

A fine set of figures

As I write, it is now two months on from Harrogate and memories are still fresh in the mind of a truly wonderful week. My particular highlights include a wonderful education programme running throughout the week; the bizarrely funny Brahms and Liszt at the Banquet, and an inspirational talk by Roger Black, whom, I note, has obviously used BTME as a springboard to a presenter's role on BBC TV's Tomorrow's World. Even the very best can enjoy professional advancement, if only they come to Harrogate!

Mulling over the attendance figures it is great to see a vindication for the decision to extend the show to three days, which was taken following extensive consultation with the industry. Four consistently packed halls, featuring all the familiar industry names and faces - both on the stands and in the aisles, as well as new The Golf Club Show, which enjoyed a very successful debut in the King's Suite. More than ever Harrogate is a not-to-be-missed Showcase for everything to do with golf... except, of course, the playing of the game!

Just to put you in the picture, Tuesday saw 2,445 visitors; Wednesday was a record individual day for BTME with a mammoth 4,040 visitors, while Thursday was visited by some 2,144. That produces a sum total of 8,629, 10.1% up on the 7,833 who attended BTME 2001, and reveals a relatively even split for the three days - an absolute bumper sandwiched between two very solid days.

As everyone who exhibits, or visits, a Show will know it is the final day where you expect to find the lowest number, so that the 2,144 Thursday figure is one of which we at BIGGA are particularly proud.

To put it into perspective, here's what I wrote in a press release at my first BTME back in 1996. I must be in line for a gold watch or something by now.

A total of 2,312 visitors went through the doors on Wednesday (day 1) and 2,159 made the same journey yesterday (day 2). Last night, on your behalf a team of BIGGA mathematicians poured over calculators to come up with a figure of 42.9% - the increase on Thursday of last year. The number crunchers can also tell us that the aggregate for the Wednesday and Thursday is 4,471, yes 4,471, a massive 25.2% up on the 1995 two day total.

It means that this year's final day figure of 2,144 was on a par with the record breaking opening two days of the '96 Show.

It's amazing how your brain sometimes plays tricks on you. I could have sworn back in '96 that you would have needed a shoe horn to get

anyone else in but, six years on, our final day figure is similar to those but it is regarded by some as a quiet day. It just shows how far we've come. Heaven help us six years from now and BTME2008. We probably will need a shoe horn then.

Meanwhile, roll on Harrogate '03.

Scott
MacCallum
Editor

Making his mark at Milford Haven

Milford Haven Golf Club has recently appointed their first course manager.

Kevin Rawlins took up this key role in the autumn. Already the 33 year-old, is making his mark on the rolling 18 hole parkland course, set on the edge of the UK's only coastal national park.

As a result of his appointment, the Pembrokeshire club is also embarking on an ambitious five-year programme.

Kevin's climb up the green-keeping career ladder began as an assistant at Camberley Heath Golf Club, followed by a six year stint at Wentworth as Deputy Head Greenkeeper.

He believes in leading by example, and enjoys being hands on

out on the course. He is full of praise for the hard-working team he inherited - First Assistant, David Smart, and greenkeeper Charlie Young. The club are currently recruiting a trainee to complete the ground staff team, which Kevin foresees as going from strength to strength.

"Kevin has proved to be huge asset to the club in the time he's been with us. The results he's already achieved on the course speak for themselves," said Club Captain Andrew Smith,

According to Kevin, there is loads of potential at the club, with the luxury of plenty of space for expansion, two acres of nursery turf, and a large store of topsoil that can be exploited in a



Above: Kevin Rawlins, recently appointed as Course Manager at the west Wales club

strategic programme of course improvements, including rebuilding the bunkers in revetted style - unusual on a parkland course.

Top man in Sussex

Steve Phillips, Course Manager at Cowdary Park GC, won the coveted award of Sussex Greenkeeper of the Year for 2001. This award is presented by The Sussex Professional Golfer's Union for Excellence in consistently preparing a Golf Course to the Highest Standards for all Professional events. Steve commented that his head Greenkeeper Jonathan Smith and his Team played a key part in winning the award.

Right: Steve Phillips, holding the award, Jonathan Smith to his right and his team from left to right, Bernard Penny, Darren Freeman, Leigh Holloway and Anthony Hill.



Scottish Education Conference a success

The BIGGA Scottish Region Conference was again held at the Business Learning Centre, Lauder College, Dunfermline in March. An excellent venue with first class facilities and easy access from the motorway.

The speakers were covering a variety of subjects all relevant to the industry today.

Ged Cunliffe, Technical Sale Manager for Biotol, opened the Conference with a paper on Biological Solutions for any fine turf area. This was a most interesting and informative subject.

Next was Philip Langdon, of Wardle Consulting Engineers Ltd, on Irrigation Systems Assessment.

Philip provided an insight into irrigation systems. A topical subject and well presented by Phil. Despite the weather this winter, and the amount of rainfall we have had, his talk was of benefit to everyone who has a watering system or indeed anyone who was considering installing one.

After the break the double act of David Withers, from Textron, and Brian Goudie, of Scottish Grass Machinery, spoke on 'A Salesman's Role'. This was something different from previous years and was presented very well. The talk covered all aspects of the salesman's role, having a

good salesman/customer relationship and the benefits that can be gained from this partnership.

Finally to round of the morning session, was Ruth Mann of the STRI, who presented her paper on Pest and Disease Survey. Ruth explained the reasoning behind the survey and the research being carried out. This topic was of great interest to the members and generated a great deal of discussion.

After lunch, John Caven, Director of Golf at Meldrum House, Aberdeen, spoke about his role in the 'Creation & Marketing of a 5 Star Golf Facility'.

John provided a most valuable insight into marketing and presentation involved in promoting this kind of facility.

A figure well known to everyone involved in greenkeeping, Jimmy Kidd, from Gleneagles Hotel, was next to speak. Jimmy spoke about Gleneagles bid for the Ryder Cup 2009. The requirement for any club to run such an event staggers belief and Jimmy in his usual competent manner provided an enthralling insight into what is required.

The final speaker was Paul Miller, from Elmwood College.

Paul's talk was on 'Integrated

Plant Management'. Paul with his experience in this field gave a very interesting and topical paper on a subject relevant to greenkeeping.

The Scottish Region of BIGGA are once again indebted to the speakers for providing such interesting and informative talks on subjects relating to the fine turf industry.

During the Conference the Chairman had the pleasure of announcing the first ever winner of the Harry Diamond Memorial Quaich. This award is presented in memory of one of the stalwarts of greenkeeping. Harry had served the Association in many capacities and was particularly involved in the education of greenkeepers and it was only fitting that this award be presented to the Student of the Year. The winner of the award for 2001 was Mark Cummine, of Buchanan Castle Golf Club.

The Scottish Board would like to thank the Patrons for their continued support and the members who attended this year's Conference. The numbers were once again over the 160 mark and it is thanks to you that the Conference is the success it is.

Peter J. Boyd,
Scottish Regional Administrator