



Welcome

AS CHANGEABLE AS THE WEATHER

Well, we can honestly say the season has well and truly started. Phil Mickelson has shaken off the tag of "Best Player Not to Have Won a Major" in outstanding fashion at Augusta. Ironically I missed the best Masters for several years as I was on holiday in Tenerife where none of it was shown live on television. With so many good Spanish players I found that a little strange, and not a little frustrating.

Back home, competition secretaries are sharpening their pencils, or to be more precise in this modern age, dusting down their software and you are receiving plaudits for the excellence of your winter programme construction work... well, it would be nice wouldn't it? But what can we hope for in 2004?

Well good weather would be nice. I know how much you suffered from the cold start to the season last year and I'm sure a plea for warm sunshine and a little nocturnal rain would not go amiss.

If you think about it so much rides on weather in the greenkeeping profession. A good dose of the the aforementioned combination and you will have every chance to prepare your course to its best. Golfers have the sun on their backs and putting surfaces which give the best chance for the ball to drop. Result? Happy golfers, and happy golfers mean fewer moans and fewer moans mean fewer complaints flying in your direction. That allows you to get on with your job. If you're not pulled away to answer the complaints of a 23 handicapper who thinks the only reason he three putted five times was the state of the green you can concentrate still further on the course condition.

Alternatively, if the weather goes against you, you will no doubt find that it is your political acumen rather than your agronomic know how that is of most use.

You would hope that more people would appreciate that the weather can't be controlled and a degree of understanding for the problems it brings wouldn't go amiss.

So can I shed any light on the upcoming weather? I've trawled the web to find out any long term forecasts and can reveal that May is going to be significantly warmer than average with rainfall below average. Having said that the third week will see rain in most areas of the country.

Looking further ahead scientists say that sea levels will rise by four centimetres a decade increasing the risk of flooding.

Further still and by the year 2080 we can expect double the number of days 25 degrees or above than we have now but we will also experience more intense storms.

That's what our successors can look forward to and no doubt that will cause them just as many problems as you are facing at the moment. By then though I'd like to think that golfers were able to take a more objective and mature approach and cut the greenkeeping staff some justifiable slack.

Scott MacCallum, Editor

NEW LOOK TO BIGGA'S SALES TEAM



▲ Samantha Richardson, Sue McDonough and Amy Newport

The BIGGA sales team has taken on a new look with the arrival of Samantha Richardson, Sue McDonough and Amy Newport who, together with Sales Manager, Rosie Hancher, will be responsible for selling adverts and exhibition space in Greenkeeper International, the BIGGA Golf Directory, BTME and ClubHouse.

Advertising Sales Executive, Samantha, 28, joins the Association from Maxi Print in York where latterly she was selling advertising for the official magazine of English Cricket. Prior to that she worked for an IT company in York.

A qualified Beauty Therapist, Sam married Dominic in Las Vegas last year and they have just moved into a new home in Fulford, York, which they share with two dogs, three cats and two rabbits. In her spare time she is a keen artist, specialising in landscapes.

Sue, 35, is Exhibition Sales Executive and is reunited with Rosie with whom she worked in Harrogate where, together, they launched a magazine for school leavers.

Previously she worked for News International in London. As part of the team on the Times Educational Supplement (TES), she sold advertising on Nursery World Magazine and was involved with the launch of the Nursery World Exhibition held in Olympia and GMEX.

Now happily living in Harrogate Sue juggles her work and home life with her husband, Michael, and five and a half year old daughter, Hannah.

Amy, 25, is Sales and Marketing Assistant and arrives at BIGGA HOUSE

from a post with an agricultural company based in Harrogate. She holds a BSc in Business Technology from Sheffield Hallam University, where she also spent two years in army training before deciding on life as a civilian. She is currently undertaking a marketing course at night school.

Amy once took four months to travel round America and during that time dropped into Gracelands to pay homage to one of her heroes, Elvis.

She lives in Harrogate and got to hear of BTME and ClubHouse through her fiance, Chris, who is an exhibition designer with his own company, Ncompass. They have a dog called Vegas.

The changes to the Sales team were brought about following the departure of Cheryl Broomhead and Katie Davies and the need to support the growing Exhibition sales of the Association.

UPDATED USGA GUIDELINES

After a nearly year-long review by more than 100 scientists, agronomists and industry experts, an updated edition of the USGA's publication Recommendations for a Method of Putting Green Construction is now available.

For more than 40 years the USGA Green Section has published recommendations for the construction of golf putting greens. USGA greens are widely recognised for their agronomic excellence because of their history of success throughout the United States and many other countries.

Many of the greens constructed to the original recommendations, which were released in 1960, are still in use today. However, to

address the increasing demands placed on modern putting greens, the USGA conducts updates which incorporate the latest research information from around the world, much of which is sponsored by the USGA Turfgrass and Environmental Research programme.

The guidelines represent a time-tested, agronomically sound method of building putting greens. They are offered to the game of golf and turfgrass industry at no charge. The 2004 USGA recommendations can be obtained by visiting the USGA Web site at:

<http://www.usga.org/green/coned/greens/recom-mendations.html>