

Feature listing from November '96

November '96: Irrigation Equipment; St Andrews; The Oaks GC; Engines

December '96: Maintenance Facilities; History of the Mower; Mentmore Golf and Country Club

January '97: Trees; Tenby GC; Communication; Addressing the imbalance in Sports Turf; Hiring Equipment

February '97: Attending to the Details; Computers; Fertilisers; Ridding Park

March '97: Making Machinery Last; Computers; Irrigation; Musselburgh Old Links; STRI; Defining Playing Performance; Compact Tractors

April '97: Turf Quality; The London Club; Computers; Electric Greens Mower; Course Accessories; Ecology; Aerators

May '97: Data Tagging; Naunton Downs GC; Alternative Spikes; Suspended Water Table Greens; Shallow Aerators; Working in Germany

June '97: Drought Survival; Cooden Beach; Monitoring the Weather; Slitters

July '97: Royal Troon GC; Speed of Putting Surfaces; Mowers

August '97: Maintenance Facilities; Heather Management; Bunker Rakes; Workshops; Architecture; Kedleston Park GC

September '97: Accident Reporting; Greens Mowers; Valderrama GC; Links Courses

October '97: Environment; Recruitment; Abbeydale GC; Rough Mowers; Soil Analysis

November '97: Environment; Competition; Bank Cutting; Risk Assessment; Pumps

December '97: Seed Development; Longhirst Hall GC; Toro Awards; Fertiliser Spreaders; Communication

January '98: FEGGA Conference; Buying Power Equipment; Elmwood GC; Mobile Phones; Traffic Management; Spraying; Environment

February '98: BTME Review; Overseeding; Royal Mid Surrey GC; Drainage; Thatch

March '98: Trees, Golf Course Accessories, News from GCSAA, Leamington & County GC, Trevor Smith's BTME Talk

April '98: Gleneagles Hotel, Compact Tractors, Environment, Protective clothing, Rain bird, Internet

May '98: Greens Mowers, Suspended Water Table Greens, Seeds, Letham Grange Resort, Charterhouse profile, Security and BIGGA's Fund Raising Campaign

June '98: Interview with Nick Park, Earthworm special, ATVs, Royal Porthcawl, Grinding

July '98: Aeration, Royal Birkdale preview, The importance of research, Architecture

August '98: Mill Ride, Fescue, Blowers, Textron, Open Review, Nematodes, Training

September '98: Nine holers - Tolladine and Fingle Glen, Turf, Steve Clement profile, Drainage, World Scientific Congress report

October '98: Saltex Review, BIGGA Retrospective, Stirling GC, Toro Awards Preview, Tree grants

November '98: Royal Opening, Ramside Hall GC, Gang Mowers, Hayter International report, Irrigation Systems



Success Story



Wednesday October 21 1998 will be part of BIGGA history forever.

That was the day His Royal Highness the Duke of York officially opened BIGGA HOUSE. I am sure everyone who attended this wonderful day will remember it with pride for a very long time. It was certainly a great honour for me in my term of office as your Chairman to welcome His Royal Highness The Duke of York, Viscount and Lady Whitelaw and all our distinguished guests which included Sir Michael Bonallack to Aldwark. I don't recall ever being so nervous standing there with just a few words to say, and it was a great relief when the words came out in the right order. The whole day went without a single hitch and credit must go to our staff for a well organised day. I would also like to thank Aldwark Manor Hotel owners and staff for the reception and a buffet you would find hard to better anywhere. "It was a great day."

The following week saw the climax of the Toro Excellence in Greenkeeping and Student of the Year awards. It is very noticeable that the standards of the finalists are rising each year, which says much for education within our industry. I sat on the panel judging the Student of the Year, and after the interviews we debated a long time before we agreed

on the winner, a young lady from Warwickshire College and a greenkeeper at The Belfry, Sally Doherty.

Sally is First Assistant on the Brabazon Course and although she admitted to being nervous when facing the panel, she answered the questions with confidence and impressed us all with her ability.

The Excellence in Greenkeeping final was run at the same time with a panel of judges headed by Walter Woods and talking to him afterwards it was obvious that they also had a difficult time, but eventually placed John Coleman in first place. John is Course Manager at Abbeydale Golf Club, Sheffield, and is also a past finalist in the Student of the Year, so he comes to the top with a fine pedigree. While we all congratulate Sally and John on their success, which was richly deserved, anyone who wins through to the finals can be justly proud of their achievements and I wish them all every success in the future. I would also like to thank and congratulate Toro, not just as sponsors of the two awards, but for taking such an active interest from start to finish. They certainly put a lot of time, money and effort into the Awards and greenkeepers and golf clubs should all be grateful to them for putting so much back into golf.

My next stop was Scoturf and once again a true Scots welcome was waiting. It was nice to meet many old friends including the Scottish Chairman, Jimmy Neilson and BIGGA Vice Chairman Elliot Small. The show was well attended and the BIGGA stand manned by Peter Boyd and Tracey Maddison from HQ, had a steady flow of visitors.

Unfortunately I was unable to stay the two days because I was booked to fly out of Edinburgh at 6.30 am the following day to Spain for the FEGGA Conference which I attended on BIGGA's behalf with Ian

McMillan. The Conference itself was good, based on Water Management on the Golf Course, and sponsored by Toro with backing from Aquatrols and Supaturf who provided two excellent speakers in Demie Moore and Justin Smith, who were a breath of fresh air to the seminar circuit. The Conference was followed by the FEGGA summit which was attended by delegates from 15 countries in Europe and provided an interesting exchange of ideas. We also got the chance to visit the San Roque Golf Club and a tour of the course. The following day it was back to Malaga airport for our return home to cold and windy Britain.

In recent weeks, talking with many greenkeepers you start to realise the speed in which the whole industry is changing. There is more and better equipment, different products such as seeds, fungicides, feeds etc., but most of all the improvement in the general conditions of golf course is very evident. The young greenkeepers coming through today are without a doubt better equipped to deal with the problems and pressures put on them. Sure, experience still has a part to play, but good sound education is the key to success. I know there are some who pour scorn on the present education system, but they are a minority and in most cases do not understand. I, like many others, have worked a lifetime in turf management and we have put a lot of time in at colleges, seminars, workshops etc., trying to improve education and the results are there too for all to see and if we older greenkeepers have had a part to play, then we can and should be proud of the success hundreds of young greenkeepers and course managers are achieving today.

Gordon Child

