

# CERTIFICATE IN GREENKEEPING NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 02 | DECEMBER 2023



New Students from India (above) and UAE (right)



## INSIDE

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Message from the Chair

---

AGIF & NZSTI Update

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Spotlight

---

Events

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Our Students

AGIF is excited to have launched the Certificate in Greenkeeping in UAE and India!

This is another fantastic achievement and proves once again just how valuable the Certificate in Greenkeeping education is.

Please enjoy the latest CIG Newsletter.

Education Partner

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### FROM THE CHAIR | RICHARD WALNE

The standard of pass marks for our students has been fantastic and we will shortly be able to recognise this by adding 3 levels of pass marks.



Whilst recognising that some attendees are not current golf course employees and therefore can not take part in all course modules to receive pass marks, we are also adding a Certificate of Participation, allowing knowledge to be shared and encouraging people to get started in a career of turf management.

Congratulations to our students, the Certificate in Greenkeeping continues to go from strength! I could not have imagined in my wildest dreams that we would have 80 students currently enrolled in 4 countries! I was able to attend the last 3 sessions and the enthusiasm of all students continues to amaze and excite me.

The conversations between students are becoming a key part of the learning experience, with great friendships and lasting relationships being created, this form of turf professional interaction has long been missing in many of the countries.

2023 has been a great year, we truly have put behind us the gaps that COVID created, we have reached a total of 160 students enrolled or graduated and the committee is preparing for the future of CIG and it's continued growth, more on that in the next newsletter.



Wishing everyone seasons greetings and a happy and healthy new year.

### FROM AGIF | PK ONG

It has been exciting times for the CIG post-COVID as the certification programme gets rolled out in Malaysia, Vietnam, UAE and India all in the last 12 months. As CIG goes places, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all who have helped get things organized at the host clubs - from the General Manager down to the golf course superintendent to the F&B team, and not forgetting the "unsung heroes" like the housekeeping staff who helped cleaned up the training room after us.



I would also like to give a little shout out to some of our CIG graduates who have been doing their bit for CIG in their own way - **Brad Cheng**, Golf Course Superintendent of Al Dhannah Golf Club (Abu Dhabi, UAE) and **Nguyen Duc Long**, Golf Course Superintendent of Hoiana Shores Golf Club (Hoi An, Vietnam). You guys rock!

As 2024 dawns, wishing you all a very Happy New Year and looking forward to seeing the New You when we come round.

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## ISSUE 02 | DECEMBER 2023

### FROM NZSTI | TARA MCLEOD



I have been truly honoured to travel throughout Asia as part of the AGIF, CIG programme. One of the true similarities within each one of our visiting countries is the true passion and compassion that our Learners exhibit as part of the management of golf courses. Both the agronomy knowledge and managerial skills are second to none within our Learner groups – and all Learners are absolutely to be commended on their efforts.

One of the key reoccurring themes as we travel from country to country is the changing climate which is throwing a number of weather extremes at us – notably high rainfall (and the potential associated rising water tables and salt ingress), extended periods of low cloud cover, drought, and extreme heat. This is NZ included. When we are growing a single turf species that may not be necessarily acclimatised to these change in conditions, it provides the turf manager with a number of ongoing challenges. Long term there are going to have to be a number of sustainable strategies employed to manage these. One of these will likely be decisions around which turf species should be managed on the golf course.

Current turf species we see on golf courses throughout the region and their relative tolerances are provided in the table below. Growing a turf species that is better suited to the ongoing challenges of the changing environment is going to be key to reducing excessive use of fertilisers and agrichemicals in order to adopt a sustainable long-term strategy and provide the excellent surfaces our golfers demand.

Species	Heat Tolerance	Drought Tolerance	Shade Tolerance	Tolerance of Wet Soils	Wear Tolerance	Salt Tolerance
Broad leaf carpet grass	Very Good	Poor	Excellent	Poor	Poor	Poor
Hybrid Bermudagrass	Very Good	Excellent	Poor	Moderate	Very Good	Very Good
Seashore paspalum	Excellent	Moderate-Good	Good	Moderate	Good	Excellent
Zoysia grass	Excellent	Moderate-Good	Good	Poor	Very Good	Very Good

The challenges in golf course management are going to be constant and ongoing. I am immensely proud to be part of ongoing education around Asia and for the opportunity to learn and grow from each other.

As we reach the end of another year, wishing you all the best of good health and happiness.

Best Wishes  
Tara



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## ISSUE 02 | DECEMBER 2023

### SPOTLIGHT

#### 20 SEPTEMBER 2023 | VINPEARL GOLF HAI PHONG

21 students from the first group of greenkeepers in Vietnam completed their year long Certificate in Greenkeeping (CIG) programme and received their Certificate of Achievement, jointly issued by The R&A, Asian Golf Industry Federation (AGIF) and New Zealand Sports Turf Institute (NZSTI), presented by Richard Walne, Emeritus President and Chairman of CIG committee of AGIF.

After two days of written and practical assessments, every student presented a subject of their choice on day 3 of the Confirmation Course.

**Pham Quoc Toan** (below) Song Be Golf Resort's golf maintenance manager was announced as top student of the class!



#### Top Graduating Students of the First Vietnam Certificate in Greenkeeping Class

(from left to right) Nguyen Van Dai (2nd), Le Trung Dung (3rd), Pham Quoc Toan (1st) and Tran Anh Nhat (3rd)  
Together with Richard Walne, Dr Andrew Mitchell, Tara McLeod and David Howard of NZSTI



"I accidentally found out about this course through a friend. At the time, I had just taken over running the department. The CIG course came to me like destiny! The CIG was the best chance for me to improve my knowledge, skills and techniques so I did not hesitate to sign up. Thank you to all the CIG team who have supported me and my classmates during the course. I am still very happy when someone reminds me of my good results."

Toan added "I have learnt well from the trainers who conveyed not just knowledge and skills, but also their experience in turf maintenance. I also had the

opportunity to get to know 20 other learners who come from other golf courses in Vietnam, we all bring and share experiences with the class, this is a very good way for us all to connect and share."

# CERTIFICATE IN GREENKEEPING NEWSLETTER

## ISSUE 02 | DECEMBER 2023

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### 20 SEPTEMBER 2023 | VINPEARL GOLF HAI PHONG



Nguyen Van Dai (left) graduated in second place overall. He signed up for the CIG as he felt he needed to expand his knowledge and opportunities to interact with teachers and friends in golf course maintenance and he has no regrets, saying the journey has been “worthwhile and valuable”.

Nguyen said: “The CIG has given me much-needed knowledge, that pieces together like a jigsaw puzzle!” Since completing the CIG, Dai has moved on to a new position at Vinpearl Golf Hai Phong leading a department, a career move he is very happy with.

Completing the CIG in joint-third place were Tran Anh Nhat and Le Trung Dung.

Nhat is the head of golf course maintenance department at BRG Da Nang Golf Resort. He said “The programme has helped me improve my knowledge in grass maintenance, irrigation management and pest prevention more effectively.”

Dung, who is Irrigation Supervisor at Hilltop Valley Golf Club, heard of the CIG from Vietnam’s superintendent club and decided to enroll in the programme to learn more about golf course maintenance. Now that he has completed the programme, he hopes to have a breakthrough in his career and gain more exposure and experience. He said “Thank you AGIF and NZSTI for everything, I hope to see you all again at the next level of CIG.”

Richard Walne said “It has been fabulous to see the growth of these students. The enthusiasm along with their desire to learn has been outstanding. I was told the results were very close. As Vietnam continues to make its mark as a premier golf tourism destination, course conditioning and presentation will become increasingly important, and these pioneering students will now be at the forefront to take the game of golf to new heights in Vietnam. We wish them well in their career journey.”



Le Trung Dung (left) and Tran Anh Nhat (right)

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## ISSUE 02 | DECEMBER 2023

### SPOTLIGHT

Patrick Samonte, of Filipino nationality, was installing upgrades to the irrigation system at Port Royal Golf Course in Bermuda in the late 2000s, and there he met his mentor Steven Johnson (pictured together below).

When Steven moved to Al Mouj Golf in Oman in 2010, Patrick was the first person he reached out to join him as he felt Patrick's experience in installation and operation of the irrigation system was world class. Patrick has since progressed and is today as Assistant Superintendent, "through his own hard work and commitment to develop his greenkeeping and management skills" said Steven.



When both Steven and Patrick learnt of the CIG programme that the AGIF was running in Malaysia, Steven encouraged Patrick to enrol for the programme, rather than waiting for the CIG to come to UAE. The thought of having to travel thrice to Malaysia to attend the year long programme did not daunt him, in fact he could not wait to commence the course. Steven was of the opinion that the CIG programme will offer Patrick a structured training that will let him learn in both classroom and on course in Malaysia and allow him to bring his newfound knowledge back and implement at Al Mouj. "The CIG programme was a great opportunity for Patrick to understand the agronomic practices behind the maintenance programmes at Al Mouj so that he knows "why we do things like we do"" said Steven.

"Patrick comes back from his courses full of confidence and eager to put his new knowledge into practice. The programme is a great opportunity for all of the participants to work together and discuss programmes and issues they all face on so many different courses in different countries and climates. This has been the ideal development programme for Patrick as he continues to develop as a turf manager."

Patrick said: "The CIG program is great! During the Introductory and Progression Courses, a lot of how's and why's were answered. I like the programme for being very informative, the trainers are very knowledgeable and experts in their fields. It was a great opportunity for me to develop my greenkeeping / agronomy skills, just the opportunity of chatting, asking questions and sharing a vast range of ideas about greenkeeping with the trainers was a great experience too. The training helps me to have more confidence and understanding to what I do on the golf course. I am much more aware when performing my duties in terms of observation, application, management, and early detections that may affect the performance of our golf course. I am looking forward to finishing the course in March 2024."





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## ISSUE 02 | DECEMBER 2023

### EVENTS

#### UAE 2023 Intake

- **Introductory Course**  
27 November - 1 December 2023  
The Montgomerie Golf Club Dubai, UAE  
**REGISTRATION CLOSED**

#### India 2023 Intake

- **Introductory Course**  
4 - 8 December 2023  
Karma Lakelands Golf Resort, Haryana, India  
**REGISTRATION CLOSED**

#### Vietnam 2023 Intake

- **Progression Course**  
26 February - 1 March 2024  
Venue to be confirmed

#### Malaysia 2023 Intake

- **Confirmation Course**  
4 - 6 March 2024  
Venue to be confirmed



First group of Vietnam Graduates (2022 Intake)

# CERTIFICATE IN GREENKEEPING NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 02 | DECEMBER 2023

## OUR GRADUATES

### 2019

**Aliza** Bt Johan | Royal Selangor Golf Club  
**Saifulizan** Bin Sam | Royal Selangor Golf Club  
**Abas** bin Ismail | Kuala Lumpur Golf & Country Club  
 Mohamad **Fadzil** bin Shaari | Kuala Lumpur Golf & CC  
 A. **Collins** Welensky | Kuala Lumpur Golf & Country Club  
**Shahriman** Bin Hassan | Kota Seriemas Golf & Country Club  
 Mohamad **Fairuz** Ahmad | Saujana Golf & Country Club  
 Norul**azwar** Mohd Zukhi | Saujana Golf & Country Club

**Johan** Fariz Bin Mohamed Salleh | Danau Golf Club  
 Mohd **Azuhan** Bin Ibrahim | Danau Golf Club

Mohd **Khamirul** Hijaz Bin Md Harullah | Els Club Desaru Coast  
 Mohamad **Hazlamy** Bin Mohamad | Els Club Desaru Coast  
 Muhamad **Syekhree** Bin Zainuddin | Els Club Desaru Coast  
 Mohamad **Farid** B. Mohamad Fauzi | Els Club Teluk Datai Langkawi  
 Siti Nur**farhana** Binti Bahoudin | Kota Permai Golf & Country Club  
**Sivakumar** Balakrishnan | Palm Garden Golf Club  
 Muhammad **Izhaq** Hafeez Bin Badrul Hisham | Kelab Golf Negara Subang  
**Ariffin** Bin Alias | Kelab Golf Seri Selangor

### 2022

Mohd **Fadly** Bin Jama | Horizon Hills Golf Club  
 Muhamad **Fadil** Bin Miskan | IOI Palm Villa Golf & CC  
**Lokman** Sabtu | Singapore Island Country Club  
 Yeo **Beng Joo** | Singapore Island Country Club  
 Abd **Wahid** Bin Tugiman | Seletar Country Club  
 Noor **Hidayah** Bte Hamdan | Sentosa Golf Club  
**Ruslan** Bin Hammadiya | Labuan International Golf Club  
 Siti Nor **Farhana** Binti Hamzah | Glenmarie Golf & CC

### 2023

**Balan** Ganesan | Singapore Island Country Club  
**Howie** Zhao | Xili Golf and Country Club (China)  
**Brad** Cheng | Al Dhannah Golf Club (UAE)  
**Bill** Fan Guo Ping | Harbour Plaza Golf Club (China)  
**Sokhim** Chheang | Vattanac Golf Resort (Cambodia)  
 Leong **Mei Yee** | Meru Valley Resort  
 Wong **Chih Hong** | Meru Valley Resort  
 Mohd **Khairul** Azhar Bin Mohd Nawawi | Els Club Desaru Coast  
**Azli** Bin Mohd Salleh | Els Club Desaru Coast  
**Tenarachahar** S/O Savarimuthu | Kelab Rahman Putra Malaysia  
**Faizol** Bin Mohamad Ghazali | Saujana Golf & Country Club  
 Mohd **Zani** Bin Sahid | Kuala Lumpur Golf & Country Club  
**Norhan** Bin Ramli | Kuala Lumpur Golf & Country Club  
 Mohd **Firazan** Bin Abu Yazam | Palm Resort Golf & Country Club / Envigro  
 Muhammad **Zaidi** Bin Muhammad Nasir | Singapore Island Country Club  
**Khalid** Bin Kader | Sentosa Golf Club

Nguyen Thanh **Hai** | Hoiana Shores Golf Club  
 Nguyen Duc **Long** | Hoiana Shores Golf Club  
 Phan Quoc **Thai (Henry)** | Nara Binh Tien  
 Pham Van **Thiet (Phil)** | Hilltop Valley Golf  
 Le Trung **Dung** | Hilltop Valley Golf  
 Duong Tich **Thien** | San Golf Yen Bai  
 Dang Loan **Anh** | Vinpearl Golf Nam  
 Pham Quoc **Toan** | Song Be Golf Resort  
 Le Long **Hai** | Song Be Golf Resort  
 Huynh Thanh **Hung** | Harmonie Golf Park  
 Dang Dat **Thanh** | Harmonie Golf Park  
 Nguyen Anh **Quan** | Chi Linh Golf  
 Nguyen Van **Dai** | Vinpearl Golf Hai Phong  
 Nguyen Van **Tuyen** | BRG Legend Hill  
 Nguyen Khac **Tuan** | BRG Ruby Tree  
 Ha Manh **Dat** | BRG Kings Island  
 Kieu Van **Dung** | BRG Kings Island  
 Nguyen Thu **Huong** | BRG Kings Island  
 Nguyen Tan **Thanh** | BRG Da Nang  
 Tran Anh **Nhat** | BRG Da Nang  
 Dao Hung **Hai** | BRG Rose Ha Nam

**Bold** or ( ) = Preferred Name

congratulations



# CERTIFICATE IN GREENKEEPING NEWSLETTER

## ISSUE 02 | DECEMBER 2023

### CURRENT STUDENTS

#### Name, Club

**Nikhil** Sanwal | Royal Calcutta Golf Club  
**Rikky** Mondal | Royal Calcutta Golf Club  
**Nurul** Hazira Bt Mohd Razali | Kuala Lumpur Golf & CC  
 Mohd Nor **Azman** bin Hairuddin | Kuala Lumpur Golf & CC  
**Aliah** Shairah Bt Mahamudin | Meru Valley Resort

**Robert** Bin Golontuh | Seletar Country Club  
**Kathy** Liew | Seletar Country Club  
 Zhao **Weijun** | Forest City Golf Resort  
 Li **Daifu** | Forest City Golf Resort  
**Bryan** See | Singapore Island Country Club  
**Yang** Yun Cheong | Kota Permai Golf & Country Club  
**Patrick** Albert Samonte | Al Mouj Golf (Oman)  
**Shanmugam** D Subramaniam | Singapore Island CC  
**Sahairon** bin Sahari | The Empire Brunei  
 Mohammad **Ali** Yassin bin Hj Mohammad | The Empire Brunei

Pg Hj Mohd **Faizal** bin Pg Zainal Abidin | The Empire Brunei  
**Kumarakuru** A/L Letchumanan | Tropicana Golf & CC  
**Grace** Lim | Tanah Merah Country Club  
 Loh **Bowei** | National Service Resort & Country Club  
 Leow **Fusheng** | National Service Resort & Country Club  
 Muhammad **Farizuan** bin Mat Nadzan | Els Club Teluk Datai Langkawi  
 T.Y.S. **Bedi**, SEPTA  
**Suresh** A.M. , Prestige Augusta Club  
**Navaneethan** V., Zion Hills Golf  
**Rashika** Galagoda, Victoria Golf Resort (Sri Lanka)  
**Ravi** HK, Prestige Golfshire  
**Mahesh** ML, Prestige Golfshire  
**Vipul** Popat Bhosale, Kharghar Valley Golf Club  
 DV **Chandrashekar**, Clover Greens  
**Rohit** Kumar, Gulmohar Greens Golf & Country Club  
**Vinay** P. , MEGEPTA  
**Rajesh** Kumar Upadhyay, Karma Lakelands  
**Rakesh** Pasike, Royal Greens Golf & Country Club (KSA)  
**Vinod** Dhaigude, Mehta Golf Club  
**Sanjay** Yadav, DLF Golf Resorts  
**Harkesh** Singh, Wave City  
**Snehal** Sanjay Chavan, The Willingdon Sports Club Mumbai  
**Virendra** Kumar, The Delhi Golf Club  
**Rajeev** Akhil Raj, The Delhi Golf Club  
 Mohd **Sohail** Malik, Jammu Tawi Golf Course  
**Kuldeep** Singh Thakur, Jammu Tawi Golf Course  
**Ram** Autar Sharma, DLF Golf Resorts

#### Name, Club

**Amruta** Pawar - Shinde, Oxford Golf Resort  
**Atul** Pawar, Oxford Golf Resort  
**Ullas** C. Shejwadkar, Bangalore Golf Club  
**Glenn** Canonaso, The Montgomerie Dubai  
 Muhammad "**Asif**" Muhammad Latif, Dubai Hills Golf Club  
**Ashok** Kumar , Arabian Ranches Golf Club  
**Francis** Eder Rodriguez, Jumeirah Golf Estates  
**Haiham** Al Nabhani, La Vie Club (Oman)  
**Sudharshon** Selliah, Emirates Golf Club  
**Surya** Bahadur, Emirates Golf Club  
 Chinemere **Onuwa**, Sharjah Wanderers Sports Club  
**Ernello** Tacuge, Al Zorah Golf Club  
**Edwin** Cacao, Trump International Golf Club Dubai  
**Glenn** Balazon, Trump International Golf Club Dubai  
**Jayasatyanarayana** Rayi, Yas Acres Golf & Country Club  
**Krishna** Kumar, Saadiyat Beach Golf Club  
**Miguel** Murillo, Dubai Creek Golf And Yacht Club  
**Jay** Jerome Castillejos, Al Badia Golf Club  
**Roel** Cruzada, Al Badia Golf Club  
 Nguyen Minh **Tam** | Laguna Golf Lang Co  
 Tran Van **Trinh** | Laguna Golf Lang Co

Le Duc **Nghiep** | Long Bien Golf Course  
 Nguyễn Thị **Giang** | Vinpearl Golf Hai Phong  
 Phạm Duy **Tân** | Vinpearl Golf Phu Quoc  
 Ôn Văn **Thịnh** | Vinpearl Golf Hoi An  
 Trần Thị **Kim Loan** | Vinpearl Golf Nha Trang  
 Dang Ngoc **Khai**  
 Trần Thị **Chè** | Trang An Golf & Resort  
 Bùi Hải **Hùng** | Trang An Golf & Resort  
 Nguyễn Nam **Chung** | Trang An Golf & Resort  
 C Ramesh **Babu** | Karnataka Golf Association (India)  
 Nguyen Van **Trung** | Sapa Grand Golf Course  
 Trần Lưu **Thật** | Royal Long An Golf & Villas  
 Kiều Xuân **Lộc** | Royal Long An Golf & Villas  
 Chu Thị Thủy **Trang** | Royal Long An Golf & Villas  
 Nghiêm Văn **Tuệ** | Dalat Palace  
 Nguyen Huu **Nghia**  
 Nguyen Trong **Tan** | Sonadezi Golf Course

**Bold** or ( ) = Preferred Name

# CERTIFICATE IN GREENKEEPING NEWSLETTER

## ISSUE 02 | DECEMBER 2023

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### THANK YOU!

The Certificate in Greenkeeping events have been made possible in country due to the support of our host golf clubs, please join us in recognising and thanking our hosts

#### In Malaysia

- Kuala Lumpur Golf & Country Club
- Kota Permai Golf & Country Club
- Palm Resort Golf & Country Club
- Horizon Hills Golf & Country Club
- Els Club Desaru Coast
- Glenmarie Golf & Country Club
- Tropicana Golf & Country Resort

#### In Vietnam

- Long Bien Golf Course
- Hoiana Shores Golf Club
- Vinpearl Golf Hai Phong

#### In Thailand

- Summit Windmill Golf Club
- Thai Country Club

#### In United Arab Emirates

- The Montgomerie Golf Club Dubai

#### In India

- Karma Lakelands Golf Resort

### OUR SPONSORS

Dedicated since the inception of the Certificate in Greenkeeping, thank you to our Sponsors for backing the AGIF as we implemented this amazing education program.



JEBSEN & JESSEN



JOHN DEERE

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