Chairman's Column

Communication is the key

Can collaboration with The R&A and communication with the RA's (Regional Administrators) help us all to move forward?

Having just returned from Saltex, it only served to remind me of how quickly time flies and that the conference season will be with us again soon. Harrogate Week promises to be bigger than ever, running from Sunday through to Friday, hence the title Harrogate Week (well nearly). There will be an extended programme of workshops aimed at all levels of membership, so there should be something for everyone.

The workshops, with more concentrated learning on specific subjects relevant to the individual, have proved more popular each year. Personally, I would like to see these workshops move out into the Regions so perhaps you could consider this when planning your Section and Region education. Those from your locality who cannot attend Harrogate Week would, I am sure, be most grateful. It might make a change from the annual Regional Seminar, or maybe you could do both?

In addition to the workshops there will also be a conference, in conjunction with The R&A, on 'sustainable' golf. We hope it will be the first of many successful collaborations between the two bodies. Please turn up or, after the cancellation in March, I will begin to take it personally. I think this conference will stimulate great debate. Maybe we will get a definitive answer as to whether fungicides will really cancel in March, I will begin to take it personally. I think this conference will stimulate great debate. Maybe we will get a definitive answer as to whether fungicides will really affect our golf club members and our jobs? Maybe we will find the answer to the burning question of how do we get the answer to the burning question of how do we get the money from, or to the telephone but I realise it is not just conversation and service you want. You, quite rightly, desire a genuine feeling of a united Association with all parts of the team pulling together towards the common goal of improved status and professionalism within our industry.

The best sign of that, I always feel, is how the team support those who need support the most. To this end, we are negotiating for a trial mediation service for those who are having difficulty with their employers, to see if we can smooth out problems before we get to the legal helpline stage. You may have read last month, John Pemberton is also stepping up meetings with Section Secretaries in an effort to further develop unity and bring us all closer together.

In the context of bringing us closer together I think it should be remembered that the Regional Administrators are the representatives of HQ at Regional and local level. They are just as much part of the HQ team as anyone else and they were put in place to form that important link between the rest of the HQ staff and the members. The staff at Aldwark are, in the main, busy dealing with national business and cannot get out into the Regions as often as they or you would like.

This is precisely why Jane, Clive, Peter and Peter are employed to take on the role of servicing members at local level on behalf of the team, indeed, they are HQ at local level. While I am sure that the BIGGA HOUSE staff would like to get out of more often meeting members, it should be recognised that the Regional Administrators are the staff you will more regularly encounter.

They play the roving midfield role and provide regular feedback to the Chief Executive and the Board at team meetings. They are HQ staff and they are right there on your doorstep, so please use them and direct any concerns or ideas you have about the Association to them.

By the way, as I am writing this, England have just won the Ashes, Northern Ireland just beat England and Scotland just won against Norway in the World Cup and Wales, well Wales can still brag about the rugby so there should be some happy greenkeepers about. Just goes to show what can be achieved when we all play as a team.

TEAM - Together Everyone Achieves More

K. Daly
Chairman