Imeson, James Thorpe