

John Deere selects five delegates for TPC Sawgrass volunteer programme

The Delegates for the first ever John Deere TPC Sawgrass volunteer programme in May joined forces on the company's stand at BTME 2015.

The latest excellent educational offering from BIGGA involved members filling in an online application form via the BIGGA website, then completing a video application outlining their greenkeeping knowledge, career aspirations and why they wanted to join the Programme.

A shortlist was then drawn up, and candidates successful after the video stage then underwent interviews with BIGGA's five Regional Administrators, BIGGA officials and a representative from John Deere.

The successful five are Michael Burgin from Normanby Golf Club, Chris McArthur from Portstewart Golf Club in County Londonderry in Northern Ireland, Graham Down from Aldwickbury Park Golf Club, James Bledge from Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club and Mike Ellis from The Point at Polzeath.

Four of the Delegates met on the John Deere stand – unfortunately McArthur's attempts to join them were thwarted by poor weather on the Wednesday which led to the cancellation of his flight.

However, in the week after BTME Chris Meacock, John Deere Turf Division sales manager, made the journey to Northern Ireland to chat to McArthur, welcome him to the team and answer any questions.



Delegates with John Deere's Chris Meacock (far left) and BIGGA chairman Les Howkins MG (far right)

McArthur said: "I'm really excited about joining the team and looking forward to the process and experience to better myself as a person. Since I entered in the summer I thought about little else, so winning is a dream come true.

"Of course being the only member of the team from Northern Ireland is a real honour. With its famous golfing history, not least set by the golfers from Ulster in the world game at the moment, I have a lot to live up to!

"I'm really grateful to BIGGA and John Deere for providing me with this

opportunity. To work and learn on such a fantastic stage such as TPC Sawgrass with a great team will give me the opportunity to connect with some of the best sports turf staff in the industry and no doubt enhance my level as a greenkeeper," said McArthur.

The final five will now join the maintenance team at the legendary venue for the entire duration of the Players Championship on the PGA Tour with travel, accommodation, subsistence and uniform all provided courtesy of BIGGA Partner John Deere.

Scotland to get degree course

Scotland's first degree course for aspiring golf professionals will be made available later this year. The BA honours qualification is a joint initiative by the Royal Dornoch Golf Club and the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI).

The four-year degree will teach students about performance, coaching and equipment and veteran Jack Nicklaus has praised the creation of the new qualification.

He said: "Royal Dornoch has such a rich history in the landscape of golf, but it also has a legacy in the development of the game, shaping both the next generation of golfers and the next generation of designers.

"I fully support the University of the Highlands and Islands, in association with Royal Dornoch, in their efforts to provide education within the golf industry and beyond."

Available from September, the course will be based at the Dornoch campus of UHI, next to Royal Dornoch.

Contracts Matter at Worplesdon says Lomas

Contract Matters is now being used by over 100 golf clubs that work with Material Matters for their club's procurement, according to business development manager, Neil Danton.

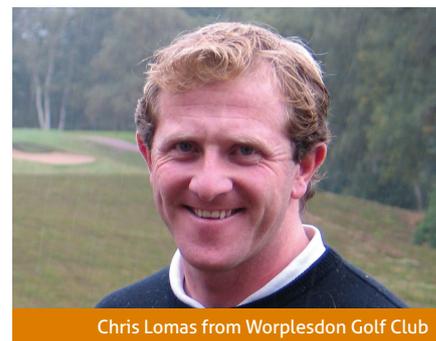
"Following its pilot in the last quarter of 2013, the feedback and take-up has been extremely pleasing," said Danton, "and the goal now, is to role this out to all of our 300 member clubs."

The feedback from those clubs that already use the Contract Matters software has been nothing short of exemplary, as Chris Lomas from Worplesdon Golf Club explained: "We now have all of our contract information in one place – held securely in the cloud – and we receive an email from the system to remind us of the next action, meaning we put ourselves in the strongest negotiating position with every contract."

With Contract Matters now forming a part of the membership offering with Material Matters, whether it is set up remotely or on site depending on your

level of membership, it would seem a very important additional tool to help in the administration of any golf club.

"I am absolutely convinced that technology will leap forward again in golf over the next two years," said Paul Mould of Material Matters. "We created Contract Matters to solve a costly issue that we saw in virtually every golf club that we work with, and are delighted to have saved tens of thousands of pounds so far, for golf clubs using it."



Chris Lomas from Worplesdon Golf Club