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INTERNATIONAL GREENKEEPERS GAZETTE

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EDITOR'S WORD

It's been a busy stretch, and I've had the chance to represent IGFH at two international tournaments this year: the Soudal Open in Belgium and the Berlin Open in Germany. Both were brilliant experiences and a reminder of how many doors this industry can open if you're willing to get involved. At Soudal, I worked as part of the tournament staff on a course I'd never stepped foot on before, learning how a different team prepares for a high-pressure event. In Berlin, I supported the groundstaff team at a tennis venue for the first time, which gave me a completely different perspective on surface prep and match-day standards.

What stood out most from both trips was how much I was able to learn in just a short space of time, just by saying yes and getting involved. If working overseas is something you've thought about, there's a feature on pages 16-17 of this issue that takes a closer look at how international opportunities come about, as well as what to expect and how to get started. It's not always easy, but take it from me, it's highly addictive (I'm already applying for a few tournaments next year!) and definitely worth doing at least once in your career.

Behind the scenes, we've also been working hard on the Turf

Passport portal. This is something we've talked about for a while, and I'm really pleased with how it's all coming together. Our goal is to launch later this summer. Once it's live, the portal will make it easier to connect people looking for jobs with companies that are hiring. It'll also serve as a way for employers to find workers who already have the right experience, even if they're based somewhere else. We know the current system has gaps, and we want to make it faster and more accessible for everyone involved.

Back in the UK, a lot of us have been full-on with renovations. It's been a tough time of year, as this spring has brought much hotter and drier conditions compared to last year, which (as I'm sure you'll remember) was mild and wet for much longer. That means we're all using more water than usual, earlier in the season than expected. It's a good moment to step back and think about how we approach water usage overall. Solutions like collecting more rainwater and investing in better storage aren't small decisions, but they're going to become more important every year.

Thanks for being part of IGFH as always, and I hope you enjoy reading issue 13.

-- BRADLEY TENNANT

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FEATURE

A NEW ERA BEGINS: GROUNDSFEST ACADEMY



The GroundsFest Academy opened its calendar of free training events this month with a hands-on, highly practical session hosted at DLF Seeds. Funded directly from the profits of GroundsFest itself, this event is the first of eight set to run across the year. It gave working attendees the chance to sharpen their technical knowledge in a no-nonsense, face-to-face setting, completely free of charge.

The day began with the essentials—tea, coffee, and introductions—before moving straight into a seed identification session. All delegates had the chance to get involved, not just by listening, but by physically working through identification tasks. There were trays of seed to pass around, and the team at DLF explained what to look for with each one.

This carried into the next section, which focused on grass

species. Instead of just being shown pictures, participants could hold pots of grass, pull them apart, and look at leaf structure and colour, learning by sight and touch how to tell one species from another.

After a short break, things got more detailed with practical demonstrations of seed germination testing and pre-germination techniques. Attendees were able to see examples up close and ask questions on how to adapt these methods to different jobs.

One of the standout moments came from a seed identification activity that saw delegates work in four groups, matching seeds in pots to their correct names. The energy in the room changed: it got everyone going, and for a short 10-minute session, it ended up being the unexpected highlight of the morning.

After a buffet lunch, the group moved outside for a full tour of DLF's facilities. This was an exceptionally well-planned tour, demonstrating the journey of the seed once it arrives from growers: how it's cleaned, sorted, packaged, and sent out through suppliers. It

helped connect the science with the supply chain, giving a clearer idea of what's behind the bag you're buying.

Up on the trial plots, attendees saw how different species and mixtures perform under real-world conditions. These included golf greens, football pitches, wildflower patches, and even a racetrack strip with a proper barrier, showing how grass holds up under equine pressure. This was a truly unique insight into how mixtures are tested by big companies like DLF before they reach the market.

To finish the day, each delegate got a certificate and photo with instructor Bradley, along with a quick group picture and followed by some light quizzes to recap what had been covered. The

feedback was strong across the board, with attendees saying they'd enjoyed the day's events thoroughly.

If you're looking for hands-on, practical education backed by people who know the job inside out, keep an eye out for the next GroundsFest Academy event. The idea of these days is to provide something more engaging and enjoyable than straight classroom theory or hours of listening-only seminars, and judging by the positive reaction from the first session's attendees, GroundsFest Academy delivered exactly that.

Sign up or check out the next event here: www.groundsfest-academy.com



MEET THE MEMBER:

MARCO PESCHIULLI



WE'D LIKE TO WELCOME MARCO PESCHIULLI AS OUR FIRST MEET THE MEMBERS INTERVIEWEE IN THIS ISSUE. MARCO WAS BORN IN PUGLIA, ITALY, BUT TOOK HIS CAREER ABROAD TO FURTHER PURSUE HIS CAREER AMBITIONS AND LOVE OF TRAVEL. IN THE PAST FEW YEARS, HE HAS WORKED IN SOME OF THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS GOLF COURSES THROUGHOUT EUROPE, INCLUDING THE TYRIFJORD GOLFKLUB IN NORWAY AND THE SEDDINER SEE GOLF CLUB IN GERMANY. HE'S NOW SUPERINTENDENT AND HEAD GREENKEEPER OF THE ESCHEBERG GOLF CLUB IN ZIERENBERG, GERMANY.



A What inspired you to pursue a career in turf?

I chose to pursue a career in golf as a greenkeeper because I've always had a great passion for nature, the environment, and green care. The idea of being able to work outdoors, helping to keep a golf course in perfect condition, has always fascinated me. It's a role that requires technical skills, attention to detail, and a deep knowledge of the terrain, grass, and seasons. I like knowing that my work directly impacts the quality of the player experience and the image of the club. For me, every day is different and represents a challenge: finding the right balance between aesthetics, functionality, and environmental sustainability is what motivates me every day.

Talk us through the experience of finding and applying for your current job. Why did you decide to apply?

My experience in finding my current job was quite targeted. I knew I wanted to work in a professional and well-organized environment, where I could grow and improve my skills in the golf course maintenance sector. I found the ad online, on a website specialized in the sports and greenkeeping sector, and I was immediately struck by the description of the role and the reputation of the golf club. I decided to apply because the profile they were looking for perfectly matched my skills and aspirations. They were looking for someone with experience in turf care, knowledge of machinery, sensitivity to environmental sustainability, and above all, someone who speaks multiple languages in order to manage an international team: all areas in which I felt prepared and motivated. The idea of working in a high-level structure pushed me to put myself on the line, knowing that I could learn a lot and contribute concretely to the quality of the course.

What motivated you to explore job opportunities overseas?

What drove me to explore job opportunities abroad was the desire to grow both professionally and personally. I wanted to test myself in a new context, deal with different cultures, expand my language skills,

and work in international environments. Also, I believe that experiences of this type are also very enriching from a human point of view, they teach you to adapt, to be more flexible and open to change. I was looking for an opportunity that would allow me to get out of my "comfort zone" and open up to new challenges.

How did you find out you'd got the job? How did you feel?

When I found out I got the job, I felt really happy and relieved. After so much effort and waiting, receiving that call was a huge satisfaction. At first I almost couldn't believe it, I was excited and also a little nervous, because I knew a new phase of

my life was about to begin, with many challenges but also many opportunities. I felt a mixture of pride, gratitude, and curiosity for what was waiting for me.

How did your friends and family react to hear that you were moving overseas?

When I told my friends and family that I was moving abroad, the reactions were mixed. My parents were a little worried, especially about the distance and how I would cope in a new country, but at the same time they were proud and happy for the opportunity. Some friends were excited for me, others were a little sad that we would see each other less. Overall, though, I felt a lot of support and



What's the most surprising thing you've learned about yourself since starting your international greenkeeping journey?

Probably my ability to adapt to different cultures and climates. I have realized that, in addition to agronomic skills, what really makes the difference is the ability to listen, observe, and quickly adapt to new realities. Whether it's working with different herbaceous species, on extreme terrains, or with multicultural teams, I've discovered that I can maintain high-quality work even in completely new and difficult contexts. This has taught me that mental flexibility is as important as technical knowledge.

What's your dream career? (anywhere in the world!)

My dream career in the golf world is the one I am living now, managing an 18-hole championship course of 100 hectares for 4 years, working every day together with my international team and increasing the quality of the course day after day, offering members and visitors excellent playing surfaces.

Favourite sport?

The sports I love are surfing during the winter months and golf in the summer months. Surfing and golf are really fascinating: surfing connects you with nature, the wave, the fluid movement and adventure, while golf requires calm, precision, and strategy. A really interesting mix.

Favourite sportsperson?

If I had to choose, I would say that I really admire athletes like Roger Federer in tennis, for his elegance, consistency, and sportsmanship.

If you could create the perfect playlist for a day on the job, what songs would be on it?

For a work day, I imagine a playlist

"WHAT REALLY MAKES THE DIFFERENCE IS THE ABILITY TO LISTEN, OBSERVE, AND QUICKLY ADAPT TO NEW REALITIES. "

that mixes energy, concentration, and a bit of good humor. Here's a possible setlist:

1. "Don't Stop Me Now" - Queen (pure energy to get you going)
2. "Electric Feel" - MGMT (a relaxed but engaging groove)
3. "Lose Yourself" - Eminem (for the motivational charge in crucial moments)
4. "Shape of You" - Ed Sheeran (easy and positive rhythm)
5. "Happy" - Pharrell Williams (a boost of cheerfulness)
6. "Take Five" - Dave Brubeck (a bit of jazz to focus)
7. "Blinding Lights" - The Weeknd (pulsing rhythm that keeps the pace high)
8. "Eye of the Tiger" - Survivor (motivational classic to not give up)
9. "Here Comes the Sun" - The Beatles (a calmer and sunnier moment)
10. "Can't Stop" - Red Hot Chili Peppers (energy and fun until the end)

What's the most challenging weather condition you've faced while working in Germany, and how did you handle it?

In Germany, the weather can be unpredictable. For example, during harsh winters with snow and frost, keeping the greens in good condition requires a lot of planning: protective covers are used, the temperature is constantly monitored, and irrigation is carefully managed to avoid frost damage. In case of heavy rains, drainage becomes essential to avoid water stagnation that could damage the lawn or impede activities. A good head greenkeeper must therefore coordinate with the team, predict weather events, and adapt maintenance treatments to preserve the quality of the course.

One of the biggest challenges was my first year as a head greenkeeper in Germany in 2022, where my greenkeeping team consisted of only 3 people in the summer months. The temperatures were extremely high, especially for German standards, and in July one of the two submersible pumps broke (as the system and the pumps were old and poorly functioning), and as a result I was left without water on 6 holes in the hottest months of the year and there was no rain to help me.

I had to find quick solutions to water the greens and tees, we immediately rented a tractor with a tank and every day a person was responsible for filling the tank and watering both the greens and the tees. We also used wetting agents and



mainly potassium fertilizers to withstand the water stress, and two other people, with two work-men and a small tank mounted on top, also watered the greens, tees, and fairways in 6 holes where I couldn't irrigate with sprinklers because the pump that brought water to those 6 holes was broken. After two months of hard work, thanks to the enormous efforts of the entire team, we managed to keep the playing surfaces in good condition and usable for all the tournaments scheduled in those months.

Finally, what message or insight would you like to share with others about the role of organizations like International Greenkeepers for Hire in connecting professionals with opportunities abroad?

Organizations like International Greenkeepers for Hire play a key role in creating bridges between qualified professionals and international opportunities, opening the doors to unique work experiences that enrich both careers and personal growth. In an increasingly globalized world, these platforms not only facilitate the meeting of supply and demand, but also promote cultural exchange, innovation, and environmental sustainability.

For anyone looking to expand their professional horizons, organizations like IGfH give access to quality networks, continuous training, and concrete support to face new challenges with confidence. Ultimately, they represent a precious opportunity to build a conscious and impactful international career.



WANT TO BE INTERVIEWED FOR OUR MEET THE MEMBERS FEATURE IN THE NEXT ISSUE? WE'RE LOOKING FOR MEMBERS BASED ALL AROUND THE WORLD, WORKING AT HOME AND AWAY. EMAIL EDITOR@INTERNATIONALGREENKEEPERS.COM WITH THE SUBJECT LINE "MEET THE MEMBERS".



EVENT

A DAY WELL SPENT AT THE ARB SHOW

IF YOU'VE NEVER BEEN TO THE ARB SHOW BEFORE, PUT IT ON YOUR RADAR FOR NEXT TIME.

H

eld every year at the same venue (Westonbirt Arboretum), the event draws a big mix of arborists, tree surgeons, families, and other outdoor professionals. This year, it ran from Friday 16 to Saturday 17 May, and Brad of IGFH attended for the first time.

It's easy to see why so many people are attracted to the ARB Show—it's busy, well-organised, and packed with things to see and do. Advance tickets were just £13 each, and if you booked ahead, you didn't have to queue long.

The Friday was already buzzing when Brad arrived. With the show running on both Friday and Saturday (overnight camping tickets were even available this year!), plenty of people had made the most of the good weather and turned up early.

The event takes place mostly outdoors, which suits the audience. You could walk between stands and demonstrations easily, and there were plenty of places to stop and take things in.

The food courts had a good variety of options to keep you going throughout the day, so this isn't an event you'll go hungry at. There was also a strong focus on engaging families. Kids could

have a go at tree climbing, and lots of the exhibitors had interactive elements to keep people involved.

This is an event that has really nailed engagement overall. This year, there was an open climbing competition, a chainsaw carving demo, an education careers hub, and knot-tying and throw-line competitions, to name just a few. So if you don't just want to wander around exhibitors' stands all day, there's plenty of other things to see and do.

But these activities don't distract from networking opportunities. Brad managed to catch up with Lee Hatton from FSI Stump Grinders, speak with the Lantra team, and reconnect with three people he'd done his Lantra Instructional Techniques Course with. Nothing beats those conversations that simply don't happen over email.

If you're in the tree care or grounds sector, the ARB Show gives you a solid chance to see equipment up close and build professional relationships. There's a practical side to it, too—seeing tools and machinery in action helps you judge whether they'll work for your site. Exhibitors knew their stuff and were happy to talk through things in detail.

Brad went in not quite knowing what to expect, but he left genuinely glad that he'd made the trip. It's the kind of day that's useful and enjoyable at the same time. With so much going on, you could easily spend a full day there and still not see everything.

If you didn't make it this year, it's worth planning ahead for the next one. You can learn more about the show and register your interest in the 2026 event here: <https://www.trees.org.uk/The-ARB-Show>

AN INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE AT THE SOUDAL OPEN 2025

BRADLEY TENNANT OF IGFH RECENTLY SPENT A WEEK AT THE SOUDAL OPEN IN BELGIUM AS PART OF THE TOURNAMENT'S VOLUNTEER GREENKEEPING TEAM. HERE, HE SHARES WHAT THE EXPERIENCE WAS LIKE, FROM EARLY STARTS ON THE COURSE TO EXPLORING ANTWERP BETWEEN SHIFTS, AND HOW OTHER GREENKEEPERS CAN GET INVOLVED IN SIMILAR EVENTS.

If you want to work in international tournaments like the Soudal Open, you need to keep your eyes open. Applications for events like this usually appear online around 6-12 months in advance, but they're not always widely advertised. Some you'll only find through knowing the right people (tournament organisers or the head staff at clubs). It's worth searching around and making contact directly if you want to work events like this one on the DP World Tour.

Brad of International Greenkeepers For Hire spent the week of 22 to 25 May 2025 at Rinkven International Golf Club in Antwerp, helping prepare the course for the Soudal Open. It was a big set-up involving plenty of work, with grandstands built around the 18th green and TV crews setting up for live coverage.

Brad was one of 17 greenkeepers from outside the club who'd come to support the team. He got stuck into a variety of tasks, including dewing tees that weren't in play, raking bunkers, mowing

fairways, and anything else the tournament required. He also took on one of the more important jobs: hand-cutting the clean-up laps on the greens. He worked the back nine, including the 18th hole, which meant working around the stands and media setups.

Talking about the event setup for tournament staff, Brad explained:

"We did split shifts, up at five in the morning until about eight, then back on again from around five in the evening through to nine or ten at night. They were long days, but you just got on with it. In between shifts, when we weren't catching up on sleep, we got the chance to see a lot of the city."

The experience brought together greenkeepers from across the industry and the world, and Brad made connections that will last well beyond the tournament week. "I made a few really good friends at the event who I already know I'll stay in touch with for life," he said.

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"SOUDAL OPEN
WAS EXHAUSTING,
BUT ALSO ONE OF
THE BEST WORKING
WEEKS ABROAD I'VE
EVER HAD."



The Soudal Open was hard work, but worth it, with Brad describing it as "exhausting but one of the best working weeks abroad I've ever had."

If you're a greenkeeper who wants to get involved in events like this, there are plenty of opportunities out there if you look in the right places. Tournaments and sports events around the world need support staff and clubs are often looking for people with the right skills. The best way to find these jobs is by searching online

and contacting clubs or organisers directly, but you can also come across opportunities you may be unaware of by following industry social media.

IGFH also helps match greenkeepers with events, so if you're interested in learning more about working abroad opportunities, or if your club needs tournament support staff, message us via Facebook or LinkedIn, or send us an email at info@international-greenkeepers.com to find out more.



DENNIS ES-510 DELIVERS ELECTRIC PERFORMANCE IN KESWICK'S PARKS

Keswick's two flagship parks – Hope Park and Fitz Park – nestled in the heart of the Lake District in Cumbria, are setting the standard for sustainable grounds maintenance thanks to the exceptional performance of three Dennis ES-510 battery-powered mowers.

The move to electric machinery was spearheaded by Christine Fawcett, Parks Manager at Keswick Town Council, following the council's bold step to declare a climate emergency. "Keswick Town Council and Keswick Parks declared a climate emergency six years ago," Christine explains. "So obviously things had to change with fossil fuelled maintenance machinery, and we started looking for battery alternatives."

The parks team had been long-time users of the petrol-powered Dennis FT510, known for its reliability and versatility – particularly its interchangeable cassette system. When Dennis introduced the battery-powered ES-510, which retained compatibility with the same range of cassettes, the transition was a natural progression.

"We'd built up a full suite of cassettes over the years," says Christine. "From scarifiers to brushes, verticutter, sorrel roller and cutting cassettes – we rely on all of them throughout the year to deliver high standards of turf care. When the ES-510 came out, it looked like the perfect time to make the change to battery. And because the cassettes were compatible, we didn't need to start from scratch."

In fact, Keswick's parks team became the first users in the UK to adopt an electric Dennis machine three years ago and now operate three ES-510s across both Hope and Fitz Parks.

Hope Park is a popular destination for visitors, featuring a nine-

hole pitch and putt course and a large putting green. Fitz Park, affectionately known as the 'people's park', is home to a bowling green, five grass tennis courts, an 18-hole putting course, and serves as the base for local sports clubs including Keswick Football Club, the bowling and tennis clubs, athletics, and cricket. Both parks are owned by charitable trusts and maintained by a dedicated in-house team overseen by Christine.

One ES-510 can handle a significant workload in a single day – cutting the bowling green, two grass-court tennis courts, and nine holes on the pitch and putt – with the battery lasting comfortably through the day. "It gets charged overnight and it's ready to go again the next day," says Christine.

The machines play a crucial role in Keswick's fine turf maintenance regime. Christine explains: "We start the season with light verticutting and brushing to clean the surfaces and remove debris. Once the season starts, we usually verticut every three weeks or so, depending on the weather. Cutting typically happens twice a week, usually on a Monday and Thursday. At the end of the season, we scarify the greens and tennis courts before overseeding in late September."

For the team, the switch to battery has brought many advantages. "We really like the flexibility – you can adjust the walking pace, set the cylinder speed depending on the task, and even keep track of how far you've walked in a day," Christine adds. "It makes the job easier and more tailored to the person using it."

For further information or a no obligation demonstration, please contact Dennis 01332 824 777 or visit www.dennisuk.com



VISITOR REGISTRATION FOR GROUNDSFEST 2025 NOW OPEN



Get ready—visitor registration for GroundsFest 2025 is officially open, and this year promises to be bigger, better, and bolder than ever before.

Returning to Stoneleigh Park from 9–10 September 2025, GroundsFest is more than just a trade show. It's a high-energy, hands-on event where the latest kit, expert advice, and industry insight all come together.

Whether you work in landscaping, grounds care, local authority, turf management, estate maintenance, education, or sportsturf—GroundsFest is the one event you don't want to miss.

GroundsFest 2025 will bring together one of the most diverse ranges of exhibitors the industry has ever seen. From major machinery manufacturers and cutting-edge tech providers to landscaping tools, turf care solutions, commercial vehicles, and more—you'll find hundreds of top brands all in one place.

Try out the latest machinery and technology from top brands in real working conditions. You'll also be able to experience Machinery Nation Live—a high-octane, entertainment-packed demo area brought to you by the team behind the hit YouTube channel Machinery Nation. Expect thrills, power, and plenty of noise as they put kit through its paces in their own unique style.

Grow your knowledge with completely free training sessions and

seminars. Led by industry experts, these sessions cover the challenges and innovations shaping the future of outdoor spaces, turf, and grounds care.

Once the demos and seminars wrap up, the GroundsFest festival begins. Live music, street food, bumper cars and great company—because the best conversations often happen away from the stand.

From seasoned professionals to students just starting out, GroundsFest is a welcoming, inclusive event designed to inspire. Whether you're looking for your next purchase, your next hire, or just a great day out with the team—this is your event.

Registration is quick, easy, and completely free. You'll get full access to the demos, education sessions, live music, and more.

Whether you came last year and loved it, or this will be your first visit—GroundsFest 2025 is the event to mark on your calendar.

GroundsFest 2024 offers free on-site parking for everyone. There is also a dedicated camping area, which should be pre-booked in advance. More information on staying in the camping area is available on the GroundsFest website.

Register for free on the [GroundsFest website](https://www.grounds-fest.co.uk). You can also follow GroundsFest on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram: @GroundsFest.

MEET THE MEMBER:

BEN CARETTE

R Our second Meet the Member of this issue is Ben Carette, whose greenkeeping journey began in an unexpected place: Southern Thailand. While working overseas as a teacher, France-born Ben picked up golf for the first time and quickly became hooked. That initial curiosity led him back to his home country to study golf course management, and he's now training through a two-year Golf Course Intendant Program in Dunkerque. His most recent placement brought him to a brand-new golf course just outside Paris, and he shares more about his experience in this interview.

What inspired you to pursue a career in turf?

Six years ago, while teaching overseas, I caught the "golf bug" from an Englishman who invited me to play on a Sunday morning. After a few weeks, golf would become more than a game, it would turn into a passion, almost like a religion.

I fell in love not just with playing but with the entire experience. The scenery captivated me. Soon, my local golf course in Southern Thailand became a second home. My friends became caddies and greenkeepers, and I began arriving early before my rounds to help with small tasks like clearing leaves or pulling weeds from the greens.

Over time, I realized I wanted to understand golf at a deeper level. Course maintenance fascinated me—how every detail impacted the game. That's when I decided to return to France to study course management formally. Now, I'm combining my passion with knowledge, eager to contribute to the sport that has given me so much.

Talk us through the experience of

finding and applying for your current job. Why did you decide to apply?

I am currently in a two-year Golf Course Intendant Program in Dunkerque, France. The program is structured so that we study during the winter and work on golf courses during the season. Mr. Olivier Grelin, the head of the program, helps students find placements at golf courses willing to host and train them.

I was fortunate to secure an internship at a brand-new golf course near Paris, where I started working right after its opening in September 2025. Being part of this opening was a unique opportunity, especially since golf courses today tend to close more often than they open. It was exciting to contribute to a brand-new project, learning hands-on about course maintenance, player experience, and the challenges of launching a golf facility.

What goals and aspirations do you have for your career as a greenkeeper in the long term, and how has this opportunity brought you closer to achieving them?

Whenever I volunteer at golf tournaments or visit courses in France or, like this year, in Mauritius, I always make an effort to connect with the course superintendents and greenkeepers. Sharing our passion for turf management inspires me to keep pushing forward.

The world of sports field maintenance is vast and fascinating. Beyond golf, there's so much to explore: football pitches, tennis courts, equestrian arenas, each with its own unique challenges. Every conversation teaches me something new, and every professional I meet adds to my growing knowledge. I'm eager to keep learning, and I'm grateful for the wisdom others have shared with me along the way.

Can you share any memorable moments or projects that stand out from your

time at Liberty Country Club so far?

I'm currently working on my graduation project about implementing robots in golf practice areas. The goal is to automate routine maintenance tasks, freeing up valuable time for staff to focus on other important course operations.

The journey began from scratch, and I had to research and contact robotics companies across France to find a suitable partner. After persistent efforts, I secured a demonstration unit that we tested on our practice range for one month. The results were extremely promising.

What's your dream career? (anywhere in the world!)

I've always been a dreamer with my feet on the turf and my head in the clouds. My heart belongs to golf course maintenance right now, but I know one day my path will lead me to a football pitch.

My dream is to work at a world-class golf resort in Thailand. As long as I wake up excited about my work, I know I'll thrive anywhere.

Favourite sport?

Is that not obvious? Golf!

Favourite sportsperson?

John Daly every day! And of course ZINEDINE ZIDANE (every French person loves him!).

What has had the biggest impact on you in your current job role and why?

Interacting with club members about our course conditions. Whether they're asking questions about maintenance practices or even voicing concerns, each conversation is an opportunity to share knowledge.

I take pride in explaining why we aerate during peak season, why certain areas need recovery time, or how weather impacts our maintenance schedule. Seeing

their frustration turn into understanding when they grasp the complexity of year-round turf quality. These exchanges remind me that great course management isn't just about grass; it's about communication, education, and meeting player expectations while preserving the course's long-term health.

Are there any specific greenkeeping practices or techniques you've learned in

your current role that you'll take with you into future jobs?

I believe communication is the most important tool we have - even more crucial than any technical skill. No matter what methods we use, we must all work together toward the same goals. I'll never hesitate to ask my seniors for help or advice when needed. Their experience is invaluable, and I know that seeking guidance is how we grow in this profession.

What are your future goals?

I graduate in one year and will attend seminars while volunteering at tournaments to expand my skills. For my final year, I may be switching to another golf course to gain diverse experience before specializing in irrigation systems and mechanics. After graduation, I aim to work in Dubai or Australia.

Let's see in a few years where my passion takes me!

WEED MANAGEMENT IN FOCUS AT LATEST KERSTEN CONFERENCE

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR SUSTAINABLE WEED MANAGEMENT? ATTENDEES AT THE KERSTEN INTEGRATED WEED MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE IN BIRMINGHAM HEARD FRESH VIEWS FROM EXPERTS ACROSS THE INDUSTRY, AS IGFH'S BRADLEY TENNANT LED A PANEL DEBATE ON BEST PRACTICE, INNOVATION, COMPLIANCE, AND THE CHALLENGES AHEAD.

Brad of International Greenkeepers For Hire recently hosted a panel discussion at the Kersten Integrated Weed Management Conference, held on June 5 at the historic Highbury Hall in Birmingham. This thought-provoking session tackled some of the biggest questions facing the amenity and sports turf sectors today.

The panel featured well-respected voices from across the industry. Professor John Moverley, OBE FRAGS of JMM Solutions, formerly of the Amenity Forum, brought decades of expertise on policy and practice. Nick Mole of Pesticide Action Network UK gave a strong environmental perspective, while Sean Faulkner of Kersten UK shed light on the latest mechanical solutions for weed control. Together, they fielded questions from an audience of grounds managers, contractors, council representatives, and other professionals in the turf industry.

During this interactive session, Brad guided the debate towards the topics the audience cared most about, including practical alternatives to chemical treatments, machinery developments, LANTRA's new qualification in Integrated Weed Management, and the evolving regulatory environment.

The discussion made clear that integrated weed management is now a mainstream issue for anyone responsible for sports turf or green spaces. It also reinforced the importance of up-to-date training and new best-practice guidance like that released by Parks for London.

The real value came from the honest exchange of ideas. Events like these show how open discussion can help our sector move towards more sustainable and practical long-term solutions. It also



gave attendees a rare chance to national experts without the filter of formal presentations.

Beyond the panel discussion, the conference also featured live machinery demonstrations and CPD opportunities that demonstrated how modern equipment and operator skill can reduce the need for chemical usage. There were also plenty of networking opportunities to be had throughout the day.

For anyone working in greenkeeping or grounds maintenance, Kersten delivered a clear message: integrated weed management is the future. And thanks to events like this, the sector is better prepared to face that future with knowledge and confidence.



ON THE GROUND AT THE MIDLANDS MAINTENANCE ROADSHOW

The 2025 Midlands Ground Maintenance Roadshow, held at Birmingham City University and hosted by Fleet Line Markers, gave you exactly what you'd want from an industry event: new equipment to try, people worth meeting, and no hard sell in sight. IGfH was there, and this is what we took away from the day.

The day kicked off with tea, coffee, and early introductions between the exhibitors and visitors. A great thing about this show is that there's no ticket charge for attendees—just people showing up because they care about their work and want to keep improving how they do it.

There was plenty to see, with exhibitors showcasing new equipment and tools, including Fleet's very own Robot line marker. You could get hands-on and speak directly to the people who designed the equipment or use it daily, with no scripted pitches in sight.

I also caught a few live demonstrations, showing how certain machines perform under real conditions. These are always appreciated for making it easier to tell what might work on your own grounds rather than just looking at spec sheets online. You got the honest pros and cons,

straight from the mouths of people who've already tested them.

I had the opportunity to speak with Iain Courage, Sales Director of Fleet Line Markers, when recording our video for the event (you can watch it on YouTube here!). Iain explained why Fleet invests in these roadshows and why they keep their pricing so cost-effective for exhibitors. According to Iain, events like these are a great place to meet old colleagues in the industry—Iain even met up with a couple of past colleagues that he hadn't seen in 10 years!

Iain also stressed how events like these give suppliers a chance to listen, not just speak. That was clear throughout the day; you didn't feel like you were just another person on a mailing list.

You don't always walk away from an industry event with anything new, but this one delivered. As well as getting insight into new products, I also made connections worth following up on and got a good sense of where things might be headed over the next year.

If you're serious about your line of work and want to stay involved in the conversation, the Midlands Ground Maintenance Roadshow is worth adding to your calendar next time around.



HOWARDSON GROUP IS PLEASED TO WELCOME DARREN MCMAHON AS THE NEW HEAD OF MARKETING

Darren's career has spanned several industries, with roles at Aga-Rangemaster, Valor Fires, and, most recently, Viessmann, a family-owned German company where he spent 14 years leading UK marketing, training, and public affairs.

His extensive background in high-quality product manufacturing and customer-focused marketing makes him a perfect fit for Howardson Group, which includes the Dennis, SISIS, Hunter Grinders, and Syn-Pro by SISIS brands.

Speaking about what attracted him to the role, Darren said:

"As a family-owned business, decisions are made for the long term. There's a very high drive for product quality, which I believe is extremely important. Customers should receive the very best product that we can manufacture, and the product should do the job for which it's purchased. To support these products in the Dennis, Hunter Grinder, SISIS, and Syn-Pro ranges, there's a crystal-clear focus on delivering the kind of service our customers would expect from a premium business."

Since joining, Darren has already had an immersive introduction to the industry. Within his first five weeks, he attended three major exhibitions in the UK and USA, met with dealers, customers, and industry experts, and even got hands-on experience using Dennis and SISIS machines on both natural and synthetic surfaces.

"I think I joined at the best time to get a good feel for the company and the industry," Darren said. "It's been incredibly busy, but I have a growing appreciation for the hard work that goes into the preparation and maintenance of playing surfaces by groundscare professionals and how difficult the job is."

Darren's vision for the role focuses on two key objectives:



"I can break my objectives down into two areas," Darren explained. "First, is to protect the historic legacy that's gone into building the brand perceptions and reputations of today as a result of the hard work of others up to this point."

"Second, it's to use that strong base to support further expansion of the Howardson Group, both locally in the UK and Irish markets and more internationally around the world where there are further opportunities for high-quality machines coupled with superior service."

Away from work, Darren is an avid cyclist, finding peace in long countryside rides.

"There's nothing I enjoy more than getting on my road bike on a crisp day, heading into the countryside, and enjoying the beautiful country we live in but usually take for granted rushing from one place to another," he shared.

Howardson Group is excited to have Darren on board and looks forward to his contributions in driving the company's growth while upholding its legacy of quality and service.

For further information visit www.howardsongroup.com



READING FC HOSTS MASTERCLASS FOR WILTSHIRE COLLEGE

Next, the group moved outdoors to sow wildflower seeds around the stadium—one of the new additions to this year's programme. Big thanks to DSV UK and Samuel Horner for supplying the seed.

After lunch, students made their way to the training ground. Matt Gardiner and Scott O'Nyons welcomed everyone before the group split.

Victoria Fiander, Assessor in Horticulture & Sports Turf, led a tree-planting session, while Bradley Tennant worked with the rest of the students on line marking and demonstrated the 345 method. Everyone took part and asked solid questions throughout the afternoon.

The Reading FC spring masterclass was another strong day of practical teaching. Huge thanks to the staff at Reading FC and to all the students for bringing plenty of energy and focus.



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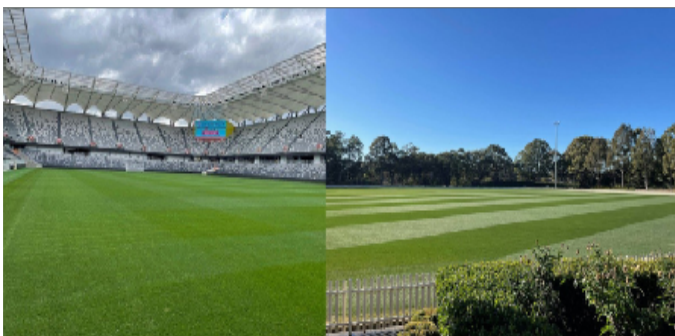


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