

Feature listing from April 2002

April 2002; Heyrose GC profile; Bernhard's Scholarship; De-stress your greens; COSHH assessments; Rootzones and topdressing; Maintenance facilities; Essay competition

May 2002; BIGGA Report; Nematodes; Caldly GC profile; Multi-tasking machinery; Bunker Sand; Essay competition; Fijian GC profile; BIGGA Minimum qualification

June 2002; Finding Fungi; Greetham Valley GC profile; Tyres; Calabria GC profile; Lakes and Ponds; Poa Annuua - Jim Arthur

July 2002; Open preview; Turf; Steve Isacss; Emissions; Grinding; Rotary Mowers; BTME preview; Sandy McDivot

August 2002; BIGGA Golf Day; Open review; Talking Heads - Education & training; Trees; Dr Kate Entwistle; Pwllheli GC; Weather; Compact Tractors; Saltex preview

September 2002; National Championship Preview; Irrigation; Non Grass Cutters; Hawkstone Park; Careers in Greenkeeping

October 2002; Saltex Review; Golden and Silver Key Supporters; Environment Awards; Health & Safety; Sustainable Use of Pesticides

November 2002; Toro Student of the Year; National Championship; Drainage; St Andrew's Bay; Autumn Problems

December 2002; BTME & ClubHouse Preview; R&A Golf Course committee; Dr Kate Entwistle; Pennard GC

January 2003; Beedles Lake Profile; Talking Heads - Chemical Application; Rebuilding Golf Greens; Constructive Advice

February 2003; BTME/ClubHouse Review; Royal Liverpool Profile; Irrigation; Nematodes

March 2003; The Berkshire Profile; Meloidogyne; Overseeding Golf Greens; Talking Heads - Health & Safety

April 2003; Oakmere Park GC; Spraying; Golf Course Security; Bernhards Delegation; Ransomes Jacobsen Profile

May 2003; Cardrona Golf & Country Club; Poa Annuua; Rough Mowers; Mole Control; Rootzone; Green Construction

June 2003; Irrigation; Ransomes Jacobsen Scholarships; Fertiliser; Fairway Mowers

July 2003; Irrigation Water; Greens Mowers; Bent Grasses; Course Management; Rakes

August 2003; Aeration; Open Review; Saltex Preview; Waste Water; Toro Student of the Year

September 2003; Hanbury Manor; Irrigation; Disease; Integrated Pest Management; Communication

October 2003; Construction Machinery; Pay Recommendations; Saltex Review; Pesticide Legislation; Finance

November 2003; Temple GC; Trees; Environment Competition Results; Sandy McDivot; Drainage

December 2003; BTME & ClubHouse Preview; Downfield GC; Compact Tractors; Architecture; Bio-tech

January 2004; Ipswich GC Profile; Grass Seed; Environment Competition Awards; Utility Vehicles (sit in)

February 2004; Harrogate Review 2004; Tyneside GC; Utility Vehicles (sit on); Irrigation

March 2004; R&A Best Practice; Trentham Park GC; Drainage; Spraying

Chairman's Column



A Roller Coaster of Emotion

When George Brown asked me to be his Vice Chairman back in the middle of 2002 little did I know that one of the first jobs I would have as Chairman would be to pay tribute to one Executive Director and welcome a new one.



But that's exactly what I have done, with the premature and extremely sad passing of Neil Thomas and the appointment of John Pemberton, a man known to everyone in the industry, as his successor.

My first recollection of Neil, certainly to talk to, was at the National Education Conference. Sitting alone having breakfast, Neil approached and asked if he might join me. During that short conversation over breakfast Neil made a relatively new member feel that he belonged. It has amused and frustrated me over the years since, that Neil's reputation in some quarters was of aloofness. While an introverted and quiet man in many ways, Neil also displayed to those fortunate to be close to him a compassionate, fair and always resolute manner.

I, like many before me, had occasion to cross swords with Neil and for me it was the National Championship and its future (or not!) at Carden Park. While at the time bitterly disappointed not to have the chance to host the event for a second time I came to realise that Neil's strength and determination to do what was best for the Association, even at risk of confrontation and potential disharmony with a member and creation of stress for himself, came above all else. That was Neil Thomas and, I feel, the one characteristic which has helped this Association flourish.

It would not be overstating the case to say that Neil was the person who ensured that BIGGA is where it is today. He took on the post in 1987 when the three previous Associations came together with a combined membership of around 2500, working out of a small office provided by the STRI in Bingley. From those small beginnings Neil steered BIGGA to a position where it is one of the movers and shakers in the golf industry. You may not be aware but BIGGA is regarded as an important body within golf and, as an Association, we are invited to contribute whenever golfing issues are debated. Relations with the other golfing bodies, the R&A, to whom BIGGA owes a huge debt; the Home Unions; the Secretaries Association; the European Tour and the sister Associations around the world, and in particular the GCSAA, are all flourishing. BIGGA can certainly say that it has grown up.

Couple that with the fact that BIGGA now owns its own headquarters building and you can see why Neil can be proud of the legacy he has left.

No-one will feel his loss more acutely than his wife, Elaine, and children, Scott, Grant, Adam and Natalie, but his passing also left a huge void within the Association.

While they have lost a loving husband and proud

father, I hope that we in the Association can continue to offer comfort, support and friendship to them as they try to come to terms with their situation.

I would also like to thank, all those who have contacted BIGGA to pay their respects and in particular the GCSAA and their Past President, Jon Maddern, who flew in from the States to attend the funeral.

Prior to the normal March meeting the Board met to discuss Neil's replacement. After a frank and open discussion, and using the guidelines for both job and people specification laid out previously by consultants, the Board of Management feels that we have exactly the right man to fill that void in John Pemberton, who had been Acting Executive Director, during Neil's period of illness. John, who had been Neil's right hand man since he joined the Association in 1993, proved to everyone during the difficult last nine months that he has all the qualities necessary to take on the role full time and the Board of Management had no hesitation in offering him the job.

John knows every inch of the Association and those members who have had the privilege of dealing with him over the past 11 years will also know that he would do anything for them.

John will now have the opportunity to use his particular blend of talent, drive and enthusiasm over a wider brief and I am sure BIGGA will benefit.

Having worked closely with John over recent months I am personally delighted with the appointment. He has been a great help to me in recent months and I am sure that the support he has been to me will continue for the remainder of my Chairmanship.

Recent weeks and months have been a real roller coaster of emotion, bitter sweet in the extreme. Periods of real sadness and despair as Neil lost his battle with crippling illness, but also the other side of the coin as we found a more than able successor, who will continue the great work that goes into making BIGGA an Association to be proud of.

Andy Campbell
Chairman