

Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

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26 Toro Awards



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Seasons Greetings from BIGGA

It has become fashionable among some to send a circular letter instead of a Christmas Card. I thought I'd give it a go as well.

Dear Friends,

As we draw towards the end of another year it is a wonderful opportunity to look back at the the last 12 months

BTME '99 was a resounding success. It just never fails to top the year before and this one was no exception. I'll certainly remember Frank Dick's inspirational motivational talk which I still watch on the video when I'm in need of a bit of a boost. Also who will ever forget the sight of everyone dancing the night away to Under the Moon of Love and Showaddywaddy at the BTME Banquet? I hope the Bootleg Beetles are just as successful next month.

BIGGA's annual Golf Day was on June 21st - the longest day of the year and the height of summer. Why then were we struck by a hail storm? But I think everyone enjoyed themselves and Aldwark Manor did us proud.

Weather seemed to follow the Association around this year and Andy Campbell had to replace his 4x4 with an arc to get around Carden Park when the National Championship took place in October. He did a great job to get the courses playable though and the restyled event looks set for a long and prosperous future.

Talking about competitions, praise must go to Brian Turner and Tommy Givnan, who won the Toro Excellence in Greenkeeping and Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards, while Temple Golf Club in Maidenhead won the Environment Competition. All three will represent the Association well in the forthcoming year.

A good many of us were at Carnoustie for The Open Championship. John Philp did an outstanding job in preparing the course - although many of the players thought he'd got out of bed on the wrong side when he decided on the height of the rough and width of the fairways - and we were blessed with a ring side seat for one of the most memorable finish in the Championship's history. Jean Van de Velde nearly left a lasting impression on a few of us with his fateful approach to the final green while the Greenkeeping Support Team orchestrated the Mexican wave while everyone waited to greet the local hero, Paul Lawrie, up the final play-off hole.

Perhaps the saddest moment of '99 came with the death of BIGGA's President Viscount Whitelaw who had been such an instrumental figure in the Association's formative years. He will be a hard act to follow but in our new President, Sir Michael Bonallack, we have a man whose pedigree in golf is unsurpassed and he will be a huge asset to BIGGA in the years to come.

So that was our year. I hope your preparations for Christmas are well advanced and your dreams of seeing in the new millennium in style are still intact.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Millennium.

Editor:
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