



Welcome

SO NEAR YET SO FAR

Did you watch The Masters? Silly question. If you have any interest in golf whatsoever, of course, you watched The Masters. Well, those of us connected with the greenkeeping profession in Britain nearly had a lot to celebrate, didn't we?

Rained out on the Thursday and it was looking good. News of muddy spectator walkways, people falling on Augusta's famous undulations and squelchy lies and it was looking even better. But, what do you know, the weather improved and before you knew it the awful conditions were no longer the story and the fact that a Canadian left hander won and not Tiger was taking all the headlines.

Yes the Augusta Syndrome nearly didn't happen in 2003. Augusta National and the Georgia weather almost did a passable impersonation of Sludgecombe Pay and Play during a wet weekend in November... but it didn't. The green staff did an outstanding job, no doubt putting in enough hours during the week to have a Working Hours Directive inspector foaming at the mouth, and pulled it off.

So while you nearly avoided the April and May headaches which go along with Augusta Syndrome, I'm afraid you didn't. Instead you may well get additional grief.

Greens were submerged under five inches of rain one minute and putting at the speed of light the next, so how many learned members might just pipe up,

"Look at the rainfall Augusta took and they still had their greens lightning fast the very next day."

The fact that Augusta can call upon a technologically advanced and highly expensive under green system to suck moisture away doesn't come into it.

Having said all that at least we haven't had to cope with the dreadful weather of the recent past. The prolonged dry spell has hopefully enabled you to get on with many of the jobs the soggy conditions of recent times have prevented you from doing and produce a level of spring course presentation of which you can be proud.

In addition to the weather The Masters didn't get an easy ride, with Martha Burk's sex discrimination protest against Augusta National Golf Club hitting the headlines. There is a better than even chance that the same type of protest will fill the British newspaper columns in the run up to The Open at Royal St George's with the R&A taking the flak.

I won't take sides on what is a complex argument but what I will say is that it will perhaps deflecting attention away from a potentially more damaging problem affecting the game. Golf is currently at a low ebb and the lack of money in the game is already taking its toll on many of the country's golf clubs, some of which have already gone into receivership or, at the very least, are looking to trim costs.

This has obvious and significant knock-ons for a great many people. Let's hope a successful conclusion to the war has a positive impact on the economy in general and the game of golf in particular.

Scott MacCallum, Editor

BIGGA TURF MANAGEMENT EXHIBITION
BTME
& EDUCATIONAL SEMINAR PROGRAMME

2004

&

ClubHouse

Each month we will bring you news of the industry's premier events.

ClubHouse will move from Hall D to Hall Q to run alongside BTME.

The Careers Fair will run alongside the BIGGA college stands within ClubHouse.

The Keynote Speaker and Seminar programme will move from the Royal Hall to Hall D.

Stand rebookings are well ahead of this time last year, with 139 companies booked at the time of going to press. Companies are urged to book early to obtain a preferred position.

REVISED OPENING HOURS

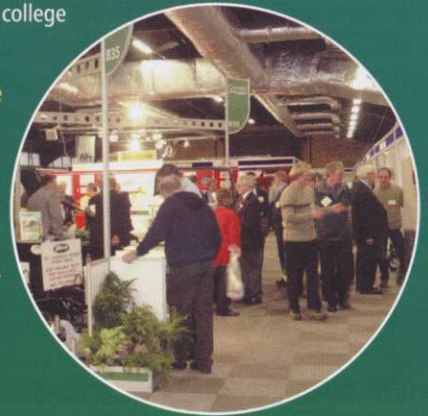
Tuesday 20 January 9.00am - 5.00pm

Wednesday 21 January 9.00am - 5.00pm

Thursday 22 January 9.00am - 4.00pm

For details of exciting new sponsorship opportunities now available, contact Pauline Thompson 01347 833830 / pauline@bigga.co.uk

Watch out for more announcements in the June issue of Greenkeeper International.



ROSIE JOINS THE ASSOCIATION

BIGGA has appointed a new Sales Manager to lead the Association's sales team and maximise money raising opportunities within the industry.

Rosie Hancher brings with her extensive experience in sales and arrives at BIGGA having most recently worked for Barker Brooks Media, in Harrogate, who specialise in publications in niche markets.

In her four years with Barker Brooks, where latterly she was Managing Director, the company worked for the DTI and the Foreign Office; published its own magazine and organised and ran conferences, shows and Award Ceremonies.

"I am delighted to have joined BIGGA and to become heavily involved in the sales side of the Association. It is what I love doing and what I'm good at," said Rosie, who is married with two young children.



Having started at the beginning of April, Rosie is already enjoying the benefits of working at BIGGA HOUSE.

"I love working in the countryside, rather than in a town, and it means I can be in the gym before work instead of being stuck in a traffic jam," said Rosie, who lives in Ripon, a few miles from Aldwark.

She will be in charge of galvanising the Sales team, whose tasks include selling stand space in the Harrogate Shows, advertising in the magazine, website and directory as well as identifying and creating sponsorship opportunities.

"We will be going all out to maximise turnover of the Association in order to increase the benefits we can pass on to BIGGA members. These aren't empty words. This department will make a real difference," said Rosie.

"I would also value comments from members on the magazine and any improvements which might be made or subjects you'd like covered. I'd then pass those ideas on to the Editor."

Email press releases and new product updates to:
scott@bigga.co.uk