

Jack McMillan

Education and Training

Firstly, let me welcome you to the new style magazine. I hope you will find it brighter and more interesting to read, and that if you have anything to comment about please send these to "From the Fairway" which is the new reader's letters page. I know the Editor will be pleased to hear from you.

The magazine is of course just one of the many changes that have been made in our first full year of operation as BIGGA. The other one that I am most pleased to be able to report on is the education and training programme. This has been a priority for all of us on the committee and there has now been a lot of encouraging action taken. Education and training is the bedrock for the future. Without a forward thinking policy and the will to implement it the Association would be grossly neglecting its duty to all greenkeepers in the UK.

With this in mind we have endeavoured to raise more finance earmarked for Education and Training. This I am happy to tell you has been successful to a degree. With the help of a number of companies in this industry we are well on the way towards achieving our goal. In particular I must mention Jacobsen, who through Chris Smith, its UK manager has pledged a five-figure grant next year towards BIGGA's Education and Training programme. I hasten to add there are others who are keen to help us and we shall report on these in future months. Because of this finance however we are now in a position to be able to appoint a full-time education officer. This will allow us for the first time ever to be able to set-up and run our own education. In the past this has always been directed by the Greenkeeper Training Committee with the help of the Golf Unions, STRI, Colleges and the PGA Tour.

Without this support and without the backing of the Royal & Ancient we would not be in a position today to take it further on our own.

The latest moves, however, provide us with the opportunity to allow our members to reach a level of education never before available to greenkeepers. This in turn must be reflected in better working conditions for greenkeepers everywhere and consequently better quality golf courses for all to play on.

On that note may I wish every member of the BIGGA and all its supporters a Very Happy Christmas and a successful greenkeeping year in 1989.