



BIGGA UPDATE

AS I write these notes in mid-April following the Annual General Meeting, it seems an appropriate time to reflect on the initial stages of the Association's development and look forward to the major events which will soon be upon us. Over an eight month period we have implemented the new structure, and the lines and methods of communication are beginning to become familiar to members. Over the next year or two, we must now make this structure work for the maximum benefit of members and use it as the

solid base on which the future development and progress of the Association can be built.

The Annual General Meeting held at York racecourse on March 23rd, was a well attended meeting and details of my annual report appear elsewhere in this issue. Additionally there were excellent contributions from the Chairman, Walter Woods on the Associations development to date; from Kevin Munt on the work of the Regions sub committee; from Bill Lawson on the Magazine sub committee; and from Cecil George on education.

In presenting the Annual accounts and Financial Report I made two fundamental points with significant implications for members:-

i) There is a long, difficult road ahead in terms of achieving financial independence. It is imperative that there is a concerted effort by all Sections to attract new members and improve the funding position in this respect whilst alternative sources of funding must also be sort.

ii) The balance of subscription income retained for the general funding of the Association is clearly inadequate. This was inevitable for 1988 given the need for a strong membership package, but the position will have to be closely re-examined in formulating the 1989 membership package.

In essence the aim is to achieve financial independence with effect from January 1st 1990, but this will not prove attainable without a concerted effort from all members and an understanding from all involved or connected with the Association, of our need for a sound financial base, in order that we can progress much needed developments with regard to both the enhancement of greenkeeping as a profession and specifically the future education and training of greenkeepers.

The proposal to adopt a revised Constitution was the other main matter for debate. This was approved and the Association now has a much



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FRONT COVER: St. Pierre, Chepstow scene of this month's Epson Matchplay Championship, the first UK European Tour event of the year and venue for the National Final of the ISEKI Greenkeepers Tournament in August.



more concise Constitution which reflects the Association's development and progress to date and is much better suited to our needs in terms of organisation and management. Copies of the revised Constitution have been forwarded to Section Secretaries for use within the Sections. I would, however, draw members attention to section 5 (c) 1,2,3, and (d). This section sets out the conditions for both Life and Retired membership categories and should be studied by both Section Secretaries and individual members who feel they may meet the criteria set down.

It is to be hoped that future Annual General Meetings will be as well attended as the initial one and certainly it is important that each year all Sections ensure that they are represented at the meeting.

The Open Championship from 14th - 17th July will soon be with us and time is short for prospective bunker-rakers to register with David Golding. Accommodation will be provided as necessary. A recent visit to Lytham for discussions with Jimmy McDonald, the Course Manager, confirms that we have been allocated an excellent side - between the first tee and eighteenth green. This is an opportunity which must not be missed for the Association to make a real impact and our organisation is geared to this end.

Following the regional finals in May/June, the national final of the Iseki Tournament will be held at St. Pierre, Chepstow on 19th August. Those who know the course and facilities available will agree that this is an excellent choice for a national final. Section secretaries are requested to let me have the names and addresses of the regional finalists as soon as they become available, and these should be followed by the regional administrators letting me have details of the qualifiers for the national final immediately following

the regional events.

Included in this month's magazine, you will find a registration brochure for the National Tournament/ International Conference in Ayrshire at the end of September. Those intending to participate are requested to register with Chris Kennedy as soon as possible. We particularly need to have an indication of numbers for regions/ sections in order that arrangements can be put in hand to organise regional transport to get members up to Ayr. This transport will be included in the package costs, and I would repeat a point I made at the Annual General Meeting that taking into account everything that is being offered as part of the package, members are getting tremendous value for money.

Your regional administrator/ section secretary is now in possession of the brochure for the European Turf Management Exhibition in Harrogate, 18 - 20th January next year. These brochures have been widely distributed in the Trade and the initial response has been most encouraging. A Steering Committee representative of BIGGA, the Exhibition Organ-iser and the Trade has held its first meeting and detailed planning is underway. A series of educational seminars will be held in conjunction with the exhibition. Additional copies of the brochure and application forms are available direct from the Exhibition Organiser, Geo A Wright Exhibitions Limited - telephone (0533) 557449.

Looking further ahead into 1989, the Board of Manage-

ment has approved plans for a national conference to be held over three days in April and it is hoped to finalise a location shortly, whilst the national tournament will be held over three days in August - again details of location in the near future.

It goes without saying that these events will only be successful if supported by members and whilst not every member can get to every event, there does need to be a commitment from members generally to support wherever possible.

The dates for the 1989 GCSAA Conference and Show are 6th-13th February at the Anaheim Convention Centre, Anaheim, California and not as printed in the April issue. Will anyone interested in attending please contact me as soon as possible.

There has been a change of secretary in the North-West Section. The new incumbent is Mr. A. T. Cross, Harthill Lodge, Harthill Road, Liverpool L18 3HU - telephone 051-724-5412. Best wishes to Mark Lewis as he leaves for pastures new.

Finally your Board Members for the next year will be:-

SCOTLAND

Walter Woods - Jimmy Neilson

NORTHERN

George Malcolm - Bill Lawson

MIDLAND & NORTH WALES

Paddy McCarron - Roy Kates

SOUTH EAST

Jack McMillan - Dennis Ayling

SOUTH WEST & SOUTH WALES

Eric James - Ivor Scoones.

Please ensure that they are made aware of your views and ideas!

Neil Thomas
Executive Director

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