

the Golf Course

SEPTEMBER 1987

Front cover: David Crawley in action in Corfu

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BIGGA UPDATE

THE office base at the Sports Turf Research Institute in Bingley is now operational and all correspondence in connection with the Association's affairs should be forwarded to me there. The first few weeks have been an exceptionally busy period and priority has been given to processing the membership applications, whilst not neglecting to attend to other matters of urgent concern to the Association.

The membership response has been encouraging, with over 1500 membership applications already received. A number of members have requested membership cards and naturally these are of priority concern. However it is essential both for the Association and the magazine's purpose that an accurate membership list is compiled. It has become clear that the membership lists of the three merging Associations, on which circulation of the magazine is based, were substantially inaccurate in terms of members' correct address. It is therefore a considerable task to make the necessary amendments and of great importance that this is accomplished before membership cards are sent out - otherwise many members will not receive their cards. I would ask for patience therefore, but if any member is experiencing particular difficulties through the lack of a card, he should contact me personally and I will let him have a confirmatory letter to membership. Please ensure that all future changes of address are notified to me.

Members will be interested to know that the Board of Management has now established a sub-committee structure to process the Association's affairs. There will be three sub-committees:-

(1) **General Purposes.** This sub-committee will have a wide ambit and, as well as dealing with finance and staffing matters, will consider such matters as membership categories, subscription levels, uniform and Association logo.

(2) **Magazine.** This sub-committee is charged with planning the magazine's future development and the production of a high quality Journal.

(3) **Regions.** This sub-committee will be particularly important in the initial period of the Association. It will be responsible for establishing a strong, effective regional/branch structure and taking account of members' views. A map indicating the present situation is included in the magazine and the sub-committee will be reviewing the current position and making recommendations to the Board.

The magazine sub-committee has already met whilst the other two sub-committees are meeting in early September.

I am currently looking at benefits for members of the Association and you will find details elsewhere in the magazine of a Legal Advisory Service available to paid-up members as at 30th September and funded from the current year's subscriptions. This is the first step in the provision of a comprehensive benefits package which I will be working on in the next few months.

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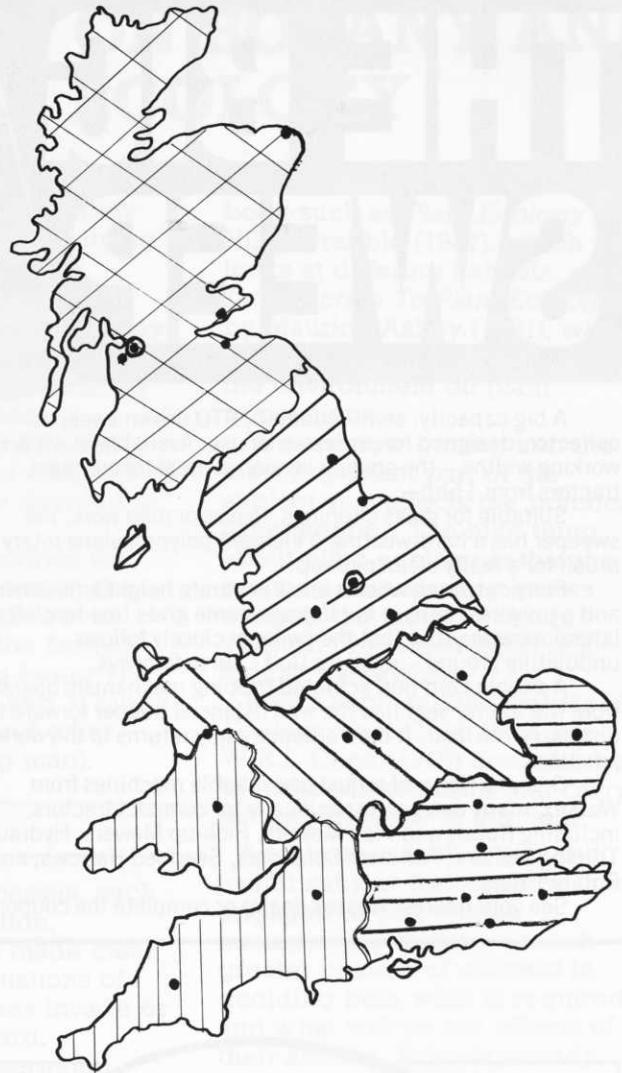
I understand that the position relating to the production of the newsletter is not clear throughout the regions. The magazine sub-committee has decided that the long term aim will be the production of a monthly newsletter. The achievement of this aim will depend on the submission of sufficient material and here the onus clearly lies with the branch secretaries. At present, it is only possible to produce a newsletter at two monthly intervals, and, given enough material, the next newsletter will appear in the October issue of the magazine. Again, there seems to be some misunderstanding on the use of a separate newsletter within the magazine. Essentially, the Board of Management feels that the newsletter can be used in a positive manner to communicate on matters and issues which directly affect the membership but which are not applicable to the wider readership which 'the Golf Course' will be seeking to reach and influence on greenkeeping matters in general. As an example, details of next year's national tournament would be more appropriate for the Newsletter rather than the magazine.

I am receiving many requests to attend branch meetings/seminars and it is my intention to get around and meet members as soon as possible. In the next few months it will not be possible to accept every invitation, though, over a period of time, I will get to all branches! For the next six months or so I think it important that I listen to members' views, aspirations and concerns, and these can form a future basis for discussion at Board level as well as representing a learning process for myself. My approach during this period will be informal as there will be many formal occasions in the future when I will need to project the Association's aims and policies, hopefully from a position of strength based on an understanding of the issues concerning greenkeepers.

Finally I will be attending the Institute of Groundsmanship's show at Windsor and will be there on 15th & 16th September at BIGGA's official stand and show vehicle. I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible.

Neil Thomas

Executive Director



B.I.G.G.A. Regions & Branches

Region	No. Branches
 Scotland	5
 Northern England	5
 Midland, England & North Wales	4
 South East England	8
 South West England & S. Wales	3

BIGGA - LEGAL BENEFITS SCHEME

DISCUSSIONS have been held with the Legal Protection Group with regard to a Legal Benefits Scheme for members, which is underwritten at Lloyds of London. There are a number of elements to the scheme which are currently under consideration by the Board of Management for possible inclusion in the 1988 membership package. Details will be made available at a later date when firm decisions have been taken on the viability of the various sections in the scheme.

However, I have negotiated a special arrangement whereby all paid-up full members as at 30th September 1987 will have access to a 24 hour legal advisory service on any subject whether this relates to their employment or any other personal matter. Members will be issued with a special card with applicable telephone numbers for use

either in Scotland or England/Wales and this service will then operate from 1st October - 31st December. By the end of December, members' response to this service will be known and for 1988 a decision can be taken on whether to continue with the advisory service and if so with or without additional options as outlined above.

The issue of cards, as with membership cards, will be dependent on the progress made in compiling an accurate membership list but any members not in possession of the special card at 1st October and wishing to make immediate use of the service should contact me personally in order that the matter can be actioned. I would be pleased to hear from members with their views after making use of this service.

Neil Thomas

Executive Director