

Getting Better Every Year



Justin Waddell

"The standards keep going up and up and the decision was a difficult one." How often have you heard those words from a judge just before he announces the winner of a competition.

So often, in fact, that to say, "It's a cliché to say 'The standards keep going up and up and the decision was a difficult one.' is a cliché itself."

However, just to say it's a cliché doesn't detract from the truism that is being spoken and that was very much the case with the final of the 2003 Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award, which was contested by eight evenly matched and extremely talented individuals.

The final judging was carried out by John Pemberton, of BIGGA, David Waldon, Chairman of BIGGA's Education Sub-Committee; Andy Brown, of Toro, and Pete Mansfield, of Lely UK.

As it was Keith Scruton, Head Greenkeeper of Colne Golf Club and Myerscough College, emerged as the winner and John Talbot, Head Greenkeeper of Ravensworth Golf Club and Askham Bryan College, and Justin Waddell, Assistant at Fortwilliam Golf Club and Greenmount College in Northern Ireland, runners-up.

Keith wins an eight week trip to the United States incorporating a six week course at the University of Massachusetts and visits to the Toro Headquarters in Minneapolis and California and the GCSAA Conference and Show in San Diego. John and Justin win trips to Harrogate next year for BTME & ClubHouse and access to all the educational events which make up the Continue to Learn programme.

The other six Regional winners were Paul Todd, Deputy Head Greenkeeper at Lanark Golf Club and Oatridge College; Dylan Jones, Pwllheli Golf Club and the Welsh College; Bobby Vining, Assistant at Mendip Spring Golf Club and Cannington College; Martyn Gray, Assistant at Bramley Golf Club and Merrist Wood College and Robert George, Deputy to last year's winner Murray Long at Coombe Hill Golf Club and NESCOL.

The competition continues to go from strength to strength and Toro must be thanked for providing such an incentive for the country's greenkeeping students.



John Talbot

Life is a Rollercoaster

Keith Scruton has experienced the lows and highs of life over the last 12 months but, as Scott MacCallum found out, he has certainly ended the year on a high.

"A year ago this Friday I was called to a meeting at my golf club and told that I was being made redundant," said Keith Scruton.

This isn't the start of a harrowing tale of a Head Greenkeeper who becomes disillusioned with the industry and begins to look for a job outside greenkeeping, but the story of a man who spots a silver lining around a potentially very black cloud, picks himself up and within a year has triumphed.

More of a Stephen Spielberg style "Against all Odds" film script than an Eastenders "Doom and Despair" story line.

A bit over the top?

Well, you be the judge. A mere 12 months on from being the recipient of bad news from a golf club which treated him poorly, Keith has a new job as Head Greenkeeper at a progressive golf club and has just become the 2003 Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year.

"It is just starting to sink in now but when my name was announced I was just dumbstruck," said the 29 year-old Head Greenkeeper of Colne Golf Club, in Lancashire.

Keith is a character full of perseverance as highlighted by the fact that he had been an entrant in the Toro Student of the Year Award about 10 years before but failed to progress beyond the first stage. But the new resilient, tougher than teak, version took it all in his stride and can sit the