One for the Road!

Almost caught up with things and I will be just about be back to normality in time to hand over the reins to my Vice Chairman, Andy Campbell, who I am confident that with his enthusiasm and drive will take the Association forward.

I have had a most enjoyable year but it has not all been plain sailing as we have had to face several unforeseen challenges, sadly one of those being the sudden illness of our Executive Director, Neil Thomas, who has had to face the toughest challenge of all and at this time is still unable to return to his duties. We have been inundated with well wishes for Neil and on behalf of all members and friends we wish him and his family better fortune for the coming year. Our Deputy Executive Director, John Pemberton has been holding the fort in Neil's absence, and I must say has risen to the challenge with the sterling help of all the staff at Headquarters, and for that we are most thankful.

Having recently returned from attending the John Deere World Team Championship being played over The Grey Hawk Golf Courses in Scottsdale, Arizona, it makes one appreciate how fortunate those that qualified to play in the finals and officials such as myself were to get away from our winter weather for a week or so. Having said that the first day's practice round was virtually washed out as most of the region had one inch and three quarters of rain in one day (one half of their annual rain fall)! The only difference from home was that the rain came straight down and was warm rather than sideways and cold! My column is too short for the many stories and wonderful happenings that occurred throughout the trip. Whickham Golf Club, our British qualifiers, put up a good show both on and off the golf course, indeed they were a credit to themselves and the region.

Apart from being generously entertained by John Deere (a report will follow in the magazine next month) on to attend the South West and South Wales Region at Cannington College for their two day conference that included some first class speakers. Talking of speakers I recently attended the Scottish Patrons’ lunch in Stirling which is always a popular event and a thank you to the trade for their support throughout the year. After lunch former Rangers player, Willie Henderson, entertained us with many wonderful stories of his long and colourful career.

During this past year I have been exceptionally busy and by the time you read this column I will have just about finished my term of office and look forward to more leisure time. I would like to be like my pal Walter Woods and practice my golf. When we were younger we used to play for money but now that we are old the stakes are much more serious, we now play for a Viagra tablet!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members for their support and kind comments that I have received throughout my term of office. I will have many happy memories to reflect on in my twilight years, I received throughout my term of office. I will have many happy memories to reflect on in my twilight years, and by the time you read this column I will have just

Sincerely,

George Brown
Chairman