

Address your letters to **Scott MacCallum, Editor, Greenkeeper International, BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Alne, York YO61 1UF. You can also fax them to 01347 833801 or email to scott@bigga.co.uk**

Malcolm's course is a Temple

Everyone at Temple wants me to thank BIGGA, the Judges and especially the Sponsors for running the Environment Award Competition. It has created a lot of interest and we have been contacted by a number of clubs, not only with their congratulations but also for information and assistance.

I sincerely believe this is the way forward for golf. Natural management not only helps the environment but returns golf courses to the conditions which is ideal for playing traditional British golf.

We and the Award have featured

on national and local radio, local papers and even the glossy national golf press. This must be good for the game of golf.

While I am writing, please pass on an invitation to Jim Hillier (Letter from America - December issue) to visit and play Temple. He will certainly be able to play the course in February, as we are open 365 days a year! We are a Willie Park Jnr designed course, opened in 1910 and I hope this will be traditional enough for him. I'm not sure if Martin Gunn, our Course Manager, would consider our maintenance practices

"old fashioned" but they would certainly be approved of by Jim Arthur. Do I need to say more?

Over the years Martin and I have been shown great courtesy and, more important, given valuable time by Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers around the British Isle and it would be a pleasure to return some of this hospitality to someone who obviously appreciates traditional British standards of Golf Course Management.

Malcolm Peake, Temple Golf Club, Berkshire



Sunni thanks

The two days I spent at BIGGA for the Toro Awards were very informative and a great experience.

The standard of the finalists was very high and I felt every one of us should have won. How the judges decided on a winner must be extremely difficult.

I would like to thank Toro for their tremendous support towards our education system and BIGGA for promoting the image of the greenkeeper, as I feel we still do not command the respect we deserve from the golfing fraternity.

**Brian Turner,
 Sunningdale Golf Club,
 Berkshire**

The Turner prize

I was so pleased to hear that Brian Turner had been given the Toro Excellence in Greenkeeping Award.

I have known Brian for more years than I care to remember having been in the same trade since my retirement last January. Brian has always been a good advertisement for greenkeeping with his golf courses being kept to the highest standards. I am sure he would be the first to admit that being a very good golfer to boot has helped considerably in his greenkeeping career.

My congratulations to him. It's well deserved.

**John Nudds, Hunstanton
 Norfolk**

Communication the key to a good course

In preparation of my dissertation in golf course architecture and my seminar for the BTME 2000 entitled 'Is the grass really greener on the other side', I carried out a survey among British and American Course Managers in order to draw a realistic comparison between course conditions and maintenance standards on both sides of the Atlantic. From the beginning of my career in golf course architecture, I was guided by the words of Robert Trent Jones who said that 'We can build the greatest golf courses in the world, but if they are not properly maintained, they are nothing. I am convinced that appearance and performance of golf courses are products of the degree of collaboration between golf architects and superintendents. It is therefore vital for both professions to under-

stand each others principles, skills and limits.

Too many golf courses have been designed and built without any thoughts of maintenance budgets and resulting problems. There is no doubt: with massive budgets, high staffing levels and modern machinery - every design can be maintained. On most golf courses however the maintenance budget is limited. Architects and superintendents shall therefore communicate whenever possible in order to broaden their professional views. I think that communication forms the foundation for optimum results of a project. Exchange of knowledge and experience will improve conditions for course maintenance and lead to golf courses with a high aesthetic and playing value.

It was a pleasure to realise that this subject is an interesting issue for British greenkeepers, too. The fact that 53 out of 80 British Head Greenkeepers have responded and filled out my extensive survey is very encouraging. I was sent wonderful letters and extra information, material and photographs of their golf courses. The response exceeded my expectations by far.

I am very touched and grateful for the friendly and generous help of the Head Greenkeepers, Course Managers and Superintendents, and I hope that we will meet at BTME 2000 in Harrogate:

**Bettina Schrickel, Design
 Associate at GOLFPLAN, The
 Ronald Fream Design Group Ltd,
 California & Germany**

A very dedicated group

During the past year I have been privileged to interview a number of greenkeepers from all over Britain and Northern Ireland in connection with the Talking Head feature in Greenkeeper International.

I would like to place on record what a helpful group of men they are, not only a credit to their profession, but also to their clubs and their Association.

Having been in sports journalism for some 50 years, and interviewed countless people in a wide range of sports, I would like to say that I have found no group more helpful and dedicated than these BIGGA members.

I look forward to talking to many more in the months ahead.
Malcolm Huntington, York

Editor's Note: Malcolm was Sports Editor and then Chief Sports Writer of the Evening Press, York, where he worked for 46 years before retiring from full-time sports writing. He was awarded the MBE for Services to Yorkshire Sports Journalism in 1997.

You can read Malcolm's latest Talking Heads feature on page 24. This month, six Head Greenkeepers talk about the most influential issues which have ranked highly on their course or in their career.

Harry Diamond

I was saddened by the death of Harry Diamond. Harry was a stalwart of SIGGA, BIGGA, you name it, Harry was there. Harry was one of the personalities in greenkeeping, which are now few and far between. Harry was a regular attendee at all Ayrshire outings, and his tales were legendary. I was Ayrshire chairman for two and a half years, and without doubt my best memory was the joy with which he accepted honorary membership of BIGGA.

At this time I would also like to remember, Harry's friends, namely Cecil George, Jimmy Nielson, Jack McMillan etc. The list is too numerous to carry on. Let Harry rest in peace and hopefully some of our young greenkeepers can aspire to be like Harry.

Ian G McNab, via email

Well deserved praise for John

I would like to say through your letters page how proud I am of my husband, John Kerr, Head Greenkeeper at Enfield GC, who has just passed his NVQ Level 4. He deserves a mention after studying so hard.

I would also like to thank Ian Merrick, of Oaklands College and David Golding, of the GTC, both of whom I have only spoken to on the phone, but who have played roles in John obtaining his NVQ Level 4/

Well done John and may you have continued success in all you do!

Lynne Kerr,
Enfield
Middlesex

Dispute resolved

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the friends, colleagues & club members who supported me through a very difficult & stressful time due to a dispute with my former employers. Also many thanks to BIGGA without whose legal aid cover I would not have been able to pursue the matter through a solicitor.

The dispute has been resolved with a settlement payment made by the golf club in question and I feel I can now continue my career vindicated in the whole matter with this I would like to thank my new employer for giving me the opportunity after a period of time searching for work.

Finally, may I wish my successor good luck.

N J Wilson, Bristol

JANUARY 2000

Reminders

1. Meet with staff to organise weekend rota.
2. Ring OCMIS to discuss irrigation requirements
3. Speak to **TEXTRON** ref: Machinery
4. Sort transport for **BTME**
5. Visit **OCMIS** stand **A5** at **BTME**
6. Take dog to Vets
7. Telephone No's: -
01460 241939 - Head Office
0131 220 2102 - Scotland
(1) 235 4020 - Ireland