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Media contact:

Karl Hansell

BIGGA

+44 (0)7890 179 801

karl@bigga.co.uk

Press release

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Outstanding achievements of BIGGA members and supporters recognised at emotional BTME celebration

A turf educator known as the ‘grandfather of greenkeeper education’ and credited with helping establish training opportunities for those working on golf courses was recognised on the opening evening of the BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition (BTME).

At the BIGGA Welcome Celebration with AMS Robotics, Dennis Mortram, 75, was awarded with the Outstanding Contribution of the Year Award sponsored by Bernhard and Company. Dennis is a former tutor at Reaseheath College in Cheshire and was one of the first to recognise that greenkeepers would require industry-specific education if they were to elevate the profession and raise standards of golf course maintenance. He also played a key role in the establishment of the Master Greenkeeper certification.

[A tribute video is available to view here.](#)

BTME is the UK’s leading exhibition for those in the golf greenkeeping and sports turf industries and is taking place in March for the first time in the trade show’s 33-year history. The traditional curtain-raiser of the exhibition is the BIGGA Welcome Celebration sponsored by AMS Robotics and hosted by television presenter Naga Munchetty.

At the event a number of other awards were handed out to BIGGA members who have done extraordinary things throughout their careers or shown wonderful

commitment to supporting the association and its members.

The team at Loch Lomond Golf Club was awarded the Greenkeeping Project of the Year Award sponsored by Baroness. With almost 2 metres of rainfall each year, Loch Lomond is a challenging place to build a golf course. David Cole MG and his team have overseen a project that has been described as the largest golf course construction in UK golfing history. Using innovative techniques that included placing a sand cap across the entire course, the team rebuilt the entire golf course over a period of four winters. [More information is available here.](#)

The Championship Greenkeeping Performance of the Year Award sponsored by Origin Amenity Solutions was won by the team at Clevedon Golf Club following the hosting the Wright-Morgan Championship on the EuroPro Tour in 2021. The event was only Clevedon's third professional event in its 130-year history but despite their relative inexperience and a modest operating budget, Course Manager Richard Ponsford and the team produced a golf course that was described by the EuroPro's tournament director as by far the best presented venue of the year. [More information is available here.](#)

Also recognised at the BIGGA Welcome Celebration sponsored by AMS Robotics were:

- The winners of the [Excellence in Communications Awards](#) with Campey Turfcare Systems were revealed to be John Rowbottom of Woolley Park Golf Club (New Media), John Milne of Garmouth & Kingston Golf Club (Outreach) and Shaun Cunningham of Prestonfield Golf Club (Innovation and Thought Leadership).
- Stuart Taylor, formerly course manager at Glasgow Golf Club, received Life Membership of BIGGA.
- The Amenity Forum Sprayer Operator of the Year Award was given to Jason Garlick of JMG Amenity.
- BIGGA's latest Master Greenkeepers received their certificates. They were Matthew Aplin, Alan FitzGerald, Greg Fitzmaurice, Richard Johnstone and Paul Brett.
- The audience [watched a conversation](#) with Bryn Roberts, deputy head greenkeeper at Padeswood & Buckley, who recently returned from delivering aid to the Ukrainian border.
- Jonathan Wood of St Andrews Links and winner of the 2021 BIGGA Photographic Competition collected his prizes including a frame print of his winning image.

Dennis Mortram said: "I'm emotionally drained. What we did back then was as a team and I have so many people to thank, who are as deserving as me to be up on this stage. Thank you to everyone for this honour, it is amazing."

David Cole MG, course manager at Loch Lomond Golf Club, said: "I must admit that I feel like the four years of the project have taken their toll on me so I got quite emotional when Naga announced us as the winners. I'm so proud of the team and I really wanted them to get recognition for what they achieved. I will be indebted to my team until the day I die because they were there 12 hours a day, seven days a week for four years in a row."

Richard Ponsford, course manager at Clevedon Golf Club, said: "I couldn't believe it. Ganton and West Lancs are amazing venues and I thought we were just there to make the numbers up. From the team that I have every day at Clevedon to the volunteers, we couldn't have done it without any of them. For the players to say that the course is up there with the best is something special."

BTME 2022 continues until Thursday 24 March 2022 at the Harrogate Convention Centre. Registration is free and available at www.btme.org.uk

Notes to editors

The British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association was created in January 1987 due to an amalgamation of the British Golf Greenkeepers Association, The English and International Golf Greenkeepers Association and The Scottish and International Golf Greenkeepers Association.

Today BIGGA has around 5,600 greenkeepers and turf professionals as members. BIGGA is dedicated to the continuing professional development of its members, and in serving their needs will strive through education and training for standards of excellence in golf course management throughout the greenkeeping profession.

For more about BIGGA, you can visit our [website](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#).

BIGGA also publishes Greenkeeper International, which can be viewed [online](#) here.