



# A very fine vintage

It is the oldest cliché in the book to say that BTME was the best ever. It's been said every year since the first show was held but perhaps, even in some illustrious company, BTME '98 might come to be regarded as a very fine vintage indeed.

Let's look at the evidence. Well, more people attended the show than ever before; the Learning Experience, in association with Ransomes produced a range of topics and quality of speaker to rival anything which will be heard anywhere this year; the changes to previous year's the marquee to replace Hall D was a resounding success and assisted the flow of the show; the aforementioned Hall D was unrecognisable when it transformed itself into a stunning star lit lounge to host the traditional Thursday night banquet allowing 650 guest to enjoy a fine meal and watch an excellent cabaret.

Among the witnesses to speak in

support of the week and the work of the Association was Michael Bonallack, Secretary of the R&A who, during the Chairman's Lunch, recalled BIGGA's early days.

"There were many sceptics who said the Association wouldn't last... look at it now. There were many people who said the Show was a mistake... look at it now and there people who said the magazine wouldn't last... but look at it now," said Mr Bonallack, who presented the Golden and Silver key plaques in place of Viscount Whitelaw who unfortunately had to miss the week due to ill health.

Another to be impressed by the quality of the Show as Jaime Ortiz-Patino, President of Valderrama Golf Club, who spoke on preparations for last year's Ryder Cup on the Seminar Programme. He expressed a desire to return to Harrogate to give another paper at some future date.

The success of the show is due to



Chairman Pat Murphy does the honours at the opening ceremony

a number of factors which ever year combine to make the third week in January special for so many people. The excellent support from members who travel to Harrogate in droves, the support from the trade

who ensure that visitors are met by friendly and familiar faces when they venture into the halls and an education programme which is second to none.

Roll on BTME '99!

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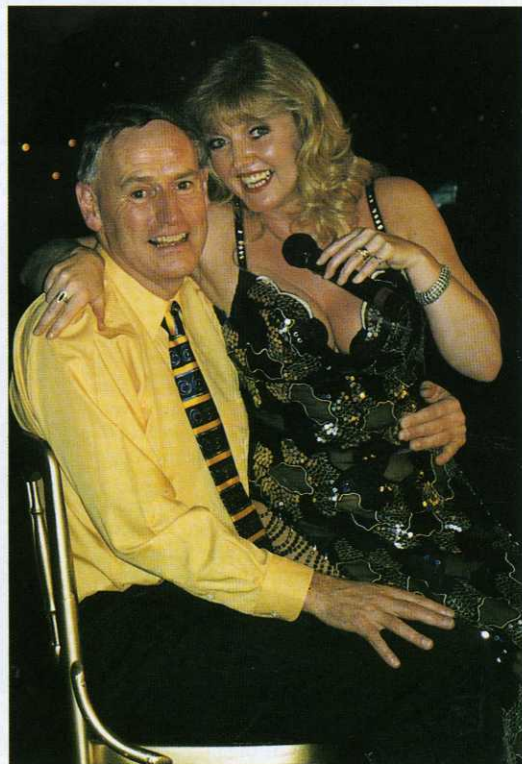
**Clockwise from far left:**

Lee Hurst entertains the 650 guests at the Gala Banquet.

Jaime Ortiz-Patino, President of Valderamma Golf Club gave an enlightening paper on preparations for last year's Ryder Cup, and then selected the winning number in BIGGA's membership draw.

In cabaret, Neil Thomas and his new friend Linda Nolan captivate the audience

Michael Bonallack receives a token of the Association's appreciation for attending the Chairman's Luncheon and presenting Golden and Silver Key Awards



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BIGGA's Buy a Brick Campaign to raise money for the Association's new Headquarters was given a superb launch during Harrogate week.

A major boost had been given right at the start of the campaign when the Golden and Silver Key supporters decided to allocate a total of £44,000 of Education and Development Fund money towards the furnishing and equipping of the new building's Training Room. This room will host many of the Association's workshops and training course and will also be available to Golden and Silver Key supporters should they wish to host a training event in the York area.

Three Sections donated money to the Fund at the Conference Dinner. The North of Scotland gave £1000, the East Midland £750 and Sussex £500 and Iain Macleod, David Leatherland and Ray Day presented a cheque for the total amount to Chairman Pat Murphy. Two day's later Ivor Scoones, presented Pat with a cheque for £1000 on behalf of the South West and South Wales Region.

Another day later and another generous donation this time by Jaime Ortiz-Patino, President of Valderrama Golf Club. During the Education Conference and throughout the Show Gold, Silver and Bronze Brick badges were selling like hot cakes thanks to the Board of Management members.

The campaign will end at BIGGA's annual golf day in June when the raffle tickets bought in conjunction with the badges will be pulled for an array of magnificent prizes.



Ivor Scoones hands over the South West and South Wales Region's donation



The BIGGA Building Fund gets another boost from Iain Macleod, Ray Day and David Leatherland



The Golden and Silver Key supporters who agreed to donate a total of £44,000 to equip and furnish the training room in BIGGA's new headquarters with Michael Bonallack and Pat Murphy

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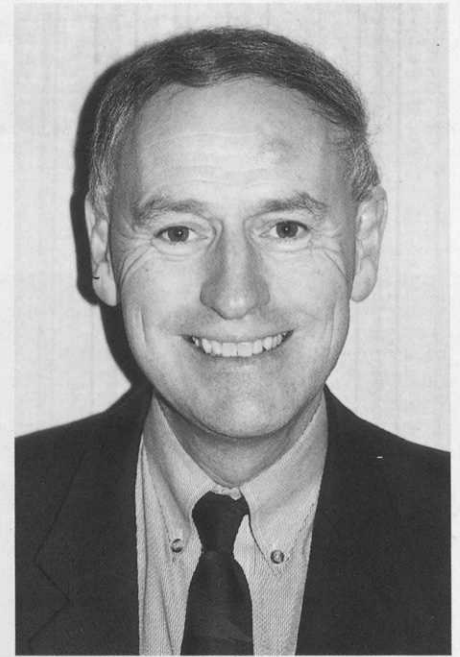
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**BIGGA's Executive Director,  
Neil Thomas reflects on BTME '98...**



# Days to remember

## **Sunday, January 18**

Another year has rushed by and I'm heading for Harrogate and the BTME. It's all of twelve minutes from home (the real reason why the exhibition is held in Harrogate!). As I drive in it has been raining through the night and morning and it is very mild for the time of year. No danger of that white stuff this year. 3.30pm and preparations for conference registration have begun. Ken and Sami are in control. Many members already booked into the Majestic - they clearly like it there. I welcome our international guests and an informal dinner is followed for many by a late night at the bar.

## **Monday, January 19**

First job is to switch on the TV for the weather forecast. I don't believe it! Dr Peter Hayes gets the conference underway in his usual efficient manner. At the outset one is impressed by the quality of the speakers and particularly how well our members present themselves, beneficiaries no doubt of BIGGA's public speaking courses. The presentation of Master Greenkeeper Certificates to Andy Campbell and Chris Carpenter is a highlight - 16 Master Greenkeepers now since the inception of the certification scheme in 1990. Food and accommodation are again excellent in the Majestic and I'm feeling quite relaxed until the Chairman pointedly directs my attention through the window to the arrival of the white stuff. Heavy snow showers follow but it will all be gone before Tuesday, won't it? And so it proved... Conference dinner is very enjoyable with a return visit from David Kendal - 'the banker from York' as our after dinner speaker. Excellent delivery - our international visitors kept pace and laughed with the rest of us. Good to welcome Andrew Sunaway as our guest from Ransomes. I have to mention Peter Wilson's unavoidable absence on 'business in the city'. What can this be? Now we all know.

Some members retire from the bar at 6.30am!

## **Tuesday, January 20**

Conference continues apace along with the three fully subscribed workshops. Comments would indicate that the Conference is the best yet. Noted that many members are now wearing BIGGA's 'brick' badge - the Headquarters building project is already very much to the fore. The exhibition is looking good and Amanda is in charge. Short Board of Management meeting to elect Chairman and Vice-Chairman and then off to beer and burritos (no - I didn't know what they were either!) gathering for the exhibitors. The fifth Hayter Dinner in the George Hotel follows superbly organised as usual by Kim Macfie and Barbara Garton. I really enjoy this dinner as I have nothing to say or do! Meanwhile the Past Chairmans' dinner takes place in the Majestic - a lively affair by all accounts - I can't decide whether to book a referee or comedian for this event next year!

## **Wednesday, January 21**

This is it. Hall A is buzzing long before 9.00am when the Chairman cuts the ribbon. Queues are forming (half way up the hill to the Majestic at one stage) and a great atmosphere. The marquee in use for the first time meets with warm approval. Off to the Majestic for the Chairman's Luncheon. We are sorry that our President, Viscount Whitelaw, has been unwell and cannot join us but delighted to welcome the Secretary of the R&A, Michael Bonallack to make the Golden and Silver Key Company presentations. He speaks of the R&A's longstanding relationship with BIGGA and his pleasure at BIGGA's progress. Prepare for AGM. This goes smoothly with a sense that everything is in good order when Cecil George rises with his inevitable and inimitable questions. Most staff are then off to the Ritefeed Race Night but I find myself in a FEGGA Board meeting which ends just before midnight - what a way to enjoy yourself! Enough for one day!

## **Thursday, January 22**

Early start. 7.30am meeting of BTME Steering Committee. Well supported and everyone seems well pleased with the Show even if brains are not fully functioning at this time of the morning. I'm able to savour the atmosphere in the halls for a couple of hours before the FEGGA AGM. This is well attended and the progress of FEGGA in twelve months is there for all to see. In mid afternoon I check on preparations for the banquet which this year is being held in the International Centre. The nightclub setting is quite stunning. One can sense the growing anticipation for the big social event of BTME. At 6.30pm I attend the Chairman's pre-banquet reception for our VIP guests and make an early departure to check the banquet arrangements. All is under control and soon the 650 guests begin to gather in the reception area. I meet with Lee Hurst to check details for his appearance - he is very friendly and easy going. Any worries about the catering are soon put to rest - it is excellent. The Chairman says a few words and then at 10.00pm I introduce Lee Hurst and the cabaret is underway. Very funny and well received.

After Lee we look forward to Linda Nolan - a return visit after the 1995 Show by popular demand. And we are not disappointed. She is highly professional. Now I have often wondered what it is like to be picked on at an event of this magnitude. Now I know. I had been set up. Suddenly Linda is at my side and I am whisked away to the stage. It's now or never. One choice is to die a death in front of all and sundry, the other is to get on with it. I wisely choose the latter and surrounded by her curvaceous charms I ham my way through the 'ding-a-ling' song. This can, I assure you, prove quite daunting given the natural level of eye contact with Linda sitting on your lap. I return weak-kneed to my chair. I am overwhelmed with congratulations from

members - this simply hasn't happened in ten years so I determine to enjoy it. A great night and certainly one I'll never forget!

## **Friday, January 23**

Tired but happy seems to sum up the mood of all present in the halls. Those who arrived on Sunday evening are still with it - just. Stamina is a prime requirement for the week. It's been a great Show and a good start to the year for members and exhibitors alike. The Show closes at 1.30pm and the evacuation of personnel and equipment goes smoothly. One Board member tells me that he wishes it could carry on - I think I know what he meant. Thanks to everyone who contributed to and supported the event and particularly to the exhibitors without whom there would be no BTME.



## **And finally...**

Once again an abiding memory is of the audience at the banquet linking arms and singing with Linda Nolan "we'll meet again don't know where don't know when". But we do, don't we? It will be in Harrogate from 18th-22nd January 1999. Be seeing you.

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# products Hot

Rolawn's ryegrass free, Olympic Turf will be available from late Spring '98 onwards.

The volume of customer requests for the turf encouraged Rolawn to bring it back into production after an absence of five years.

Olympic turf, suitable for areas where a ryegrass mix is not desirable but a top class appearance and hard wearing turf is needed for tees.

The new Olympic mixture has been sown from Chewings Fescue (Bargreen), Slender Creeping Red Fescue (Barcrown), Smooth Meadow grass (Limousine), Brown top Bent (Herriott).

"We are delighted to be able to give our customers the choice once again, between having the ryegrass free Olympic turf or our hard wearing Medallion turf for areas requiring a general purpose hard wearing turf," said Terry Ryan, Rolawn's Sales & Marketing Director.



Jacobsen Textron's newest product offering, the Greens King Electric greens mower, (above) is the company's response to environmental concerns and customer demand.

"Jacobsen is one of only two companies offering a totally electric,

non polluting mower - it's the mower for the 21st Century," said Terry Herlihy, Jacobsen Product Manager. "The Greens King Electric is a product that's good for the operator, good for the golf-course and good for the environment."

Aware of the increasing regulations on noise and air pollution in Europe and around the world, the Greens King Electric is powered by a 48-volt battery system. Unlike an internal combustion engine, the unit's electric battery system releases no harmful emissions.

In addition the absence of hydraulic components makes it impossible to have any hydraulic fluid leakage's, which can burn turf grass and harm soil.

Without a combustion engine, the Greens King Electric is virtually silent, perfect for any course with residential properties on it. Greenkeepers can be assured no neighbours will be disturbed by early morning mowing.

Created for golf course use world-wide, the new Greens One of a number of convenience features on the Greens King electric is the continuous information panel, which indicates battery charge levels and mower functions.

The new Jacobsen LF-135 Turbo boasts the exceptional quality of cut and all the features that have made the LF-

128 the world's most popular fairway mower - plus extra power for the toughest wet or hilly conditions.

The Jacobsen LF135 Turbo features a 35-horsepower, fuel efficient, turbo-charged Kubota diesel engine.



A new generation of versatile John Deere compact tractors was launched at BTME '98, with the introduction of the 20hp 4100 Gear model.

This is a direct replacement for the less powerful 18.5hp model 670, and features a new Yanmar 'clean & silent' three-cylinder diesel engine with lower exhaust and emission levels, very narrow overall width for true compact performance, and a high standard specification.

This includes shift-on-the-move engagement of mechanical front wheel drive and an eight forward, four reverse speed transmission plus diff lock and hydrostatic power steering.

Further big tractor features include long life oil cooled disc brakes plus shiftable mid and rear mounted ptos, which can be operated either separately or together to allow versatile, multi-implement operation. There is also a new 410 front mounted loader with joystick control for materials handling and heavy lifting jobs.

An industry first, John Deere's new fairway conditioner was featured on the company's stand at BTME '98.

Recently launched as an optional attachment for the established John Deere 3215A and 3235A fairway mowers, it incorporates a contra-rotating grass tender conditioner, which is gear-driven rather than using the more conventional belt drive.

This enables the attachment to provide a better, cleaner finish by



grooming, recutting and dispersing grass clippings more evenly, particularly in wet conditions, without leaving unsightly clumps of grass on the fairway.

In operation, the grass clippings are effectively thrown back into the cylinder at least three times, giving an extremely fine cut, before being dispersed across the surface of the turf. A gear driven brush keeps the rear roller clean, and helps produce a more consistent height of cut.

"This is an ideal attachment for greenkeepers who need to cut a lot of grass early in the morning when there's dew on the ground and conditions are generally damp," says Graham Williams, Commercial & Consumer Equipment Division Manager.

"The gear-driven brush is more suited than a conventional belt drive to the faster speeds used on fairways."

Toro gave its 'new generation triplex mower' a public world debut at BTME with UK greenkeepers the first to see a prototype with its wraps off.

Chief among the golf mower's innovative features is that its three cutting units can be moved hydraulically to the left and right to increase overhang up to 22in,

## Three leading MM golf mixtures, quality





# products Hot

which offers great benefits when cutting around bunkers, as well as obstacles such as trees or under overhanging branches.

"By increasing the length of overhang, operators can keep the wheels further away from the bunker to prevent edges collapsing," said Toro Commercial Product Worldwide Marketing Manager Barry Beckett.

The new mower features Toro's patented three-wheel-drive system and, coupled with the machine's low centre of gravity, this gives it a remarkable hill-climbing capability. A 24hp diesel engine provides ample power to tackle the most testing terrain.

The new Greensmaster 3050 is Toro's lightest ride-on greensmower, to further ease greenkeepers' concerns about greens compaction and related problems. Weighing 165 pounds less than its predecessor, the Greensmaster 3000, and 80 pounds less than the 3100, the new mower also has an economy model price which makes it a more affordable option for budget-conscious golf courses.

The Greensmaster 3050 adopts many of the same, proven features of the Greensmaster 3100, the most successful ride on greensmower sold by Toro, such as the identical hydraulic system and 16hp Vanguard petrol engine.

Ransomes' new AR 250 articulating rotary mower boasts five fully-floating cutter decks, all of which glide smoothly over uneven surfaces, providing a cut of unruffled consistency and with precious little missed, whatever the terrain.

Though designed specifically for high output mowing of rough and semi rough grass on golf courses, along with sports grounds and general amenity turf areas, the AR 250 is certainly no cumbersome heavyweight. It zips along in transport mode at up to 23km/hr (14mph), is shod with wide, turf friendly tyres and is powered by an economical but powerful 28.3kW (38hp) water-cooled diesel engine. Each deck features Ransomes' twin blade 'Envirodeck' cutting technology, which mulches the grass it cuts before blasting it downward into the sward.

As part of Ransomes' continuous development programme, a new and comprehensive selection of cabs for its range of tractors is receiving final finishing touches before being shown for the first time at BTME.

Covering Ransomes' entire tractor range—from the 16hp garden tractor through to the all-conquering CT445—the cabs will offer convenience and comfort of an



exceptionally high standard.

Cabs for the CT325 to the CT445 incorporate roof-mounted heating and ventilation systems; complete with filtered air and comprehensive sound insulation. Laminated safety glass provides clear, uncluttered vision and, of course, the cabs are all ROPS certified.

Ransomes Cushman utility range boasts a complete stable of thoroughbreds, each vehicle performing and delivering exactly what is expected of it. The new, improved Cushman Hawk is an ideal choice for transporting people and loads.

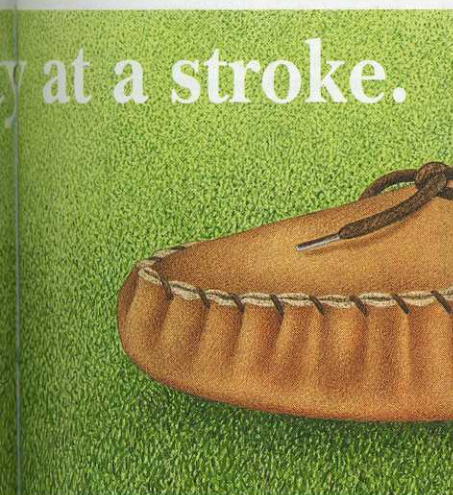
Tonick Watering has increased the warranty on all its Decoders to 5 years; this includes damage by lightning. The range includes guaranteed compatible replacements for Watermation, Toro, CIC, Wraithrain, Primetime, Robydom and ISS Aquaflo.

New for 1998 is a versatile controller family.

First in the range is the unique, Tonick Translator enabling existing controllers to switch most types of decoder (for example, a Watermation TW2 controller can switch Toro decoders).

Sovereign Turf can provide turf in 'Jumbo' rolls, 2' 6" wide by up to 90' in length (20m<sup>2</sup>). With a good root structure to provide speedy establishment, Jumbo Rolls are often preferred, as turf can be laid quickly and economically with fewer joins and gaps to fill.

For tees, tee extensions, around bunkers, reconstruction or pay and play courses, larger rolls can considerably reducing laying time. In addition whether a minimum order (850m<sup>2</sup>) is placed or a larger quantity of turf is required, Sovereign offers the benefit of a free Jumbo laying trolley.



at a stroke.

These three mixtures have been specifically designed for the golf course – from tee, to fairway to green.

MM10 is a mix of fescues and bents, with the slender creeping red fescue 'Mocassin', giving a dense, close knit, resilient turf for close mowing on greens and tees.

MM12's adaptable blend of species - also including 'Mocassin' - gives good colour and texture on tees and fairways, withstanding wear and giving excellent divot recovery.

And MM11, a traditional 80-20 greens mixture, fine in appearance and playing quality, offers a very stable sward with all-year-round performance.

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