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Two superb golf courses played in testing conditions by a strong field containing some of the finest golfers BIGGA has to offer. Photography: Alan Birch

What could be better?

Yes, the 2001 BIGGA National Championship was a wonderful occasion and in Royal Birkdale and Southport & Ainsdale we had two golf courses which ensured that the entire field were tested but most of all felt privileged just to be there.

Played on the Monday and Tuesday after the Ryder Cup was scheduled to be played it shouldn't be forgotten that between them Birkdale and S&A had hosted four Ryder Cups and in Birkdale's case a host of memorable Open Championships.

So it was with a sense of real history and awe that the maximum field - reduced slightly by last minute call-offs - teed off at Birkdale on the Monday.

The conditioning of both golf courses was a tribute to Walter Woods who played some sparkling golf on both days to finish high up the prize list and, more importantly, see him ahead of his old rival George Brown of Turnberry.

The conditioning of both golf courses was a real tribute to Chris Whittle and Mike Mercer and their teams at Royal Birkdale and Southport and Ainsdale respectively.

A wind gusting at up to 50mph meant it was never going to be easy so tribute must be paid to Ian Semple, National Board Member and Course Manager at Old Folds Manor who knocked it round in 74.

That score can be put into perspective by some of the high scores of his fellow competitors. One player actually hosed a 20 footer to keep a 20 off his card at the 1st green while there was a 17, a 13 and some of the double figure scores.

It was Chris, an assistant at Hillside and former junior member of Royal Birkdale who won the event held at Royal Birkdale causing him to return. As a follow up he also birdied the 1st at S&A and completed his two days of work with another birdie on the 18th, on this occasion followed by a slightly more restrained punch of the air.

Even now Past Chairman Elliott Small is hot on the trail of the player who played his ball - a Titleist 3 - on the 16th at Birkdale causing him to return. As the purple mist descended he finished his round birdie-eagle which perhaps only compounded his fury.

As yet it is not known whether any BIGGA members were responsible for Liverpool and England's Steven Gerrard getting into trouble prior to the England-Greece game.

Gerrard was spotted out drinking in a Southport bar at 2am on Tuesday morning, around about the time many greenkeepers were also frequenting bars in the area.

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REGIONAL TEAM CUP
Winners - South East Region 623
Mick Haynes, Raymond Day,
David Murdoch, John Donnelly,
Nigel Colley, Antony Kirwan,
Jason Moody, Ian Semple
Runners Up
Scottish Region
George Brown, Iain MacLeod,
Steve Sullivan, John Mair, Walter
Woods, Duncan Gray, Alistair
Philip, Craig Pennycuick
3rd Midland Region
4th Northern Region
5th SWest & SWales Region

Above: Our National Championship winners take a bow!

Above: The conditioning of both golf courses was a real tribute to Chris Whittle and Mike Mercer and their respective teams at Royal Birkdale and Southport and Ainsdale

Walter Woods (above) and George Brown (right) battle it out

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November 2001 Greenkeeper International
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On course for some WINTER SUN

Hopes are high for a mild winter - but why chance it?

Fed up with the rain and the cold each year millions of Brits escape to some of the world's sunnier spots at this time. And despite the understandable concern over recent terrorist activity and its long-term repercussions, many will be taking a trip this year too.

Although there's plenty of competition from around the world, two of the classic winter sun holiday destinations are likely to be the real hotspots for late 2001 and early 2002.

Spain represents particularly good value at the moment. The strength of the UK pound means that travellers will be able to pick up great deals on accommodation and get more for their money while they are there - and of course, that applies to the ever-popular Canaries as well as mainland Spain.

That perennial favourite, Portugal, will also be the choice of many British holidaymakers. Always affordable, Portugal's many resorts boast excellent facilities in spectacular surroundings. Both countries offer plenty for golf enthusiasts too.

With more than 35 courses dotted along the coastline from Malaga to Gibraltar, Spain's Costa del Sol is one of Europe's finest golfing locations. And with the region's thriving nightlife and top-class restaurants, there's plenty more to enjoy. Catalonia is another Spanish golfing gem. Home to many high-quality tournaments (such as the pre-qualifying events for the Volvo PGA Tour), Catalonia offers great golf for both experienced and high handicap players in a picturesque setting, with views of the Mediterranean and the snow-capped Pyrenees.

For guaranteed sunshine it's hard to beat the Canaries - and at the top of the list is Tenerife. With courses to suit all abilities, excellent beaches and resort facilities, the island is sure to be a big attraction again this year.

Portugal's leading golfing choice is the popular Algarve, a region of highly developed tourist resorts but also get-away-from-it-all beaches. To the west of Faro airport, the sophisticated resorts of Vilamoura, Quinta do Lago and Vale del Lobo are a magnet for golfers - with the region's Moorish history, fishing villages and distinctive rock formations among the other attractions of the Algarve.

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THE TORO AWARD
FOR EXCELLENCE IN GREENKEEPING
It is perhaps the most select band of greenkeepers to be found anywhere - only four members strong but with the collective knowledge and talents of an army. That number will be added to by one when the panel of judges meets to decide upon the 2001 winner of the Toro Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping.

It will not be an easy task because already the four finalists have been through an arduous selection process just to reach this stage and when one of Alan Purdie, Crail Golfing Society; David Murdoch MG, Liphook GC; Huw Morgan, Wildernesse GC, or Alan Strachan, Royal County Down GC, is announced as the 2001 winner he will become a very worthy member of what will then become the Famous Five.

**Toro Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping Roll of Honour**

- 2001 - Who will be named as our winner?
- 2000 - Iain Ritchie - Portmarnock GC
- 2000 - Ian Tulloch - Portmarnock GC
- 1999 - Brian Turner - Sunningdale GC
- 1999 - John Coleman - Abbeystead GC
- 1997 - Ian McMillan - Hankley Common GC

**The Interview Panel**

The final interview panel will consist of Walter Woods; former Courses Superintendent at St Andrews Links; Bob Buckingham, Toro's European Sales Manager; Graham Dale, Managing Director, Lely (UK) Ltd; Bruce Jamieson, Toro Consultant and former Director of Agronomy of the PGA European Tour and Neil Thomas, Executive Director of BIGGA.

Each finalist will already have been judged at country level and had their course visited by Walter and Bruce.

*David and Huw both won through in the combined England and Wales final.

**The Prize**

The winner will receive a Toro Workman 2100 Utility Vehicle, plus a trip to the States to visit the GCSAA Conference and Show in Orlando, Florida, and the Toro Headquarters in Minneapolis and California next February. The winner's team will also receive £250. The three runners-up will each win a Greensmaster 1000 Pedestrian Mower.

---

**Alan Strachan**
**Royal County Down GC**

Alan is 34 years old and has been Course Manager at The Royal County Down Golf Club for the past six years. Born in Scotland, Alan has been in the industry for 16 years. He has held the Deputy Head Greenkeeper position on three of the best links courses on the east coast of Scotland, these being Montrose, Royal Dornoch and Carnoustie. A keen member of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of Ireland he is currently on the National Executive. He has also been a member of BIGGA for the past 12 years.

RCDGC is situated in an ASSI, an ANOB and a SAC, and the management programme involves minimum spraying of chemicals. Alan is a keen golfer, playing to a handicap of 8 and is married to Pauline with two children, Gregor (9) and Eilidh (6).

---

**David Murdoch MG**
**Liphook Golf Club**

David is 32 and has been Head Greenkeeper at Liphook since 1995. He started work as a 16 year-old on a YTS scheme at Dunskier Park GC in Kirkcaldy, Fife in 1985 before moving to Dunfermline Golf Club as an apprentice a year later before moving on to become Deputy Head Greenkeeper at Dunfermline in '91. He moved to Old Thorns Golf and Country Club in Hampshire later that same year. In '93 he moved to Liphook in Hampshire as Deputy Head Greenkeeper and became Head Greenkeeper in '95. He became a Master Greenkeeper in May 1999.

---

**Huw Morgan**
**Wildernesse Club**

Huw is 35 and has been Course Manager at the heath and woodland Wildernesse Club in Sevenoaks, Kent, since '93. Prior to that he had been at Fairwood Park GC, parkland course in South Wales, between 1985 and '90 where he was Course Manager before moving to become Course Manager at Southerndown Golf Club, a links course. He remained at Southerndown for three years before moving to his present club. He is currently waiting to sit the Master Greenkeeper exam and is studying an HNC Distance Learning Course with Elmwood College. His hobbies are golf, football and rugby. He is married to Salli-Anne and they have three sons.

---

**Alan Purdie**
**Crail Golfing Society**

Alan is 44 and has been Head Greenkeeper at Crail Golfing Society since 1991. Prior to that he was Head Greenkeeper at the Eden (links) Course at St Andrews for 3 years after moving there following an eleven-year stint at both Assistant Head and latterly Head Greenkeeper at Broombrook Golf Club, a moorland course. His greenkeeping experience has covered courses of most persuasions including Links, Parkland, Moorland and the Hills course at Lothianburn GC, where he started his greenkeeping career.

Alan's hobbies include playing off 2 at St Andrews, where he is a member, collecting golf memorabilia books and supporting his beloved 'Heart of Midlothian' football team.

Married to Margaret for 24 years, their daughter, Cara (20) is currently studying an Art degree, while their son, Craig (18) is a greenkeeper at the Old Course, St Andrews.

---

**November 2001 Greenkeeper International 37**
The Scottish Region is once again offering its members a subsidised package deal for BTME 2002. The package includes coach to Harrogate, entry to all seminars and exhibitions, three night's bed and breakfast in en-suite rooms on January 22, 23 and 24 in the Moat House Hotel, Harrogate.

The cost of the package is £189 with partners welcome at a cost of £129 for Harrogate.

Further information from Peter Boyd, 10 Meadowburn Avenue, Newton Mearns, Glasgow G76 6TA. Tel/Fax 0141 616 3440.

Central

We extend a warm welcome this month to Lorraine Paterson, from Callender, (Sharon at Elie won't feel so lonely now); Eric Wilson, Murrayshall, and Kevin McCallum, from St Michael's. I've already met Eric as he attended our recent Autumn meeting, entry to all didn't have to go right enough, as the tournament was held at Murrayshall!

Hopefully we will all get to meet Lorraine and Kevin at some future events. As said above, Murrayshall House Hotel and Golf Courses was the venue for our 2001 Autumn Tournament on September 27 and what a superb new course the Lynedoch is, with views over nearly half of Scotland - that's a bit of an exaggeration but on a clear day you can see for miles in every direction.

For a new course it was in great condition and the greens were really excellent with some very subtle borrows, well that's my excuse for taking so many putts! Our allotted tee times were oversubscribed well before the closing date (so we must be doing something right) and everyone who attended had a really enjoyable day - even the weather was kind to us for a change.

Before any of you say there was a bit of confusion regarding the closing date on all of the forms. I always make at least one "deliberate" mistake just to make sure you are all paying attention!

Prize winners on the day were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Prize winners</th>
</tr>
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<td>Best Scratch</td>
<td>G. Campbell, Murrayshall, 68+3-71; D. Gillo, Tulliallan, 75-9-66</td>
</tr>
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<td>K. Stirling, Kingsbarns, 74+68-142</td>
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<td>1. D. Scott, Scoonie, 83-15-68; 2. D. Smith, Glenalmond, 87-14-73</td>
</tr>
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<td>1. S. Cruickshank, Deer Park, 99-23-76; 2. M. White, Ellwood, 100-19-61; Patrons' Prize J. Darling, Richard Ainley's, 79-5-74</td>
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<td>Longest Drive</td>
<td>D. Simpson, Crieff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nearest the Pin</td>
<td>A. Philp, St Fillans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We had a slight hiccup with the prize giving which has been rectified. I will withhold the name of those concerned to protect the innocent. Well, everyone said "It wasn't my fault" so I presume that they were innocent!

Our sincere thanks go to everyone at Murrayshall for looking after us so well on the day with special thanks to General Manager, Toby Bryan, Ian Mitchell, all the clubhouse staff, especially Donald for his very warm welcome, the Pro, who cut the price of a buggy to £10, a real deal on wheels, and I must give a special thank you to Course Manager, Ian McMillan, and all his staff for the excellent condition of the course (that should really be courses) and for the very generous gesture of donating the green staff gratuities back into Section funds.

Well done to the greenstaff at Murrayshall!! Also a big thank you to all the Scottish Patrons, without whose support our tournaments wouldn't be the same. I nearly forgot to mention the lads who sold the raffle tickets. Once again they did a superb job in raising funds to help fund our tournaments.

Thanks everyone.

The winner of the August draw in Club 2000 were Bobby Fleming, from Dulater, winning £30 and Sharon Lawrie, from Elie, winning £20. September winners were Alex Cruickshank, from Daval, with £30 and Andrew Crawford, from Kinross, who wins £20. A special mention and thank you to Alex Cruickshank, from Daval, for donating his winnings back into Section funds.

Tickets for next year's lottery are going quite well at the moment. Only a few members have returned them, some have even put them in an envelope anonymously, but don't worry lads we know who you are!

Remember all monies and unsold tickets must be returned to me by the end of December. As this is the only fund raising venture which is run by the Section I hope that not too many tickets are returned.

I will give you an up date in December's news on the Grand Football Tournament and the Section AGM which were held last month (too late for this issue) and I may also have snips on an issue which has been quite a talking point at recent committee meetings with snap being the operative word. Watch this space.

John Crawford

North

The Autumn outing to Keith GC was a great success, with reasonable weather fortunately, as rain fell either side of the day. The downside was our lowest turnout for a while with only 53 members, trade and guests in attendance. This was possibly due to the date being earlier in the month than usual, which had come about because the club had a double book and moved us to the earlier date. We must thank Keith GC for their hospitality and congratulate Neil Kidd and his staff for presenting the course in wonderful condition. The winners on the day were as follows:

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</tbody>
</table>
Scratch
1. Gary Tough, Letham Grange, 73
2. and Committee Trophy Winner Steve Sullivan, Craigielaw, 75

Class 1
1. Neil Kidd, Keith, 76-5-71
2. George Mitchell, Nevern, 75-2-73 bh
3. Michael Mann, Cambridge, 78-5-73

Class 2
1. Alan Grant, retired, 82-11-71
2. Patrick Wood, Nevern, 81-5-72
3. Ken Kinnaird, Grantown-on-Spey, 84-11-73

Class 3
1. George Asher, Kenmoy, 86-23-65
2. David Duggan, Fortrose, 85-27-72
3. Stuart Hogg, Fortrose, 83-21-72

Apprentice
1. E. Cameron, Elgin, 78-6-72
2. Colin Irving, Inverness, 87-11-73

Veteran
1. Roy Donald, Oldmeldrum
2. Hugh Macintosh, Peterhead
3. Pat Allan, Stewarts 80-5-75

Guest
1. F. Devine, Keith 78-10-68
2. Hugh Maclatchie, Peterhead
3. David Duggan, Fortrose, 93-26-67

Scratch
1. Neil Kidd, Keith, 76-5-71
2. S. Nicol, 72-10-71
3. T. Murray, 76-3-72

1st class (Russell's Quaich)
1. S. Gray, 73-3-70
2. S. Nix, 76-2-71
3. A. Russell, 86-11-76

2nd class SGM Cup
1. C. Irvine, 83-11-72
2. C. Hearn, 85-12-74
3. A. Russell, 90-11-79

3rd class STS/ Rugby Taylor Cup
1. I. Cameron, 82-17-75
2. R. Hogarth, 98-17-79
3. S. Dixon, 97-17-80

Nearest the Pin
Steve Simpson

Loch Ness<br>Class 3<br>Ken Mail, 72 bih<br>1. E. Cameron, Elgin, 78-6-72<br>2. Colin Irving, Inverness, 87-11-73<br>3. Dave Marnoch<br>Longest Drive<br>Class 1 Neil Kidd<br>Class 2. Colin Irving<br>Class 3 Dave Marnoch

Ken Kinnaird also picked up the Spring and Autumn aggregate cups for best nett and best Hand Greenkeeper, while Roy Donald won the Veteran aggregate.

200 Club winners were May no.188 £30 A Williamson Perth, June no.56 £30 M Gordon Baeram, July no.123 £30 J Geddies and H Macatichie and August no.69 £100 A Grant, Fraserburgh. The card draw for the BIG- GA blazer was Robert Hardie, Aberdeen. Once again thanks to everyone at Keith for helping the day to run so well and thanks to the Section Committee for their organisation.

The National Championships at Royal Birkdale and Southport & Ainsdale were a great success with good weather apart from the stiff breeze each day. Along with myself representing the Section were Steve Sullivan and Gordon Moir and we helped the Scottish Region into runners-up spot for the team trophy.

There was a full entry apart from a couple of late call offs and the whole event was well organised and ran smoothly. It is a great opportunity to meet fellow greenkeepers from around the UK and Europe, so next year leave the first week in October free and put your name down to play in it at Hillside and Hesketh GCs in Southport.

This month we have our mini Conference which will have passed by the time you read this and of course Scostiff at Inglisston, so I hope to see you all at one or the other event. The December magazine will have a report on the Section AGM.

Iain Macleod

East
Welcome to this month's column, we've a lot to get through this month so let's get going. The Section held their autumn tournament at Monktonhall Golf Club in September and a great day was had by the big turn out who were in attendance and it was also good to see a few new faces on the day. We hope you all had a good day and we hope to see you at more Section events in the future and not just golf days. Thanks to Captain and Council for the excellent food and refreshments, Tom Shepherd, Head Greenkeeper and his staff for the condition of the course and the way it was set up on the day. A job well done lads. Also members of the trade for being in attendance and supplying us with raffle prizes and to Sam Morrison, David Products for keeping the 1st tee mowing. Thanks to everyone on the day.

The results are as follows:-

Scratch Stewart's Quaich
K. Mail, 72 bih
1st class (Russell's Quaich)
1. S. Gray, 73-3-70
2. S. Nix, 76-2-71
3. T. Murray, 76-3-72

2nd class SGM Cup
1. C. Irvine, 83-11-72
2. C. Hearn, 85-12-74
3. A. Russell, 90-11-79

3rd class STS/Rugby Taylor Cup
1. I. Cameron, 82-17-75
2. R. Hogarth, 98-17-79
3. S. Dixon, 97-17-80


Well done to all trophy winners. All Section members past and present helping the Scottish Region into second place in the team event. Other Section members taking part were yours truly - Chris Yeaman, West Linton GC, and Gary White, Baberton GC. We weren't among the prizes this time but hopefully next year will be our lucky year. Well done and let's see more from the Section next year at Hillside GC and Hesketh GC again in Southport.

Well that's it for this month, if you have anything of interest let me know on any work, 01791 580 449 (mobile) or e-mail chrisc26@msn.com. Coming your way next month - results of annual Stewart's match, East Section v North East of England at Goswick GC, putts award winners 2001. Chris Yeaman

Getting right up to the bunker or water's edge without them crumbling, or mowing in safety under an overhanging tree is perfectly possible when you're operating Toro's unique Sidewinder™ version of the new Reelmaster® 3100 triple mower. Its innovative system of shifting its cutting units to left or right increases overhang by up to 56cm (22in). Leading edge technology not only results in a superb cut and higher productivity, but puts safety at the forefront with out-front driver operation for good vision and manoeuvrability, plus unrivalled stability and slope-climbing. For a close, up-to-the-rim cut without fear of driver or machine topping over the edge, choose Toro.

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Wooden spoon - Last Autumn’s Champion Jim Paton, West Kilbriide. Where did it all go wrong, Jim? After one of our driest Septembers for years, our luck didn’t hold and the bad weather was to return with a vengeance on the above day with strong to gale force winds and persistently heavy rain. The event was cut to nine holes mid-stream in the atrocious conditions and most players banded valiantly to complete their round. At the prize giving the Complex owner Tom Gillespie was thanked for allowing us courtesy of the facilities along the golf course and although the weather tarnished the day it didn’t beat the course as it remained playable. Mr and Mrs Sproston were also thanked for providing the catering and refreshments throughout the day and finally our Secretary, Derek Wilson, was thanked for all the organising of the event. Ironically when I returned home 90 miles north, I was to discover that it had remained dry all day, Sod’s law!

By the time this reaches you it will be Scotstuart again, maybe I’ll see you there. Any news call me on 01355 685278. See you next month.

Ian Barr

Welcome to this month’s news letter. First a report on the Section Autumn outing held at Milngavie GC on September 20. The weather turned out beautiful to match the condition of the course so congratulations must first go to Bob Hindmarch, Wallace Wilson and all the other members of the greens staff. The committee would like to wish Bob all the best when he retires next year but I am sure he will miss working in such a beautiful place just a little.

Thanks must also be extended to the committee and members of Milngavie Golf Club for the courtesy of the course.

Scratch Stuart Taylor, Killermont GC.

1. A. Clark, Milton Park GC, 76-7-69.
2. G. Kerr, Glednock GC, 79-7-90.

Category 2.

2. J. Wilson, Langland GC, 80-11-69.
3. T. Hindmarsh, Cathcart GC, 85-14-71 (B/IH).

Category 3.

1. W. Wilson, Milngavie GC, 93-18-75.
4. Traide D. Oxley, 72-4-68.

Visitor E. Wood, Killermont GC, 71-1-70.

Winner of 100 club draw J. Scott Snr.

Well done to all the winners - and a good turnout on the day. On November 30 our Annual Dinner will be held in Victoria’s night club. Tickets are available from committee members, paid in advance of the actual dinner date. This has always proved an enjoyable and entertaining evening in the past with a choice of bars to suit all tastes and ages.

Cuppings are to be extended to Joe Bell, Millport Golf Club, and his wife who have been blessed with their second child Louise. Congratulations also to John Hart, (who replaced Joe as Deputy Head at Kilcromon GC), on the arrival of his baby son Callum. We are sure both of you and your wives are very happy with the new arrivals and are looking forward to the sleepless nights. Have they no television west of Houston?

Well that’s it for this month hope to see as many of you as possible at the annual dinner, as always if there is anything you would like added to the column please give me a call on 01355 266862.

Brian Bolland

Our autumn meeting was held at Langollen GC. There was a much reduced entry this year which was a shame because the course was in excellent condition. Thanks go to Jeremy Hughes and his team, the Captain and committee members for having us, the stewards and definitely the caterers, after the amount of shots I took and the amount of walking I did, I was starving!

The results were;

1. Gem Shield and prize George Whitby.

Our thanks go to the sponsors Paul Walker, ALS, Gem, Acorn, Sportsworld, John Osmun. Our next event is in the college on 14th Nov 13:30-16:00 by Hardi sprayers.

The Christmas tournament and AGM is at Conway GC on Tuesday, Dec 4. One final mention, the retirement of a man who made greenkeeping that interesting to me that I’m still doing it nearly 30 years later, not only me but many others including Andy Campbell and his own son, Peter.

I will always be indebted to Len Sproston for helping to make something out of me and giving me the encouragement and confidence to be a Head Greenkeeper.

Thanks Len here’s to a very long and happy retirement.

Dave Goodridge

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**The BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition has been held in Harrogate, each year, since 1989 and is the biggest indoor show of its kind in Europe. More than 7,000 visitors are expected at the show in 2002 and this figure is set to increase in 2002, due to extended exhibitions area in Hall II accommodating an even greater number of exhibitors, and the addition of the Golf Club Show running alongside BTME.**

**Northern Region Golf Club Show**

**The Golf Club Show, will take place for the first time in 2002. Visitors will continue as an exhibition with the whole range of products and services for the Golf Course on display. The Golf Club Show will aim to succeed as an exhibition wherein Secretaries, Club Managers, Golf Professionals and Club Members will find that all their additional equipment, furnishing and service needs for their golf clubs can be fulfilled.**

[**BTME 2002**](http://btme.co.uk)

**the most comprehensive Golf Club exhibition in Europe**

**Continue to Learn**

Continue to Learn with BIGGA at Harrogate in January 2002, when the National Education Conference and Workshop Programme runs alongside the extended BTME Exhibition. The formal conference is presented in a new format to allow delegates maximum flexibility to gain the most from their visit. The BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition Seminars provide an opportunity to mix the Exhibition with a range of Seminars allowing all delegates the opportunity to Continue to Learn. New for 2002 will be the Golf Club Show Education and Training programme which is aimed primarily at Golf Club Owners, Golf Club Secretaries and Chairmen of Green.

This programme incorporates the very successful Running Golf Courses in the 21st Century, run jointly with STRI, with a range of seminars. Both programmes are open to all delegates, although members of BIGGA receive preferential rates. The Key Note speaker is Roger Black and this Session is free to all delegates. Finally, the very successful Careers Clinic will run alongside BTME.