

EDITORIAL COMMENT

Beyond dispute, the 'hottest ticket in town' for any golf event has to be those precious little holographed numbers produced each year for The Masters, tickets which cost just \$100 for the whole week. Indeed, so precious have they become that a whole mini-industry erupts each year, with travel companies happy to pay hugely inflated prices in order that they may sell 'Masters Packages' which include air flights, Cadillac limo's, swanky hotels and champagne receptions on the lawns of some of Augusta's stately homes. Despite valiant and increasingly successful attempts by the Masters committee to bring transgressors to book, men have been known to cheat and lie for tickets, on occasions even ending up in jail by attempting to produce forgeries. How refreshing then, to discover that American golf course superintendents may enter Augusta National on production of a Class One membership card, whilst those superintendents engaged on the course during the tournament are invited to return later in the year for a round over the hallowed grounds. It's enlightening, heartening, and indicative of the high regard that such an exclusive body has for those who care for America's courses.

By contrast, the miserly administrators of the 1993 Ryder Cup have seen fit to snub our profession by refusing point blank to grant any concessions to British greenkeepers, though in a letter sent in answer to an official BIGGA request, a director was quick to point out that 'of course, all your members will be most welcome to purchase tickets'.

Murmurs of discontent are rumbling throughout the States at the high cost of Ryder Cup tickets (£242 for Patrons) and the exorbitant prices bandied around by hotels in and around

Birmingham. Though tickets can be had, the preferred method of ticket sale appears to be the package (at prices starting around \$1,300 *without* airfare), and American pro's are encouraged to earn sales commission by referring golfers through PGA Travel, the monopoly agency in America for the biennial matches. One such includes riding with the big-wigs on Concorde, invites to the opening and closing ceremonies, tickets that include VIP hospitality at the 18th and five star accommodation and luxury travel, all for a tag of - wait for it - just \$13,000 per person! With that sort of obscene extravagance, it's no surprise that Britain's greenkeepers are left out in the cold. Frankly, I think the whole thing stinks!

■ It appears that I opened a fine bag of worms in April with the publication of 'Greens must not be spared', and though I did not share Mr Travers' views and indeed agonised over printing them, I decided that his comments deserved exposure if only to reveal the professional golfer's viewpoint, which so often appears to be in direct opposition to those of the greenkeeper. Often there are occasions when I don't agree with an expressed opinion, indeed I didn't entirely concur with the view that worn approaches and walk-off areas would benefit from an annual application of nitrogen fertiliser, when such problems are not due to nutritional deficiencies but to compaction and abrasion, best dealt with by corrective aeration or traffic control. No, the point I make is that I am the editor not the judge, and must leave adjudication to my readers. The fact that so many of you ask questions and refuse to take opinion as gospel truth is one that I find refreshing - keep those letters rolling, please.

DAVID WHITE

YOUR CHANCE TO WIN A SHARE OF OUR £600 BTME '94 COMPETITION



BTME PRIZES ARE JUST THE TICKET!

THE FIRST THREE QUESTIONS

1. In our April issue's BTME Update we carried a letter of congratulation from a sales director of one of the industry's leading companies - what is his name?
2. In the BTME column in May, we introduced our new sales and marketing assistant with special responsibility for the BTME - what is her name?
3. In this month's BTME Update we indicate the number of promotional information packs which have already been sent to interested companies - how many?

Here's your chance to WIN your way to BTME '94!

Starting this month and every month until September, we will be posing a number of easy to answer questions. All you need to do is keep your answers handy and safe until our September BTME Update, which will have the final questions and details of where to send your entry.

There will be three winners. First prize will go to the sender of the correct answers, whose entry is drawn first from the hat. He or she will win:

★ Return rail travel to the prestigious venue in Harrogate, three night's accommodation in a top class hotel and entry into ALL the educational seminar sessions. Prize value: £300.

Sender of the second correct entry drawn wins:

★ Return rail travel, two night's accommodation and entry to all seminar sessions. Prize value: £200.

The third entry drawn wins for the sender:

★ A single night's accommodation and a seat at all the seminars. Prize value: £100.

Answer the first set of questions, left, hold on to your answers - and YOU could be a BTME winner!

Note: Competition not open to BIGGA staff. No cash alternatives. Full entry details in September 1993 edition of Greenkeeper International.

WITH less than two weeks to go to the deadline, some 20 per cent of 1993 exhibitors had booked - and paid their deposit - for stand space at BTME '94.

As at June 1, the total for bookings was expected to be much higher - underlining companies' willingness to invest so early in such a major event

New company enquiries are coming in all the time, following the despatch of 757 BTME '94 promotional information packs. Potential newcomers are asking about large stand spaces - look out for more and more exhibition stands in 1994 which will be as big as has ever been seen at BTME.

One notable addition to next year's show will be the British Golf Course Constructors Association, who are to exhibit for the first time.

A big welcome awaits them... and maybe you, too? Call Louise Lunn on 0347 838581 if your company would like a BTME '94 information pack.