

Celtic FC's John Hayes is The Scottish Groundsman Of The Year

The unprecedented success of John Hayes, head groundsman at Celtic Football Club, in winning national 'groundsman of the year' awards continued this month when he was announced as the Institute of Groundsmanship's Scottish Football Groundsman of the Year 2006.

This follows his success in September when he collected the IOG's Professional Football Groundsman of the Year 2006 award and, in 2005, when he was IOG Scottish Football Groundsman of the Year.

Based on criteria that includes such factors as available resources, presentation and housekeeping standards, technical knowledge and scope of operations, the coveted award - organised by the Scotland & Ireland Region of the IOG and sponsored by turf care, grass and sports maintenance specialists Rigby Taylor, is open to all groundsman within the Scottish Premier and Football League Divisions 1, 2 and 3, and has the full support of the Scottish Football Association.

John Hayes collected his trophy from IOG chief executive, Geoff Webb, at last week's IOG Scotsturf show in Edinburgh.

Commenting, John Hayes had said: "My thanks to the IOG for this award, but it is important to recognise that what is achieved at Celtic Park is due to team effort and I would like to personally thank Andy McCann, Michael Cook, James Brady and Graham Cartwright for their efforts over the years."

Other winners at the IOG Scottish Football Groundsman of the Year 2006 awards were:

Scottish Premier League – joint runners up: Albert Dawson, Dundee Utd and Colin Fraser of Livingstone FC;

Division 1 – winner: Chris Smith, St Johnston FC; runner up: David Fraser, Ross County FC;

Division 2 – winner: Paul Barnett, Gretna FC; runner up: David Harkness, Ayr Utd;

Division 3 – winner: Mickey Ellis, Stenhousemuir FC; runner up: David Monteour, East Fife FC.

A special award for 'national stadium, multi-use' was made to Stephen Bache of Hampden Park.

IOG chief executive Geoff Webb, who presented the trophies, commented: "The high standard of groundsmanship at football stadia throughout Scotland has again been highlighted by our Groundsman of the Year awards. John Hayes is to be applauded on his second successive win in this keenly-contested competition.

"The IOG strives to ensure that the skill of groundsmen is increasingly recognised by a wider audience, and the achievements of professionals like John Hayes are perfect adverts for the industry."