

INTERNATIONAL GREENKEEPERS GAZETTE

October 2024 Issue #10

MEET THE MEMBERS

JOE PITT AND RYUSEI ANDO

Read this issue's member interviews with Joe Pitt, superintendent at Balcones Country Club Texas, and Ryusei Ando, greenkeeper at Akita Country Club, Japan.

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THE FUTURE OF LINE-MARKING

We attended the debut of Fleet Line Markers' newly developed robot line marker, which can mark a football pitch in 26 minutes.

Pages 10-11

INTERNATIONAL GREENKEEPERS GAZETTE | ISSUE 10

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EDITOR'S WORD



Our 10th edition is a huge milestone for International Greenkeepers for Hire. We were never sure how far we'd progress, but the last few months have been an outstanding success. We're on the brink of expanding our staff and will soon be able to extend our services and support to even more people.

A large portion of our success has come from the launch of the TurfPassport program, connecting job seekers and businesses looking for employees across the world. We officially launched this earlier in the year but have recently started to really push the program, with advertising flyers and easy-to-use QR codes that take you directly to the website page. The interest has been great, especially off the back of

GroundsFest—which, I'll add, was a fantastic show.

We've made ongoing progress over in Australia: Daryl has continued volunteering at the Youth Prison Justice Center in NSW and attending career fairs all over Sydney, helping to promote our industry and bring in new talent.

Here in the UK, we've attended a heap of events, from one of the first synthetic maintenance seminars days to meeting with T.E.T.O (Turf Equipment Managers Organisation) at Leicester City's world-class training ground.

As always I would like to say a special thanks to our sponsors, Howardson Group, Mountain View Seeds, and Kersten UK. Without their input, we simply couldn't help the people we have.

We're excited for 2025, so stay tuned!

Bradley Tennant

Bradley Tennant

Founding Member of International Greenkeepers for Hire & Editor
info Internationalgreenkeepersforhire



International
Greenkeepers Gazette:
Issue 10

On the cover: Ryusei Ando, greenkeeper at Akita Country Club.

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INTERNATIONAL GREENKEEPERS FOR HIRE

ABOUT US

The International hub for greenkeepers, groundstaff and volunteers. To unite greenkeepers, promote the industry, and help share the art of greenkeeping with others. The organisation is made by greenkeepers, for greenkeepers.

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CAREERS IN OUR INDUSTRY

- Greenkeeper/Groundstaff
- Tree surgeon/surveyor
- Pitch and course construction
- Sales representatives
- Turf farms
- Lecturer or Trainer
- Manufacturer
- Environment management
- Spray technician

- Mechanic
- Research and Development
- Irrigation Technician
- Consultant
- Operations/facilities manager
- Golf, cricket, football, rugby, lawn bowls, horse racing, polo, baseball, tennis and more



FREE

EDUCATION ON
OUR WEBSITE

Meet the Member:

Joe Pitt

Joe Pitt is the first of our featured members in this issue. Joe started out as a laborer at his local golf course in the UK, before taking on a superintendent role and later furthering his career with a move overseas to sunny Texas, where he worked in several roles at Austin Country Club. He currently works as a superintendent at Balcones Country Club, also in Austin, Texas.



Joe Pitt

What inspired you to pursue a career in turf?

I took a job as a laborer at a golf course near where I lived. I didn't really know what to expect, but after learning about how detailed turf care is, and how it's not just mowing and watering grass, I was hooked. I was fascinated by how many different moving parts there were to maintain a golf course. I knew that this was something I wanted to learn more about and pursue as a career.

How did you find your current job?

I was asked by my superintendent if I wanted to apply for a superintendent job that had come up at a course down the road, called Balcones Country Club. He was made aware of this job by an agronomist who we both knew.

I was shocked at first and didn't really know what to think, as I had never even begun to think about taking that next step as a superintendent. But having the backing and confidence from my superintendent that he thought I was ready was a big confidence boost, so I applied and got the job.

What is your favorite part about working in sports turf?

I enjoy the visual reward you get from this job. At the end of a long day, you can see the hard work that you have put in. It's not documents on a computer but instead bunkers edged up and raked, or fairways striped up. There is also a great sense of comradery between everyone who works on the course.

What's the most challenging problem you've faced while working on sports turf, and how did you handle it?

At the moment I'm dealing with an aging hydraulic irrigation system. We're constantly dealing with leaks and breaks. In the Texas summer, the temperature regularly reaches 41 degrees. This presents a challenge in keeping the correct moisture levels in the turf. To combat this, we must be very quick with any repairs and make sure our pressure levels don't spike, causing more breaks.

I would say the best way to handle these situations, or any stressful situation, is to not panic and try and keep a level head as much as possible. It's easier said than done, but if you can remove yourself from the problem and analyze it, you'll have a much better chance of figuring it out.

If you could switch roles with any grounds/greenkeeping team for a day, whose job would you

want to try and why?

I would like to see what it would be like to work on a cricket pitch. I've always found it interesting how they prepare the strip and how much maintenance goes into such a small area.

How do you unwind and relax after a challenging day of work?

I like to come home to my family and spend time with my daughter. With such a busy and demanding schedule, I try to make every second count. It can be hard to switch off sometimes. But I think it's very important that while you're away from work, try not to think about it too much. Creating a good work life balance is key to this career, as we all know the long hours and early mornings can take their toll.

Share a funny or unexpected moment that happened during your career.

Getting to chat with Danny Willett at the 2023 Genesis Invitational. It was great to chat with such an accomplished English golfer. We talked about a golf course that I used to work on called the Brabazon at the Belfry, who he sponsors for the British Masters.



Joe Pitt



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?

Being a part of organizations like International Greenkeepers for Hire or BIGGA or GCSAA is a must if you want to further your career. I often feel like these organizations are underused, they provide a wealth of experience and knowledge through their membership.

This line of work is not something you can do alone, and having the support and help of a great organization like International Greenkeepers for Hire will only benefit you.

I believe training or working overseas is vital to becoming a successful Turf Manager, there are so many different techniques and practices out there. Understanding and experiencing these will only make you more valuable as an individual.

IGFH Members, We'd Love to Hear From You!

Interested in being interviewed for our Meet the Members feature? We interview turf professionals based all over the world, with a special interest in those who have travelled overseas for work.

Email Laura at : editor@internationalgreenkeepers.com with a brief introduction to yourself, your experience, and your current job role.

What's the most rewarding aspect of your current job role?

I love being able to provide the best possible conditions on a golf course that I'm proud to work on. Getting feedback from our members on how the course has never looked better and that they're excited about the improvements to come is extremely rewarding.

What's one piece of greenkeeping equipment you couldn't live without, and how does it make your job easier or more enjoyable?

Our Toro Pro Core is probably one of my most valuable pieces of equipment. We deal with a lot of compaction here with our old greens, so I use that piece of equipment very regularly to help combat this.

Who has had the biggest impact on you in your career role and why?

My former superintendent Bobby Stringer helped me and guided me for the past five years. He has been a great mentor to me and helped me in securing my first superintendent role.

When I first moved to Texas, I didn't know much about

warm-season grasses. Coming from a cooler climate and only having to deal with cool-season grasses, I was apprehensive to learn all I could about warm-season turf. With his help I am now very confident in my knowledge of Bermuda grass and all other warm season turf.

What advice do you have for new people looking to join the industry?

Don't worry if you have little to no knowledge of turf grass. One of the great things about this job is you learn the most out in the field. If you're hardworking, punctual, and have genuine interest, you can go very far very quickly.

I started out ten years ago not knowing a thing about turf management. I learned most of what I know through just working on a golf course. Employers want hard-working people who always show up. Knowledge of turf can be easily taught, whereas a good attitude is a lot harder to come by.

If you're interested in turf management, I recommend that you just visit your local course or any other field that includes turf management that interests you, and see about working a summer there. You'll learn in this time whether or not it's right for you.



A product of Joe and his team's hard work

THE FUTURE OF LINE-MARKING

On August 21, Fleet Line Markers debuted their newly developed Robot line marker with a demonstraion of the robot's ability to mark a football pitch in just 26 minutes.

Staying informed about the latest innovations is essential for us as we strive to educate and engage new members in our industry. We're fortunate to have strong relationships with many brands, including Fleet Line Markers. Fleet graciously invited us to preview their newly developed Robot line marker from their New Zealand division.

The preview took place on August 21, 2024, at Malvern College, set against the backdrop of both the College and the Malvern Hills.

The day began with a warm welcome, accompanied by coffee, tea, and an opportunity for attendees to network with peers. Following

this, we moved to the seminar theater for the presentation portion of the event. John Carr of Fleet Australasia kicked off the proceedings.

John then handed the floor to Iain Courage, Sales Director of Fleet Line Markers (UK), who provided an in-depth history of Fleet Line Markers. He traced the company's roots back to its founding by Peter McGuffie in 1953, when it supplied a substitute for 'Blanco' to the British army, through to the present day with laser-guided line marking machines and a variety of paint options.

After Iain's presentation, John Carr resumed the discussion, focusing on the development

of the Robot line marker. He explained the timeline of its creation and how it operates using the RTK network and base stations. John also passed around the Robot's tablet and Spike hardware box, demonstrating how these tools work together to mark out a sports field. A Q&A session followed.

We then moved outside to the sports fields for the Live Robot Demonstration. Fleet had set up a football pitch marking, complete with painted logos, goodie bags, and lunch for the attendees.

Under challenging conditions with over 50 people observing and gathering around the Robot, it successfully marked out an adult

football pitch in about 26 minutes. John Carr noted that this time could improve as the machine continues to be refined.

The Fleet Robot delivered on its promise, marking out a football pitch with no human intervention after setup. There are still some adjustments to be made, but it has a promising future. With a price point roughly half that of other market options, it presents a compelling choice for clubs, organizations, and contractors.

We eagerly await further updates as the Fleet Robot Marker is set to launch in mid-2025. For more information, you can contact Fleet directly at [Fleet Line Markers](https://www.fleetlinemarkers.com).



An enlightening day at the Howardson Group's Synthetic Surfaces Seminar

On July 23, 2024, more than 50 people attended the Synthetic Surfaces Seminar at Loughborough University, organised and hosted by Syn-Pro by SISIS from the Howardson Group.

International Greenkeepers were present with their stand, alongside Fleet Line Markers in the outdoor area. Other attending companies included Musco Lighting, Harrod Sports, Labosport, and SIS Grass.

The day kicked off with a warm welcome from Jason Briggs of Dennis & SISIS, who set the tone for a series of presentations and discussions. These included:

- **Benefits of Synthetic Turf Sports Surfaces.** Prof David James, Group CEO of Labosport and Technical Chair of SAPCA, discussed the benefits of synthetic turf. During the presentation, David covered performance, durability, and increased usage potential compared to natural grass surfaces.

- **Managing the Environmental Impact of Synthetic Pitches.** Alastair Cox from the European Synthetic Turf Council addresses the environmental considerations of synthetic

pitches, including adherence to EU regulations and best practices in field design and maintenance.

- **Considerations When Installing a Synthetic Surface.** Hayley Wilson of SIS Grass discussed the key factors to consider during the installation of synthetic surfaces. Hayley's talk included practical advice on preparation, selection of materials, and ensuring long-term performance and safety.

- **Changing Over to LED Lighting – Cost Benefits & Eco-friendly?** Derek Field from Musco Lighting explored the transition to LED lighting for sports facilities. This session highlighted the cost benefits, energy savings, and environmental advantages of adopting LED technology.

The morning's talks were followed by a midday break and complimentary lunch with an opportunity to meet the trade, stationed on their stands

outside. This also presented a fantastic opportunity to network with peers and industry experts.

After lunch, the afternoon sessions began. Attendees were split into four outdoor groups for hands-on sessions focusing individual topics.

Fleet Line Markers hosted a session on line-marking artificial surfaces using laser-guided markers and synthetic paints.

Harrod Sports covered a session on the best practices for ensuring the safety and upkeep of field equipment, while SISIS representatives delivered a session on the difference in performance when maintaining a 3G pitch versus not. Finally, Labosport discussed the critical importance of regular maintenance for 3G pitches and its impact on performance and longevity, backed by data collection and inspections.

After the outdoor sessions, the attendees returned to the seminar theater to round off the day with the final presentations and discussions. These included a talk by Alastair Cox of the International Hockey Federation on the evolution of hockey pitches, a panel discussion on the future of 3G and hybrid pitches, and a talk from Professor Paul Fleming from Loughborough University on maintaining synthetic surfaces under varying weather conditions.

IGFH would like to thank the Howardson Group for inviting us to this event; it was well attended and organised. We certainly learned a thing or two, and we're looking forward to future events and most definitely recommend attending if you can.

You can learn about the previous and upcoming events and seminars to be hosted by Howardson Group by visiting the [company website](#).



Images L-R:
- A demonstration by Fleet Line Marking
- SISIS machinery in action
- The IGFH stand (come and see us!)
- A session led by Labosport



Groundsmen Deserve Respect

IGFH's Bradley Tennant's take on the recent disrespectful comments made about groundsmen on the Sky Sports podcast, "Off the Bench".

"As groundstaff, we've heard our fair share of jokes and banter about the profession. But the recent comments made on The Bench podcast by Jon Wilkin and Sam Tomkins overstep the line. What started as light-hearted humour about the care we put into our pitches progressed into a number of careless and disrespectful comments, diminishing the importance of what we do and who we are.

Wilkin's remark that groundsmen are "weird" and "psychopathic" paints the picture that people working in our profession are inherently "uncool." It's easy to laugh off the image of someone obsessing over a patch of grass, but the reality is that this image discourages people from considering groundskeeping as a serious, rewarding career.

We're already a small community, and comments like these only serve to push more potential groundsmen away. At a time when recruitment in our field is challenging, this is the last thing we need.

The problem with these kinds of comments is that they encourage people to devalue the role of groundsmen and make jokes at our expense. While we can take a joke, it gets tiring to hear the same old comments from football fans—a common one is "Oh, they just cut grass", followed by something along the lines of, "They've got it easy".

Actually, it takes a huge amount of passion and dedication to ensure the pitch is perfect for every game. And I would argue that there's something very "cool" about being the person who prepares the stage for a team's performance, ensuring that the pitch is in pristine condition so players can perform at their best.

We're not just cutting grass; the quality of the pitch directly impacts the experience of the players and fans alike, and many people don't



realise the importance of our role in ensuring this. The work we do requires extensive knowledge of the science of turf management and the specific needs of our stadium. Every detail matters, and the pride we take in our work is not about being "precious" but about striving for the best possible result in a job that demands it.

Wilkin's joke about the groundsman scowling at him for walking across the pitch in trainers misses the point. The pitch is a carefully maintained surface that has to withstand incredible wear and tear. When 30 athletes, who are generally heavier and more powerful than the average person, are about to charge onto the pitch, every precaution is necessary to ensure that the surface holds up. It's not about being obsessive; it's about being responsible.

There was an opportunity in that podcast to turn a joke into something positive. Imagine if, instead of ridiculing groundsmen, Wilkin and Tomkins had taken a moment to highlight the importance of our work, perhaps even encouraging young fans to take an interest in what we do. The role of a groundsman is a chance to be a part of something bigger—to contribute to the sport we all love, even if our dreams of playing for the team are long behind us!

So yes, have a laugh about our love for the perfect pitch. But let's keep the respect for groundsmen, and please don't refer to us as "psychopathic." We're skilled, passionate, and proud of what we do.

We've shared the podcast we're referring to in this article on our YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dr9_polmTK4

Treating Weeds in Hard Surfaces and Soil with Electricity - Kersten UK

Different electric weeding technology works in different ways. Here's a breakdown of what works well where and why. Article written by Kersten UK.

We have several new electric weeding products available from Kersten and Zasso. These machines all use electricity to kill weeds, but the systems differ markedly in their uses. Here are the important distinguishing reasons to use one over another.

Surface Conductivity and Electric Weeding

All materials are conductive, however, some are more conductive than others, and some provide more resistance than others. In order to overcome different levels of resistance we need different voltages.

Damp soil is a relatively good conductor of electricity, which requires less voltage in order to overcome the resistance. In this instance somewhere between 3000 and 6000 volts is optimal for a good connection. On hard surfaces a larger voltage is required to make a good connection, due to the higher resistance in the surfaces. Our products for hard surfaces usually use around 10,000 volts.

Root Depth in Different Surfaces

In soil, plant roots will generally be deeper, the distance between electrodes matters.

The Kersten Electric weedkiller places the two electrodes at a large distance apart - usually between

10-20 meters. This enables the electricity to make a larger loop and go deeper into the ground, killing plants with deeper root systems.

Converseley, the zap weeder from zasso has a shorter distance between electrodes, meaning the effect is shallower, but allowing a much more portable machine. Plants on hard surfaces such as pavements tend to have much shallower roots, whilst plants more commonly found in deeper soil - such as Japanese knotweed require deeper root treatment.

Varying the Voltage to Suit the Plant

Shallow rooted plants do not need a long application of electricity in order to boil the cells in the heart of the plant. So, a high voltage can get the job done quickly.

Plants with deeper roots need more time for the heat to reach the extremities of the plant. At high voltage, the device can burn through the plant before enough heat has built up in the roots below. To counter this, the voltage can be lowered, in order to deliver a longer shock to the plant without damaging the upper part of the plant too quickly. (slicing through the plant stem).

With the correct tools and the correct settings, it is very easy to have a systemic effect on the plant, killing it more effectively than other types of thermal treatment.



The Zap weeder — Ideal for use on hard surfaces



Kersten Electric Weed Killer. Variable voltage for effective treatment of plants in soil — Treating Japanese Knotweed



Sharpening Skills at the BIGGA South Coast Grinding Workshop

We discuss our insightful visit to the BIGGA South Coast Grinding Workshop, a free educational event held at Corhampton Golf Club in Southampton, on July 2, 2024.

We have been privileged to be associate members of BIGGA for several years, and we were delighted when Kris Parker, BIGGA's Membership Services Manager - South West & South Wales, invited us to the free Grinding Workshop. These workshops are a refreshing initiative, providing an excellent opportunity for staff to gain hands-on experience with equipment they might not usually encounter.

The turnout was impressive, featuring a mix of apprentices and their mentors, and there was a positive, supportive atmosphere throughout the day.

The workshop, jointly hosted by BIGGA and Bernhard, took place at Corhampton Golf Club in Southampton, UK. Now we know the mention of one partial brand will usually send 50% of the crowd walking in the opposite direction, but we do encourage you to attend these events if they pop up.

Scott Purdy and Dean Rook of Bernhard did a fantastic job of creating a neutral environment. There are other products on the market, and clubs own other products, but these workshops are focused on education first, not sales.

Kris Parker welcomed attendees to the event, and

Scott Purdy provided a comprehensive overview of Bernhard's journey, from their first grinder to modern advancements like electronic high-of-cut bars and in-soil sensors.

Following Scott's presentation, attendees had the opportunity to ask questions.



Image top: Scott of Bernhard Grinders
This image: Grinding in action

The day then shifted to hands-on demonstrations, where we witnessed the precision grinding of bottom blades using the Anglemaster and learned about the setup and use of the ExpressDuel grinding unit for cylinders.

Dean Rook also introduced the RapidFacer, a tool that's designed to quickly reface bottom blades, extending their lifespan and usability between full regrinds.

All in all, it was a fantastic day with lots learned, and we managed to meet a couple of people who are members of IGFH!

We haven't gone into the technical aspect of the day because we're not experts, but we do recommend you reach out to your preferred manufacturer and ask if they are planning to host any educational events like this or would be willing to visit you with some information.

Thanks again to Kris and BIGGA for the invite!

You can view BIGGA's upcoming events and workshops at: <https://www.bigga.org.uk/event-listing.html>



This image: Learning from industry experts
Image bottom: Getting hands-on in the workshop



MEET THE MEMBER:



Ryusei Ando

Ryusei Ando is our second featured member in this issue. Ryusei is based in Japan, where he works as a greenkeeper at Akita Country Club. Here, he talks about his favourite part about working in sports turf, what he could do if he was able to swap roles with another groundskeeping or greenkeeping team, a vital piece of equipment that he couldn't live without in his current job, and his biggest role model in the industry.

If you could switch roles with any grounds or greenkeeping team for a day, whose job would you want to try and why?

I would like to join a football stadium grounds/ greenkeeping team and become the head groundsperson. I love football very much, and although I have no experience with stadium greenkeeping ever, that position is my future goal, so I want to get a benchmark experience.

How do you unwind and relax after a challenging day of work?

Being Japanese, I like to go to an onsen (hot spring).

Share a funny or unexpected moment that happened during your career.

Once at the golf course, I slipped and fell in the valley while riding a machine.

Normally, both the machine and I could have lost our lives, but luckily we were both unharmed.

What's the most rewarding aspect of your current job role?

Being told by players and other staff at the same workplace that the "course was very beautiful." Since it is our mission to provide our customers

with a satisfying turf, there is more satisfying than hearing this directory.

What's one piece of greenkeeping equipment you couldn't live without, and how does it make your job easier or more enjoyable?

A pocket knife, I use all the time in my daily work.

Who has had the biggest impact on you in your career role and why?

Eiki Yoshikawa, the head groundsperson of Blaublitz Akita (Japan football team). He is the one who brought me into his industry, and his passion and philosophy for groundskeeping, as well as his way of life, make him the role model I aspire to as a person.

What advice do you have for new people looking to join the industry?

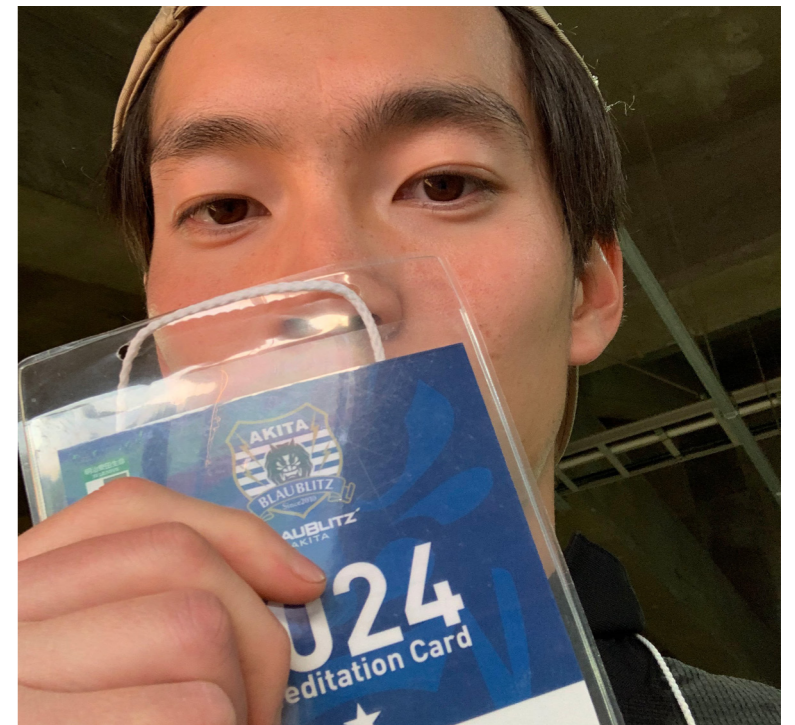
My mentor taught me that this industry is the world of "art" and "science". I feel that is very important to hone your experience, knowledge, and sense. I am still a newcomer, but let's work hard together!

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?

I don't think that there are many people who want to do greenkeeping overseas in Japan, and I think there are limited means to do so. In such a situation, this kind of organization has been a very important source of information for me and I want it to become



On the job! Mowing the greens at Akita Country Club

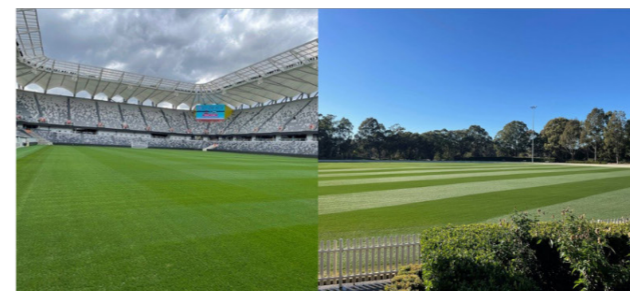


more widespread. I keep learning and growing. For those of you who want to become groundskeepers overseas, let's achieve our dreams together!



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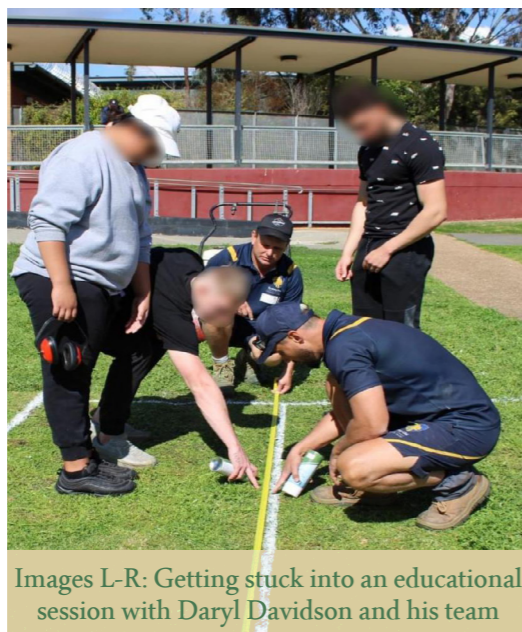
Turf Management Skills at Reiby Youth Justice Centre

In August this year, Daryl Davidson of IGFH volunteered his time to provide an educational, hands-on turf-keeping session for a small group of young people at the Reiby Youth Justice Centre in South Western Sydney.

The centre offers a range of health, educational, and spiritual services to young people, including training

turf, grassed areas, and synthetic surfaces used for sporting events. Whether it's a Certificate III in Sports Turf Management or one of the many other VET pathways, we're showing young people how they can take control of their future with practical, real-world skills.

"Special thanks to @Ben Gilles from Ground Logo



Images L-R: Getting stuck into an educational session with Daryl Davidson and his team



in job and living skills. Daryl and several members of his Sydney University grounds team provided equipment for the young people to practice using, including a line marker, cylinder mower, and fertiliser sprayer.

The NSW Department of Communities and Justice shared a highlight of the day's events on Facebook, commenting:

"Vocational Education and Training can be a real game changer in transforming young people's lives.

"For National Skills Week, young people at Reiby Youth Justice Centre in Tharawal Country, Airds, learned from greenkeeping experts how to create their own cricket pitch, and how to embed a logo design into a field.

"Greenkeepers are highly skilled and sought after for their expertise in establishing and maintaining

fine Media, as well as @Daryl Davidson, Founder of @International Greenkeepers For Hire and Head groundsman at @Sydney Uni Sport & Fitness for their time, equipment and products to bring an immersive hands-on activity, educational experience and a pathway to employment."

Daryl reported that the session ran successfully, adding: "It was a rewarding experience to share our knowledge and skills with the young people at Reiby Youth Justice Centre.

"Giving them hands-on experience with the equipment helped them learn technical skills, and also showed them the kind of career opportunities that exist in turf management and groundskeeping.

"Our hope is that this session inspired some of them to pursue a positive path forward."

You can view the NSF DCJ Facebook post [via this link](#).



EDUCATIONAL CARD #41 MADE BY GREENKEEPERS, FOR GREENKEEPERS

SOLID TINE AERATION

Solid tine aeration is used to improve soil structure, reduce compaction, release nutrients, allows water to penetrate the surface and enhance overall turf health. Unlike hollow tine aeration, which removes soil cores, solid tine aeration simply punctures the soil with solid metal spikes or tines. This method creates channels that allow for better air, water, and nutrient penetration.

Solid tine aeration



When to Use Solid Tine Aeration

Solid tine aeration is particularly useful in addressing compaction with minimal soil disruption. You might go for this method over hollow tine aeration for areas with high foot traffic—it's ideal for maintaining playability on sports surfaces or aesthetic appeal on fine turf areas. It's also a good choice for when compaction is less severe.

Frequency of Solid Tine Aeration

The frequency of solid tine aeration depends on your soil type, turfgrass species, and usage patterns. Ideally, you should aerate using this method at least once or twice a year for areas prone to compaction. But if you're dealing with heavy clay soils or areas with intense use, more frequent aeration may be necessary.

Best Timing for Solid Tine Aeration

The best time to perform solid tine aeration is during active turf growth, typically in spring or autumn. This enables quicker recovery and less stress on the grass.



Hollow tine aeration

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Howardson Group partners with Derbyshire Cricket, Edgbaston Stadium, and Warwickshire County Cricket Club

It's been a busy year for Howardson Group, with the company announcing multiple partnerships with stadiums, charities, and clubs to support sustainability and accessibility efforts.

In June 2024, Dennis and SISIS (two brands within the Howardson Group umbrella) announced a partnership with the Derbyshire Cricket Foundation.

This collaboration aimed to bolster grassroots cricket pitches throughout the county, promising a significant enhancement in the quality and accessibility of cricketing facilities.

The Derbyshire Cricket Foundation (DCF), a dedicated cricket charity situated at The County Ground, Derby, uses the power of cricket to engage and inspire people in Derbyshire to have a lasting connection with the game.

Tom Coxhead, Club and Community Officer for Derbyshire Cricket Foundation, expressed his enthusiasm about the partnership, emphasising the shared values and ambitions driving this collaboration. "As the governing body for recreational cricket in Derbyshire, we are committed to making cricket accessible to everyone in the county," he said. "We were seeking partners who share our vision and values, and Dennis and SISIS stood out as an organisation with a well-established reputation for excellence and integrity."

Roger Moore, Head of Marketing for Howardson Group, emphasised the multifaceted approach of the partnership, focusing not only on providing machinery but also on offering educational seminars and workshops to groundspersons.

"We see this partnership as an opportunity to support the foundation and the grounds association while fostering education and skill development among groundspersons," Roger explained. "By inviting association members to our headquarters and organising workshops and webinars, we aim to empower them with knowledge and insights into turf maintenance."

Both Dennis and SISIS and the Derbyshire Cricket Foundation are committed to championing grassroots cricket and supporting the local community. This partnership will contribute to the growth and prosperity of cricket in the region.

In July this year, Dennis Mowers announced

another partnership with Edgbaston Stadium and Warwickshire County Cricket Club. This collaboration was aimed at achieving two significant objectives: becoming the most sustainable cricket ground in the country by having a fully electric range of mowers and enhancing education and support for local grassroots cricket clubs.

Warwickshire County Cricket Club and Edgbaston Stadium are committed to becoming fully sustainable by 2030. This ambitious goal includes transitioning to a completely electric fleet of mowers. The partnership with Dennis Mowers, part of the Howardson Group, was reported to be "a crucial step" toward this objective.

Gary Barwell, Head of Sports Turf at Edgbaston, explained the vision: "We have made a commitment that by 2030 we would like to have a fully electric fleet of mowers. We didn't want to do it as a half-baked project; we wanted it to be across the main ground and the training ground, making us the first club to be fully electric. It was a case of finding a manufacturer that could supply everything we needed."



Image: Roger Moore (left) from Howardson Group with Tom Coxhead from Derbyshire Cricket Foundation.



"Choosing to work with Dennis Mowers was an easy decision due to their high standards and their extensive experience supplying mowers to top-tier sporting teams."

"Bringing them in was a secure and confident move for both the club, the venue and myself. The quality and reliability of the mowers also ensure we maintain the high standards we have adhered to over the years."

The Dennis E-Series range, including the ES-22 Ultra, ES-36, ES-760, and ES-34R, has been chosen for this transition. These battery-powered mowers offer exceptional performance, with features like adjustable speeds, interchangeable cassettes, and superior cutting quality, all while being eco-friendly.

Gary highlighted the advantages of the mowers: "The performance levels have been so good, the grass is healthy, the cut is so strong and there has been no drop-off from switching from petrol to battery. In fact, I would argue that there has been an upturn. The balance and overall performance are being praised by all of the team members."

In addition to sustainability, the partnership will focus on educating and supporting local grassroots cricket clubs. The aim is to help improve the skills of groundstaff, enhance pitch quality, and ultimately increase participation in the game.

Gary shared his enthusiasm for this educational aspect: "The partnership is incredibly exciting and is going to be very promising for the industry. I want to help people by demonstrating the work we are doing

here at Edgbaston and extend this knowledge to other clubs. I am extremely passionate about turf and cricket, and the idea is to work together with Dennis to improve cricket pitches."

Dennis plans to involve Gary in educational seminars and training sessions for cricket clubs, sharing best practices and demonstrating the capabilities of their equipment.

This hands-on approach aims to create a lasting legacy by empowering local clubs with the knowledge and tools to maintain top-quality pitches.

Roger Moore, Head of Marketing at The Howardson Group, expressed his excitement about the partnership: "We are thrilled to partner with Warwickshire County Cricket Club and Gary Barwell. This collaboration reinforces our commitment to sustainability and community support. We look forward to a fruitful partnership that will benefit cricket clubs at all levels."

As Warwickshire County Cricket Club moves forward with its sustainability initiatives and educational outreach, the partnership with Dennis Mowers stands as a testament to their shared vision for a greener, more knowledgeable future in cricket.

For more news, reviews and insightful views, you can follow Dennis on Twitter and Instagram @DennisMowers and like the company's Facebook page – www.facebook.com/DennisMowersUK. You can also view the latest Dennis videos by visiting www.youtube.com/DennisMowers.

T.E.T.O Hosts Members at Leicester City Training Ground

IGFH's Bradley Tennant reflects on the recent T.E.T.O gathering held at Leicester City's Training Ground in June this year.

T.E.T.O, also known as Turf Equipment Technicians Organisation, held their most recent gathering at Leicester City's Training Ground thanks to Chris Minton, Head Mechanic at Leicester City, and James Wilkinson, Workshop and Equipment Manager and the Buckinghamshire GC.

T.E.T.O was founded by Chris Minton, James Wilkinson, and Matt Axton. It was formed as a WhatsApp group, where Turf Equipment Technicians from around the world could join together, sharing their experiences, knowledge, and information to solve problems being faced within the group—from the most common mechanical issues

to requesting a more structured path for Equipment Technicians to join the industry and gain qualifications.

The organisation plans to publish an article soon that explains more about T.E.T.O and the challenges they face. IGFH are part of the T.E.T.O WhatsApp group, invited by Chris Minton, and we were also lucky enough to attend the last meeting in January 2024 held at BTME by BIGGA.

After a morning coffee and welcome, Chris Minton and James Wilkinson updated T.E.T.O members on the progress of the group, including their growth to over 200 members

and their exciting new affiliations with BIGGA.

This talk was followed by an insightful presentation—'Cutline is King'—by Mike Rollins, Regional Manager of Simplex Ideal Peerless. Mike presented a great session; there has been a lot of talk recently about grinding and the use of the grinders this year. We appreciated seeing information from the user's standpoint and how having the correct settings, even down to a degree of angle, can affect the cut as much as having a dull blade. I am personally keen to pry more of this information out of the group; there must be over 500 years of technical advice we haven't tapped into.

We took a short break for lunch before it was time for a tour of Leicester City F.C.'s facilities, including the club's workshop, pitches, gardens, and even the golf

course. It's incredible to see the scale at which this facility is being operated, highlighting the importance of limited downtime on machinery and, therefore, investment into the workshops and technicians.

'It's incredible to see the scale at which this facility is being operated, highlighting the importance of limited downtime on machinery and, therefore, investment into the workshops and technicians.'

T.E.T.O exists to improve recognition, opportunity, communication, and education across our industry, whilst creating valuable support networks.

If you are interested in joining the T.E.T.O group or know someone who

would like to, please contact us or the T.E.T.O team:

- Bradley@internationalgreenkeepers.com
- Tetorg@hotmail.com

You can also visit the T.E.T.O Twitter/X account: [@TETOrganisation](#)



Images L&R:
- L: The T.E.T.O members together
- R: An insightful talk by Mike Rollins



INSPIRING FUTURE TALENT AT THE GREATER WESTERN SYDNEY CAREERS MARKET

IGFH returned to the 2024 Greater Western Sydney Careers Market run by Brett Carter Events, held on May 22-23 at the Penrith Valley Regional Sports Centre. Daryl Davidson of IGFH shares his experience attending the event and the value that can be gained from careers fairs, for the young attendees and the companies showcasing their industries.



“We’ve been back at the careers fairs over in Sydney. The 2024 Greater Western Sydney Careers Market run by Brett Carter Events is done and dusted for this year, and what a cracker of an event it was.

Just shy of 6,000 high school students from 52 high schools and 170 exhibitors were in attendance, with so many positive comments throughout both days. Students committed themselves to finding out about all the career and further education options available to them as they navigate the tricky road to their futures.

Careers fairs provide an excellent platform for networking with professionals from various industries. Meeting representatives from companies of interest can allow you to

forge valuable connections, exchange contact information, and potentially secure future job, placement, or internship opportunities.

We arguably have one of the least-represented industries in the world in terms of exposure to the younger audience, and we’ve made it one of our biggest aims to attract as many young people as we can to our industry.

There are a few ways we can do this, from easy wins such as online flyers in job board groups to speaking to local press, and attending events like these across the world. It’s important because we know the industry needs to grow and change, and it’s these students that will help us to do that. Let’s get more people into Sports Turf!

Thank you to our loyal sponsors, fellow exhibitors, supporters, and partners for your continued support and we look forward to doing it all again next year.

Pencil the 22nd and 23rd of May 2025 into your calendars. Registrations will open in October.

Now onto the upcoming Apprenticeship/ Traineeship & Jobs Expos that are due to be held in August/September 2024, we can’t wait.

If you have any questions, contact us at: <https://internationalgreenkeepers.com/contact-us>”

GROUNDSFEST 2024: A RESONDING SUCCESS

Bradley Tennant shares his experience of representing IGFH at this year’s GroundsFest.

After a fantastic experience exhibiting at GroundsFest 2024, we’re back in the office, grateful for the warm hospitality of Chris Bassett, Chris Bennett, and their team for organising such a well-run event.

GroundsFest has cemented its reputation as the premier annual, free event for groundstaff, greenkeepers, landscapers, designers, architects, gardeners, local authorities, estate managers, and contractors.

The event blends indoor business and educational opportunities with outdoor demonstrations. Attendees enjoyed an action-packed day, including a unique live music festival in the evening that offered a relaxed atmosphere for continued networking. Best of all, the profits from GroundsFest are reinvested into the industry, helping to fund educational initiatives.

For us at International Greenkeepers, the event was invaluable. We reconnected with old friends and welcomed new faces eager to join the industry. Our recently launched TurfPassport program received significant interest, and the positive feedback from the event was overwhelming.

Exploring the show, we were impressed by the buzz and energy throughout. The outdoor areas had a festival-like atmosphere, with demonstrations, conversations, and activities all around—an immersive experience for anyone in the industry.

It was also a great opportunity to broaden our connections and gain insights into different sectors.



On the second day, I presented on the topic, ‘Benefits of Volunteering to Advance Your Career’. I shared how volunteering—whether at tournaments, matchdays, or through work experience—can be the key to securing a dream job or stepping into the industry for the first time.

With new product launches and industry innovations showcased at events like these, attending them is more important than ever. We highly recommend signing up and visiting as many as possible. Check out the list of events we’ll be attending [linked here](#).

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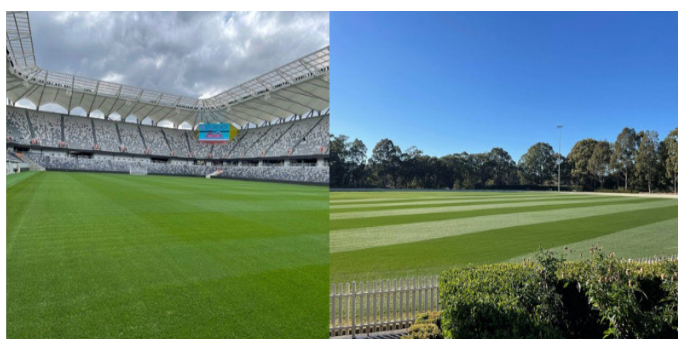


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