



News from the Chief Executive

Three months into my new role as Chief Executive and I wonder where the time has gone. The management structure at Headquarters has been revised and now centres around myself, Ken Richardson, Scott MacCallum and Rosie Hancher thus creating a positive team which is committed to working with the Board of Management and to moving the Association forward. In line with my determination to improve the transparency of the day to day running of the office we have already visited many Section and Regional events and meetings, with more planned for the coming months. We have also welcomed many visitors to BIGGA HOUSE, some for the first time who realise that the staff are approachable and work hard on their behalf. This exercise has been well received by members who all too often feel that the headquarters staff are remote from them and the realities and pressures of greenkeeping today. I have also been concentrating on building relationships with the other bodies with whom we are associated as well as strengthening the ties with our trade partners. While we are a significant body ourselves we must not lose sight of the fact that we are only one part of the industry and if we are to influence thinking in the future on such topics as the environment or education then we need to present a unified approach to others.

Through my column each month I will attempt to keep you up to date with BIGGA's current policy, its implementation progress and I'm sure a few thought provoking and perhaps at time contentious observations and comments.

Plans are well under way for BTME & ClubHouse 2005 and the halls are already approximately 80% sold. Twice a year we hold a Steering Committee meeting at Aldwark comprising of exhibitor representatives and members of BIGGA staff. There is however still a strong undercurrent in the trade which would like to restrict the number of shows serving the industry to one each year in order to reduce their costs.

The more popular suggestions are: 1) Alternate shows annually with the IOG ie SALTEX one year and BTME & ClubHouse the next; 2) Combine forces with the IOG to produce one show at the NEC and 3) Reduce BTME & ClubHouse to a two day show. The Association is committed to an annual exhibition in Harrogate and will do its utmost to ensure that it is a successful three day event. In this connection Rosie and I recently travelled to Peterborough to meet with members of the Outdoor Power and Equipment Industries division of the Agricultural Engineers Association whose members include some of the major machinery manufacturers. Their concern over the future of exhibitions was re-iterated and I can only stress how crucial the profit from the show is to the funding of BIGGA's activities. We continue to talk to try to find a mutually acceptable solution however the support of members is paramount. If you need any more information or would like to know how you can help then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Finally I would like to thank Derek Farrington for his eight years of loyal service to the members of BIGGA, especially in the South East Region where he was the Regional Administrator also latterly helping out in the South West and South Wales Region. Derek retired at the end of May however I am sure that he will continue his ties with the Association through other channels.

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SCOTTISH REGION

North

My apologies to the Section for there being no reports for the last two months, so I will try to bring you up to date.

New members are Dale Steven, Forres GC; Marc Miller, Elgin GC; Christopher Bruce, Duff House Royal; Stephen Grant, Kintore GC; David Leys, Kintore GC; Steven Arnott, Kintore GC; Fraser Munro, Kingussie GC; Welcome to the Section lads. I hope you can make it to some of the outings.

The Spring outing at Moray GC in May was well attended and the course was very well presented by Martin Cameron and his staff with the greens in particular being in 1st class condition.

The Captain and catering staff are also to be thanked for a very enjoyable day. The prizewinners were as follows;

Longest drives: Class 3 G. Asher, Kemnay GC; Class 2 P. Wood, Newmachar GC; Class 1 M. Miller, Moray GC. Nearest the Pin: A Stewart, Royal Aberdeen GC. Sweep: 4. R. Donald, Oldmeldrum GC; 3. S. Robertson, Craigiehill GC; 2. H. Mclatchie, Peterhead GC; 1. M. Main Moray GC.

Guest Winner: Ross Warrender 89-13-76. Trade Winner: Mike Dennis, Rigby Taylor, 84-11-73. Committee Trophy: H. Mclatchie, Peterhead GC, 93-22-71. Veterans: 2. G. Asher, Kemnay GC, 106-18-88; 1. A. Grant, Fraserburgh GC, 88-13-75. Apprentice Trophy: 2. M. Anderson, Elgin GC, 89-6-83; 1. M. Rae, Newmachar GC, 77-4-73. Class 3: 3. D. Adams, Newmachar GC, 107-28-81; 2. M. Wood, Moray GC, 97-17-80; 1. H. Mclatchie, Peterhead GC, 93-22-71. Class 2: 3. B. Brooks, Newmachar GC, 86-12-74; 2. B. Cocker, Alyth GC, 88-14-74. Class 1: 1. M. Main, Moray GC, 87-16-71. Class 1: 3. A. Stewart, Royal Aberdeen GC, 82-6-76; 2. Bradley Wood 78-3-75; 1. R. Donald, Oldmeldrum GC, 79-6-73. Scratch: 2. B. Cruickshanks, Garmouth/Kingston GC, 76; 1. M. Ross, Elgin, 72

200 Club Winners: Jan. Stewart McBain; Feb. S. McIntosh; Mar. H. Mclatchie; Apr. J. Robertson.

Some other news, Celtic diehard, Robert Hardie, Head Greenkeeper at Craibstone GC, has become a father again and this time its a baby boy. Congratulations Rab. Also congratulations to Keith Wood, of Aberdeen Links, whose wife has had a daughter.

A major thanks to Jim McCormack, of Kirriemuir GC, who raised around £5,000 for the Anthony Nolan Trust when he scaled the heights of Kilimajaro. A tremendous achievement Jim and a lot of people are very thankful to you for your efforts.

Congratulations also go to Gary Gruber, Head Greenkeeper of Skibo Castle GC, who presided over the Northern Open in May. The course was a great credit to Gary and his staff.

On the golfing side congratulations again to Steven MacIntosh, Course Manager at Torvean GC, who retained his Ross-shire County Championship title at Tain GC with scores of 70, 71 in very difficult conditions; and to Derek Chisholm Deputy Head Greenkeeper at Kingussie GC who won the Inverness County Championship at Kingussie GC with scores of 66 and 68, also in very difficult conditions. A season ticket to Celtic Park was also a prize for these guys.

On the move is Stuart Hogg, of Fortrose GC, who has now taken the position of Course Manager of St Annes Old Links. Stuart was at Fortrose GC for many years and had been in charge for the last 10.

He has recently been awarded his Master Greenkeeper Certificate, which is a testimony to his ambition and the hard work he has put in over the years. Fortrose GC have also been awarded many environmental awards under Stuart's supervision.

Kevin Fowler, Stuart's Deputy for the last few years has been appointed as the new Course Manager and we wish him all the best.

I hope everyone has a trouble free summer, and the weather is good to you.
Iain Gunn