

## Feature listing from December '97

**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, Ramsdale Hall GC, Gang Mowers, Hayter International report, Irrigation Systems

**December '98:** Toro Awards, Environment Awards, The Appliance of Science, Engines, Architects, BTME Preview

**January '99:** Pesticide Usage, Life in Colorado, Lyshott Heath GC, Worm Research, Stylo Matchmaker profile, Temporary Greens

**February '99:** Westerham GC; R&A questionnaire results; Finland; grass cutting; BTME99 Review; Bernhard and Co

**March '99:** Loch Lomond, Worm update, GrassRoots, Softspikes, Maintenance facilities, Environment review, Architecture

**April '99:** Carden Park, Telecommunications, Water Management, Rolawn, Seeds

**May '99:** Security, Bude and North Cornwall GC, Spraying Regulations, Jim Arthur, The Acid Theory, Amenity Technology profile

**June '99:** Thorpeness GC, Millennium Bug Busting, Irrigation, Scotts profile, Company adaptability

**July '99:** Carnoustie, Golf Course Furniture, Spike Research, Toro profile, BIGGA Silent Auction

**August '99:** Viscount Whitelaw tribute; Open review; Merrist Wood; Saltex preview; Turf; Trees; Grass Cutting; BIGGA Golf Day review; Redexim profile

**September '99:** Slaley Hall; Tyres; Spotlight on Thatch; Elmwood College Awards; National Championship preview

**October '99:** The Manor House, Castle Combe; Aeration; Saltex review; Mycorrhizas; Toro Award preview

**November '99:** Sir Michael Bonallack interview; The Pines GC; Oil; Bunkers; National Championship review



# Into the Millennium



The last month has seen the finals and presentations of the awards for Toro Excellence in Greenkeeping, the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year and the Environment Award sponsored by Amazone Ground Care, Grass Roots Trading Company and BIGGA.

The Toro Award finals at Aldwark was a long and nerve racking day for all the finalists. Both competitions were very close but as the saying goes, there can only be one winner on the day and I am sure in Brian Turner and Tommy Givnan we have worthy winners. However, I do feel that the saying only one winner is a bit of a myth because, as I said at the presentations, all the finalists were winners in their own right. They had all won through at regional level and that's no mean achievement, so I would like to congratulate each and every one of them. I would also like to express my thanks to all the judges who once again had the task of marking, adding up and deliberating the final results.

The Environment presentations took place at the Royal Berkshire College, which is very close to the winning golf club, Temple, where Martin Gunn is Course Manager. The judges for the award were Bob Taylor and Jonathan Hart-Woods from the STRI and Dr Keith Duff from English Nature. After the awards presentation and speeches, we were taken to Temple Golf Club for lunch and photo session.

The day included representatives from all the golf clubs who had won through to the final stages - Sandmoor GC, in Leeds,

won a special award which will be presented at a later date.

The competition was started five years ago by Rod Baker of Amazone Ground Care. His enthusiasm remains as strong as ever for environmental issues and the industry as a whole are indebted to him for his continued input and support.

On 27 October Marion and I, along with Neil, Elaine and Pat, our immediate Past Chairman, attended a service of thanksgiving for Viscount Whitelaw in the Guards Chapel at Wellington Barracks, London. It was a very moving and emotional occasion and one we will never forget. It made us even more aware of how lucky we were as greenkeepers to have him as our President and friend for so long.

My next appointment was in Dublin for the GCSAI Show and a chance to meet with our BIGGA boys from Northern Ireland. We had a very productive meeting and agreed to help them to run a conference in late October or November in the year 2000. Later that day we had a chance to further cement our friendship with the Superintendents Association of Ireland in a dinner meeting with Iain Richie and Joe Bedford in the company of Bob Buckingham from Toro. The meeting again was very cordial and can only strengthen the relationship between our two associations. I would like to thank Bob, Iain and Joe for their hospitality.

Over the last few months I have had a lot of criticism from greenkeepers about fellow greenkeepers and the way they maintain their golf courses. While I understand the reasons for some of the comments, it concerns me that as greenkeepers we should not be criticising each other but looking at the reasons why.

I was always a traditional type greenkeeper, but I do understand that in the pressurised modern day golf climate we can be forced to prepare courses which we know deep down we are not acting strictly within the laws of agronomy. The modern golfer and even more so the professionals are dictating how the golf course should play and I agree that is sad, but we should understand the pressures some greenkeepers are under from big business, where play, must go on, no matter what the weather or time of year.

If a greenkeeper is in this situation and wants to keep his job he has to provide what the members and management want - lush green courses all year round.

So how do we change this way of thinking? I believe it must come from the top down. The high officers within golf must try and teach the modern golfer and the pros what real golf courses in Britain should be like and in turn the golfer will have to learn the skills which after all is tradition in our part of the world. If you want to be critical then aim your criticism at the controlling bodies, not at the greenkeeper, for he will know that long term he cannot maintain healthy turf by overfeeding and overwatering just to provide picture postcard looks. I'd like to remind members to read the BIGGA Code of Ethics, which they have agreed to, before criticising others.

My last visit of the month for this magazine was to Scotsturf in Edinburgh where I met up with Tracey, Diane and Steve from HQ and Peter Boyd the Scottish Administrator. Our stand was kept busy with a steady flow of greenkeepers and it was good to see so many new members joining. I enjoyed meeting many old friends and our Vice Chairman Elliott Small was one of the first to arrive on Wednesday morning. A visit to Scotland would not be the same if you did not have a drink with Jimmy Neilson and Cecil George and take in their friendly banter.

The show was well attended and proved to be a good meeting place for Scottish Greenkeepers. However, I did see one from England, Barry Heaney, who was with John Crawford, two Past Chairmen, together and both looked in good form. I would like to thank Peter Boyd who looks after our Scottish members so well and Tracey, Diane and Steve for a very pleasant two days in their company.

By the way, for all the people that have asked about Marion's ponies, they're doing fine.

Finally, I'd like to take this opportunity of wishing all our members, staff and supporters a joyous Christmas and successful seasons in the year 2000.

Gordon