

BIGGA/ICI Premier Greenkeeper of the Year is announced

And so it came about, on the first Monday of December, seven tried and trusted men, all good and true, arrived at Aldwark Manor knowing that only one last test remained before one of their number would be awarded the coveted title of 'BIGGA / ICI PREMIER GREENKEEPER OF THE YEAR', together with an all



Roger Mossop, Marketing Manager of ICI Professional Products, left, presents Anthony Davies with the ICI Premier Greenkeeper of the Year Award. BIGGA Chairman Ivor Scoones looks on.

expenses paid trip to attend the GCSAA Convention and Trade Show in Las Vegas in February 1991.

Since the early spring of 1990, following a sponsorship incentive from ICI Professional Products, BIGGA members had been competing for the title of the UK's Premier Greenkeeper.

The competition, which was in three stages, was well supported by greenkeepers from across the regions, with the basis of the award being submission of a paper of up to 3,000 words entitled 'A Year in the Life of My Golf Course'. A panel of experts drawn from BIGGA and ICI selected the seven greenkeepers who submitted the best papers; and arrangements were made to visit their courses to assess both course presentation and management. These assessment visits, undertaken by Jack McMillan and ICI's Patrick Goldsworthy were, to the greenkeepers surprise and some apprehension, undertaken without the greenkeeper in attendance.

Now to the final hurdle, a testing personal interview before a panel of experts comprising John Millen, Chairman, BIGGA Education Sub Committee, The Executive Director, Neil Thomas, Jack McMillan, Golf Course Consultant, and ICI's Professional Products Technical Manager, Patrick Goldsworthy. The interview stage was tense indeed, with each candidate being quizzed for over thirty minutes on a wide

range of technical, commercial and general industry topics. The quality of candidates was so high that making the final selection was a near impossible task, for the marks from stages one and two were so close as to make the interview crucial to the result.

Ultimately the winner was selected and the runners-up decided, the judges final decision being based on the total marks achieved in each of the three stages. The final criteria in making judgement was for a candidate who offered a wide range of skills not only in the technical knowledge of greenkeeping and course management but also the skills of man management, leadership and team building. These qualities, coupled with abilities in long term planning, presentation and communication, together with a caring feeling for the environment, indicated that Anthony Davies, Head Greenkeeper at Prestbury Golf Club in Cheshire best fitted the criteria and he was declared the worthy winner.

Second place was awarded to Martin Jones, Course Manager at Tadmerton Heath Golf Club, with Kerran Daly, Course Manager at Salisbury and South Wiltshire Golf Club a close placed third.

The remaining candidates, Bernard Findlay, Portstewart Golf Club; Richard Barker, Kirby Muxloe Golf Club; Hamish Brough, Broomieknowle Golf Club and Nigel Potter, Saddleworth Golf Club were all awarded equal runner-up places.

All the awards were made following a presentation dinner at which BIGGA Chairman, Ivor Scoones, before the presentation ceremony said the award 'will come to represent an important aspect of BIGGA's educational programme.'

'It is clear that the high standards demonstrated at today's interviews are an indication of the improving quality of greenkeeper education. BIGGA's priority is the education and training of greenkeepers and much effort has been directed in the last three years towards improving standards, with the help of our approved colleges.'

In responding to Ivor Scoones' comments, Roger Mossop said, 'We strongly support the industry through sponsorship in the belief that a company should put back into industry a significant proportion of that which it takes out, particularly in the area of education and training.'

Roger Mossop presented Jack McMillan with the ICI Annual Award made to individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to the industry.

Richard Fry

● Entry forms are now available for the 1991 ICI Premier Greenkeeper of the Year Award.