

It's milk and carrot time once again

I don't know about you but I certainly believe that Christmas loses its appeal the older you get.

I have vivid recollections of Christmas time when I was a kid and certain things which always gave a warm glow inside. There was the funny little candle lighting ceremony which they did on Blue Peter for four shows before the big day - I never could work out how the candles could burn from one show to the next without ever going down; opening advent calendars when you always knew it was going to be a poorly drawn drum; visiting Santa down at the local department store and wondering why he had a Scottish accent; the School performance... No that's a lie, I have never taken a part in a Nativity play.

After what seemed like months it would be Christmas Eve and the ritual of laying out your sack - we also had stockings but they never appeared to be quite big enough for what we were hoping for - and a glass of milk and a carrot. We could never sleep and invariably roused the entire family from their beds at around 2am only to find that Santa hadn't been yet. I could have sworn mum and dad looked as disappointed and surprised as my brother and I.

When the old Man in Red had done his stuff it always seemed that the room was overflowing with presents. I still can't get over the size of the box my World Cup Subbuteo came in. I think I've still got it.

Nowadays Christmas is full of practical things, buying instead of receiving, planning instead of dreaming, and where once the month of December dragged on forever, now it has been scientifically proven by chronologists to last a mere 15 days - when everyone talks

about wondering where the time has gone in December, that's why!

So this year I've decided to try and bring a little of the juvenile magic back into Christmas and I've started by drawing up my Christmas List which, once completed, I'll send up the chimney. Does anyone still possess a coal fire?

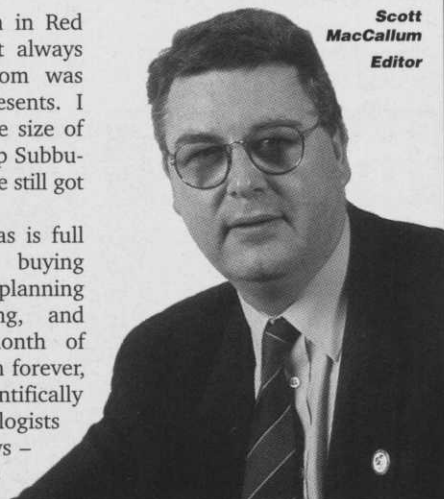
Dear Santa,

This year I've been extremely good, I haven't missed a deadline and as a result I feel I deserve:

- A new golf bag.
- A snowless BTME at which no-one mentions the great blizzard of '95.
- Pick of the rooms in BIGGA's new office and training building.
- A new picture of myself for this column.
- A selection of interesting pictures from Section events up and down the country.
- A National Tournament without rain.
- Fine weather whenever I visit a golf course on either business or pleasure.

The milk and the carrot will be on the mantelpiece and I hope you don't forget me.

If I don't get all that I want I hope that each of you do and have a superb Christmas and a prosperous New Year.



Scott MacCallum
Editor

As I see it...

BY PAT MURPHY
BIGGA CHAIRMAN

A rare thing happened at the beginning of this month. I missed a BIGGA event!

It was the finals of the Toro Awards but they clashed with something at home and I just couldn't get away. However it would be hard to find a more able deputy than Gordon Child who stood in for me.

I was absolutely delighted that Steven Nixon from Past Chairman Barry Heaney's old club at Wortley near Sheffield won the Student Award and that Ian McMillan completed a wonderful double by winning the Excellence Award to sit beside the Environment Award Hankley Common had won the previous month. It was quite a remarkable achievement by Ian.

I soon made up for missing the Toros by attending Scotsturf in Edinburgh which was a great success - James and Jenny worked extremely hard and we even ran out of magazines on the stand. It was good to meet up with Elliott Small and his successor as Regional Administrator, Peter Boyd, who seems to be settling in superbly and who masterminded our presence at Scotsturf. I also saw Past Chairmen John Crawford and George Malcolm as well as Scottish Vice Chairman Jimmy Nielson and Chairman Sam Morrison who is enjoying his new position at Bothwell Castle. I'm still jealous of that wonderful tartan blazer of your's, Sam.

Scotsturf also gave me a chance to have dinner with Ritefeed to discuss the Ritefeed Championship which they are sponsoring as well as the Ritefeed Race Night at BTME from which all proceeds will go towards our Building Fund. I'm certainly looking forward to a long and enjoyable relationship with Ritefeed.

Back home I attended a Northern Regional Meeting at Mere. It was an extremely positive meeting at which Dave Goodridge the North Wales Chairman reported on events in the Principality. The only downside of the meeting was that Barry Heaney was unwell and unable to attend. Get well soon, Barry.

I was also lucky enough to visit Hankley Common to present the club with the BIGGA Golf Environment Award, in association with Amazone and Rhône Poulenc. Hankley were wonderful hosts and the golf course is a credit to the club and to Ian McMillan. The competition has been a tremendous success and the enthusiasm of all the winners who attended Hankley was simply wonderful.

Straight from Surrey it was on to Northamptonshire for an excellent Midland Seminar and can I just say how impressed I was with young Noel Greene, Student of the Year runner-up last year, who made his debut as a speaker and was excellent.

Well I'm just off to Spain for the FEGGA Conference but before I finish my packing can I just wish you all a wonderful Christmas and a prosperous and disease free new year.

