

George Malcolm talks to David White  
about his year as BIGGA Chairman

**“W**hat can I say, David, I’ve quite simply had a fantastic year!” Thus began my conversation at BTME with George Malcolm, BIGGA’s Chairman during the past year.

“Look around you, see for yourself the success of this one event alone, look at the way our members have rallied to support our aim – simply to be the best indoor trade show in the industry – multiply this one achievement by ten and you have my year in a nutshell, a totally satisfying and rewarding experience. I well remember talking to you 12 months ago, of my hopes and aspirations – and of my apprehensions – and can now sit back comfortably and relax, knowing that I received all the support for which I had hoped.

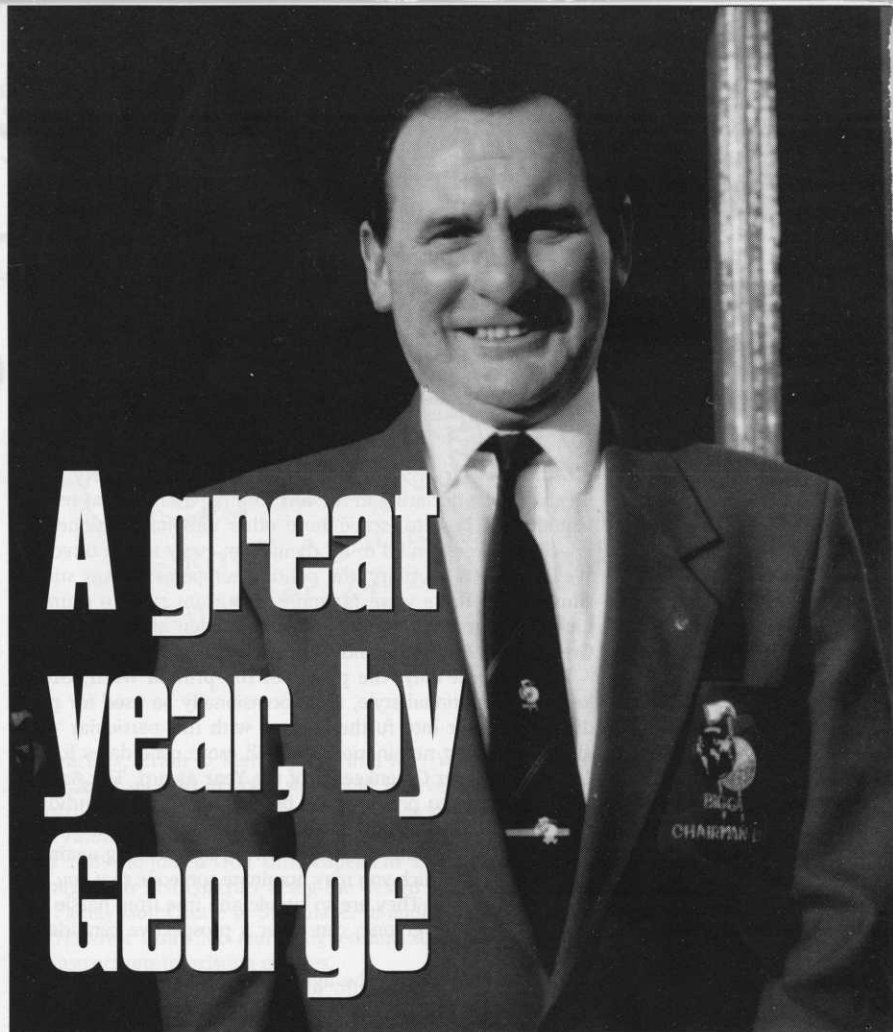
“If I were to single out any one body for praise it would have to be my own Club, Middlesbrough Golf Club, for their totally unselfish support and encouragement. Without that, nothing like as much could have been done during my term of office – so I’ll be back to Middlesbrough in 1992 to try and reward them equally, including my selflessly devoted greenkeeping team, for they’re great guys, every one!

“Do you remember my sales pitch last year, my principal goal? This was one calling for members to bring in new blood and swell the ranks. Well, it seems my words didn’t go entirely unnoticed, for our membership has certainly grown over the past 12 months – and I’ve achieved a 200% goal by bringing in two new members personally. This is an aim we *must* continue to promote, for there is no doubt that the strength of this or any other organisation is in numbers – the point being that our collective voice is increasingly heard and reacted to in no uncertain fashion.

“You ask me if I’ve achieved all I set out to do 12 months ago, and in truth I do believe I have. I’ve tried for a high profile, attending every possible function to which I was invited, and I only missed one event over the whole period – a big disappointment at not being at The Belfry to cheer the BIGGA team to victory in the Kubota Challenge. As it happened, the team managed a ‘whitewash’ and I shared in their pride of achievement, but I do wish I could have been there in person, just to rally the team!

“It’s not been a pressurised year at all, thanks to a bonny team behind me on the Board of Management, and I can do no more than repeat my plea of 12 months past, which is for every member to ‘wave the flag and bring new incumbents into our midst’. I still believe that the package BIGGA provides is the bargain of the century!

“Although we cannot achieve the membership numbers of our American cousins, simply because of their obvious larger geographic areas and population, we are actually pulling in more greenkeepers per Club, county or region than those of the USA and the percentage total of greenkeepers in BIGGA is far greater than that of the GCSAA, which is no mean feat! That stated, I’ll not be content until



we have a total 100% membership, with *every* greenkeeper in the land proud to be a BIGGA member.

“To younger greenkeepers, I can say that their increasingly rosy future undoubtedly lies in further education, and I urge them not to let a further day go by without enrolling in some form of higher education programme or other. The choice is limitless, with our own Master Greenkeeper Certificate and management courses high on the list of attractive possibilities. I’m also really excited about the probability of greater numbers entering the ICI Greenkeeper of the Year awards and I’m busy encouraging greenkeepers I know to put forward a fellow greenkeeper that they secretly admire and whose expertise is worthy of recognition.

“Now I’m looking forward to handing over to Roy Kates in April, though I shall certainly miss the heady feeling, the elation of being in the driving seat for a whole year and it will perhaps be a week or two before I come down to earth! In conclusion, I still maintain that openness has been the saviour of my year, with folks who had something important to say taking the right course in saying it to the right people at the right time. It is something that Roy will no doubt want to encourage and nurture. This has been the most wonderful year of my life and I wouldn’t have missed it for the world!”

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