

Another one for the memory banks

As a week, it would be hard to beat Harrogate 2001. Virtually every aspect of it has been deemed a success ... and not just by those people involved in the organisation but by delegates and exhibitors, many of whom have contacted BIGGA HOUSE to say how successful, not to mention enjoyable, it had been for them.

Sure there were problems. I wouldn't have liked to have been stuck in one of the long, cold queues of people trying to get into the halls but that in itself is a measure of how successful the show had been. We've had queues in the past but not to the extent that they were significant hardship for the participants as they were this year. Having identified it as an issue it is something we will have addressed well in advance of next year.

There were many highlights for me during the week of the National Education Conference and the Show. There was the member, all the way from Germany, who, on the Sunday night, put on his jacket for the first time since the last year's Harrogate and found £200 in the top pocket. He'd forgotten all about it. It must be nice to have that sort of disposable income.

Another high point was the surprise appearance of BIGGA's Administration Manager, Johnny "Rotten" Pemberton, on stage with The Searchers, a truly unforgettable experience for all who witnessed it. I'd always thought John might possess the talent and the potential to be a great singer ... I'm afraid I was wrong.

It was also pleasing to see so many international visitors to the Show. Harrogate has always attracted a number of overseas members and friends but this year there seemed to be many more than usual, reinforcing the view that BTME week is an opportunity for the entire industry to come together and compare notes on problems and solutions.

Once again Textron must be given a vote of thanks for their support of the Learning Experience programme.

That 7,172 people chose to make a date with BTME during the two and a half days of the Show is quite astonishing. That represents a huge increase on previous attendance figures and marks the Show down, among existing and would-be exhibitors, as a vibrant and exciting event which must not be missed. It also goes a long way to justifying the decision to extend the show by half a day next year.

It was not a decision taken lightly, as Neil Thomas explains elsewhere in this magazine, but the flexibility the additional few hours will add will give everyone a chance to get round the entire show, while the exhibitors themselves will no doubt appreciate a more even flow of visitors over the three days.

News on the format of next year's Harrogate will be posted as and when it becomes available but you can be assured that BTME 2002 will build on the success of this year's event and once again be the highlight of the greenkeeping calendar.

Scott MacCallum
Editor



International membership growing!

Bert Cross describes his recent visit to Lusaka Golf Club.

While on holiday in Zambia I had reason to drive to the capital city, Lusaka, and on route drove past Lusaka Golf Course. From the road I could see some of the course, and I decided on my return journey I would call in to take a better look. When I arrived at the golf club, I made myself known by showing my BIGGA membership card which is always in my wallet, and was introduced to the Secretary/Manager, Mr Mulenga.

I was made very welcome, and invited to walk the course with him. I was very impressed with the condition of the course, and even more impressed when Mr Mulenga gave me a list of the machinery to maintain the course, which consisted of; one 20inch certes to cut greens; one 18 inch certes to cut tees; two MF tractors (fair condition); one three gang Toro drag sets and one Tractor rotary mower. The greens are Bermuda grass and are cut at approx six millimetres, three to four times weekly, the fairways are a mixture of very coarse grasses and cut weekly.

On our walk round the course I was introduced to the Professional/Head Greenkeeper Mr Zulu. He explained the diffi-



culty of getting fertiliser, and machinery, plus the high cost of both even if they are available. Bunkers on the course are mainly green side only, but you can run into other problems just off the fairways like, snakes, termites, army ants, and great numbers of beautiful trees lining the fairways. The course is 18 holes par 73, covering 240 acres, with fairways, tees, and greens with irrigation fed by three bore holes. Lusaka Golf Course was officially opened in 1935. The first major alteration was made during the war years, with the scrapping of some holes, and constructing new ones within the frame work of the remainder. In

1956 the course was re-designed to eliminate playing into the sun on the closing holes. The first grass green was planted in 1958, and by 1962 all 18 greens were grass. The irrigation during the months between October and January is used constantly due to high temperatures 30-40 C. The course is the venue for the Zambian Open, and Masters Champion Vijay Singh won his first tournament there in 1992. Ian Woosnam since then won a Range Rover for a hole-in-one. The course is in a beautiful setting, and a credit to Mr Mulenga and Mr Zulu considering the lack of machinery to maintain the course. A staff of 25 work on the course (male and female) hand weeding greens, and keeping down the rough with slashers (3 ft x 2inch steel blades sharpened both edges).

Thinning out the course grasses on the fairways is also done by hand, a task that could be solved with a good scarifier. The greens come under attack from all sorts of burrowing and flying insects, and every green has to be checked daily and sprayed if necessary. I was, as mentioned earlier made very welcome, and loaned a set of clubs, a caddie who knew the course inside out, and courtesy of the course. The golf club have now joined BIGGA.



Top level changes at Textron

Textron Golf, Turf and Specialty Products International has made major changes to its sales and marketing teams.

Garry O'Neill joins the company as Sales Director for Europe and Africa. Previously with Toyota (GB) he held a number of positions, latterly in a strategic role responsible for product, pricing, marketing and distribution for light commercial vehicles.

Former Sales Director Peter Bell becomes Marketing Director, International with overall responsibility for all promotional activity, together with distribution development, product management and sales planning.

Neil Woodfin is appointed to the

new position of Customer Services Director, International with full responsibility for after sales support including service, parts and training.

All the above positions report directly to Managing Director, Harold Pinto.

Other appointments resulting from the senior management changes include: Ian Loveys, who joins the company as National Accounts Manager from Bosch Power Tools.

He replaces Richard Bishop, who after 32 years with the company, leaves with the best wishes of everyone in the Sales and Marketing team, to further his career within the turf care industry.



Above: Garry O'Neill