A month to remember

I returned home from the Open Championship at Carnoustie in mid July to take stock of one of the most eventful Opens for a long time. It started with far too much unfair criticism of the way the course was set up. Rough too long, fairways too narrow bore the brunt of adverse topics from players and media alike.

Yes it was tough, but they are supposed to be the best golfers in the world, not 18 handicappers. Maybe they have got to used to playing on courses with walk-to-wall mowing. The unfairness of it all in my view was that it took away some of the praise which was rightly due to John Philp and his staff. The course condition was superb, greens were fast and true, the fairways were so good that I have seen far too many and they have got to used to playing on courses with walk-to-wall mowing. As I was never home to cut the grass she had to do something. As I was never home to cut the grass she had to do something. I personally wish to like to thank John and his team for the wonderful advert they are for the greenkeeping profession.

The BIGGA Support Team was another success story. They were all on time, did an excellent job, and conducted themselves professionally at all times. Thank you all, you were a credit to the association and yourselves and I was proud to be with you. I would also like to thank the staff for the organisation. I don't know who it was down to, but the marquee was in an excellent position and we had lots of visitors. Everything went smoothly and we all had a great week.

I was back home trying to put pen to paper when I received a call from Jim Paron, Chairman of our Education Committee, asking me if I could fill in for him on some of the Toro Student of the Year interviews with Ken Richardson.

It's always a pleasure to talk and listen to young students just starting their careers in greenkeeping, and finding out how much and what they are learning at different colleges. The standards do seem to vary from college to college and I feel there is a lot of work to be done to improve this both by ourselves and the GTC.

Hearing that, I think the general standard is improving.

I have just completed my visits for the Toro Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping as part of the National Award. All the finalists will be visited again by Walter Woods, then on to the interviews at BIGGA HOUSE later in the year. This Toro Award is an excellent competition and we have much to thank Toro for, because I believe it is helping to raise awareness and awareness of our profession.

I have seen a big rise in quality of entries this year and it's a credit to everyone who took part.

Like all competitions there can only be one winner which does seem a shame when so much effort has been put in by all the nominees. I would personally like to thank all the golf clubs and greenkeepers for making me so welcome on my visits and I wish them all the very best of luck. Win or not, you all deserve a pat on the back.

We hear all sorts of stories about golfers in relation to greenkeeping, but I was faxed a copy of a newspaper article a few days ago about a lady golfer who is suing a greenkeeper for making me smile. She first attempted to sue the golf club but the court found in her favour. She then filed a case against the golf club.