



Welcome

HOPES FOR 2005

As I sit here it is just before Christmas and, with the January magazine almost complete, my mind is wandering. What hopes do I have for 2005?

Well obviously Harrogate is at the forefront of all our minds here at BIGGA HOUSE, so wish number one must be for everyone to have a successful week. That of course is easy to say but when you arrive at the beginning of the week what do you want to achieve from your trip so that you can say it has been successful?

From a visitor's perspective I would imagine it is to update yourself on what the marketplace has to offer and perhaps arrange for some new equipment to be tested at your club. Of course, it is also an ideal time to whip out the club chequebook and buy, buy, buy. Companies are more than willing to take your money and there may be some special show discounts to make it even more tempting. Away from the Halls the Workshops and Seminars could provide a solution to a problem you've been wrestling with for a while and the chance to catch up with colleagues is always eagerly accepted.

From an exhibitor's point of view Harrogate is a superb opportunity to influence and expand your customer base. Many of the top Course Managers, not just in the UK but also Europe and the rest of the world, will pass the front of your stand, eager to be impressed by what you have on offer. A proactive approach to dealing with them could reap its own rewards. Wouldn't it be great if you left Harrogate having made contact with 50 Course Managers you hadn't previously dealt with; already an arrangement with a percentage of them to trial machinery and, with luck, some firm orders.

For we, the BIGGA staff, if all, or even part of the above comes true for you we will all be happy and if you are pleased with your week we will have had a successful week too.

Elsewhere, next year The Open is back at St Andrews and for the benefit of Gordon Moir and Ewan Grant I hope the weather in the lead up to the Championship is conducive to producing a fast running, burnt out links so that the famous Old Course will be a genuine test of golf.

Then I hope The Open produces some spectacular sporting theatre. The last two years have been fine, and it is great to see an underdog win, but I'd love the top players in the world to be battling it out on the final day and for one of them lift the Jug. What I want is an "I was there" moment from this year's Open.

Finally, as a long suffering Scottish rugby fan, I'd love our national team to produce some exciting moments in the Six Nations Championship and perhaps even register a win or two. Of all my hopes that's probably the least likely however.

Have a super 2005.

Scott MacCallum, Editor

GOLF CLUBS WARNED OVER NEW FIRE REGULATIONS

Golf clubs across the UK are being urged not to penny pinch when it comes to new fire regulations soon to be introduced.

Michael Shaw, National Secretary of the National Golf Clubs Advisory Association (NGCAA), explained, "All golf clubs need to have a Fire Certificate in order to operate. These have always been supplied free of charge by the local Fire Service but from January 2005, such certificates will no longer exist.

"Instead, clubs will become responsible for their own fire risk assessments. Most clubs will need to rely on the expertise of an external consultant to undertake a review and this could cost quite a lot of money depending on the size of the club."

Although a system will be implemented to penalise clubs who fail to undertake assessments and implement suitable precautions, the NGCAA is concerned that many will flout their obligations.

"I'm certain that many clubs won't want to pay for an assessment and will just carry on without commissioning a fire risk assessment. The harsh reality is that these clubs could be jeopardising the health and safety of their members and guests in their bid to save a few pounds."

Shaw also added that further problems may arise on any conversion or variation of the club's registration certificate or licence when the new licencing regulations take effect in February next year.



FOUR OUT OF SIX AS NORTH WIN AGAIN

The Norrie Whytock Trophy was once again played over the Auchterarder Golf Course and for the fourth time in six years the North Section ran out the winners.

Our thanks to our sponsors Bayer, for their continued support and to David Drummond, their Scottish representative, for his support on the day.

As usual Archie Dunn and his staff had the course in excellent condition despite the trying weather conditions that has prevailed this year. Our thanks also to the Captain and committee of Auchterarder Golf Club for allowing us the use of the facilities at Auchterarder.

With all five Sections competing the usual format applied. Four man team with the best three scores to count in a Stapleford format.

The North Section again run out the winners with a total of 99 points, with Ayrshire Section runners up on 93 points.

The winning team comprised Steve Sullivan, Craigie Hill GC, George Mitchell, Newmachar GC, James McCormack, Kirriemuir GC, and Mark Main, Moray GC.

Next year's event will be played at Auchterarder Golf Club, on August 22 2005.

Peter J. Boyd, Regional Administrator

PALMER TEAM UP WITH WIEDENMANN



Palmer's Groundcare premises at Selby (Inset) Dick Palmer.

Palmer's Groundcare Ltd, of Selby, North Yorkshire, has been appointed as the Wiedenmann UK dealer for the region.

Commenting on the appointment managing director Dick Palmer said, "We are delighted to have been appointed as the Wiedenmann dealer for this area of the UK. With the Terra Spike range, their blowers, rotary decks and grass collectors this will enable us to provide a complete service to the industry."

Bruce Alexander of Wiedenmann UK added, "We offer a warm welcome to Dick and his team. They have excellent facilities at Selby and are able provide the high service levels expected by our customers.

"We look forward to a long and mutually beneficial working partnership."

AWARD FOR EDITOR

Greenkeeper International Editor Scott MacCallum has won the Writing category of the Communicator in Business (CIB) North Awards.

Scott won the prize for his "A Racing Certainty" article on Nigel Mansell and his Woodbury Park Golf Club in Devon, which appeared in the magazine in October '03

The Award ceremony was held in the world famous Cavern Club, in Liverpool, and to mark the occasion, and in keeping with a venue made famous by The Beatles, each of the category winners was presented with a specially made Gold Disc by CIB National Chairman, Ken Runicles.



ETESIA CELEBRATES NEW PARTNERSHIP AND DEALER SUCCESSES

Etesia UK Ltd have entered into an agreement with Kramp UK, appointing them as official replacement parts distributors to Etesia's specialist outlets.

The announcement was made at Etesia's 2004 Dealer Awards event, when over 50 representatives from the company's UK network were invited to visit Kramp UK's 70,000 square metre headquarters in Biggleswade, Bedfordshire.

Speaking at the launch of the new initiative, Managing Director, Patrick Vives, said, "Kramp have been successfully handling Etesia's spare parts for some time, so this is just an extension of that service."

At the awards dinner Burrows GM Ltd received the UK Dealer of the Year Award.

Other award winners included: Alex McDougall Mowers – Best pedestrian mowers sales; Parks & Grounds Machinery Ltd – Best new professional dealer; Tom Williams Garden Machinery – Best new domestic dealer; Dean Mowers received the plaque for Best increase in turnover.



Bill Nelson, MD of Burrows GM Ltd (left) receives his UK Dealer Of The Year Shield from Etesia's MD Patrick Vives.

CLARKE PLANS WORLD CLASS GOLF RESORT

GML Estates Ltd, part of Channel-Island based Orana Group, has agreed terms to acquire Gilford Castle, in Gilford, Co. Down. GML intends to submit plans to renovate the Castle and outer buildings and to convert the grounds into a world-class 18-hole golf course and golf club, with the first Darren Clarke Golf Academy.

It is believed that the total investment will be around £25 million and will create approximately 100 full and part time jobs.

Darren, with ex-pro golfer David Jones, will be designing his first golf course in Northern Ireland specifically for the Gilford Castle project. It is intended that the course will rank among the best in Europe and be of a standard high enough for international competitions. He will also help to set up and oversee the first Darren Clarke Golf Academy, which will encourage and train young people from all over Ireland.

GML plan also to provide a first class clubhouse, with restaurant, bar, golf shop, and other facilities. The golf course will be 7,000 plus yards in length and designed to both preserve and to take advantage of the existing mature woodland, with the River Bann providing a major water feature to challenge the world's best golfers.

"I am very excited about doing my first course at home, especially somewhere as good as the Gilford Castle estate. The landscape is beautiful and we will create a stunning course, said Darren Clarke.

"My mindset going into it is to create a championship golf course, but also one that amateurs can enjoy as well. We have two fantastic golf courses in Northern Ireland, Royal Portrush and Royal County Down, which are known worldwide. My ideal would be to make Gilford Castle every bit as good as those two – to have it right up there so that we have three of the world's top golf courses in Northern Ireland. We want people not only from Ireland travelling to play it, but people from all over the world."

NEED A LIFT TO BTME?

BIGGA have placed a new discussion forum on the BIGGA Bulletin Board for members to arrange transport to BTME & ClubHouse, in Harrogate, on 18 – 20 January.

Entitled 'Car Share Scheme to BTME & ClubHouse' the forum is designed for members to organise transport arrangements with other members in their Section or Region.

So if you need a lift to the Exhibition or if you have spare space in you car, and are willing to offer your services, then get on the Bulletin Board, which is located in the members' section of www.bigga.org.uk.

SGM SCORES WITH OPEN DAYS

Around 200 customers attended the annual Scottish Grass Machinery Open Days in December, at Dunfermline's East End Park, who SGM sponsor.

Customers from across Scotland attended the event at the Scottish Premier League stadium where they viewed the latest groundcare equipment and talked to technical experts. This included representation from three of SGM's new partners, Shibaura, Kioti and Claas.

Guest speakers at the SGM open days were Des Murray, principal advisor, APSE Scotland, who spoke on "Liveability - Creating integrated service delivery function", and Duncan Peddie, Head Greenkeeper at Alloa Golf Club, who spoke on "The benefits of contract hire to the user".



IAN'S FA CUP FOOTBALL FANTASY

While most young boys dream of playing in the FA Cup, the original and still most romantic Cup competition in the world, unfortunately not many of us get to live out that particular fantasy.

Ian Cambridge is one fellow who has actually tasted the glory of an FA Cup run. Ian, a greenkeeper at Saffron Walden Golf



Ian Cambridge scoring after four minutes in FA Cup first round against Shrewsbury.

Club, is the top marksman for South League Premier side Histon, who reached the FA Cup second round, played on Saturday December 4.

Histon, who were on a 13 match winning run, hosted high-flying League Two side Yeovil at Bridge Road.

Despite a three division gap between the two clubs, the result was only settled in the final minute. 0-0 at the break, Yeovil grabbed two early second half goals before Ian whipped in a superb cross for team mate Neil Kennedy to head home and put the contest back in the balance.

It was only in injury time, when Histon had thrown everything forward in search of an equaliser, that Yeovil broke to secure their progression to the third round, where they will play Rotherham.

"We gave as good as we got. We played well, and can really hold our heads high. In the end the main difference between the sides was that Yeovil were more organised, as you would expect from a professional team," said Ian.

"We are a very fit team, and in the FA Cup adrenaline gets you through, so we matched Yeovil for the majority of the game. We did ourselves proud. It was a great day, and a wonderful payday for the club as well."

Ian, 30, spearheaded Histon's six match cup run, firstly helping Histon through four qualifying matches. His side beat Hampton and Richmond Borough 2-0 in the first qualifying round, where Ian claimed both goals, Redditch in the second round, coming from 2 down to win 3-2,

Horsham at home 5-1, and finally Wealdstone 2-0, where Ian was again on the score sheet.

In the first round, they were drawn against another League Two side, Shrewsbury, and won 2-0 with Ian once again banging one in to see them through to face Yeovil.

"This was the biggest match of my career. We lost in the first round last year to Working, but to get to the second round and play a higher league team this year is even bigger."

Despite the defeat Ian is looking forward to the rest of the season. "We are fifth in the league, just four points off top spot with games in hand, and promotion is our main focus now.

"We are also in the third round of the FA Trophy, and that is something we are looking to win."

With a promising season still ahead, it will be a busy 2005 for Ian.

"My job suits me, as we start early so finish early, so that means I can always make training. It is tough sometimes if you have played a mid week match away and don't get back until very late at night, then have to be back up at 6am to work, but I get by.

"The golf club and the lads at Saffron are great to me. We run a shadow staff at weekends, and Ray (Goodsall, Course Manager) always schedules it so that I'm free if Histon are away.

"If the game is at home, I'll do a morning shift then go straight to the ground. They cater for my football."

SHERRIFF AMENITY ANNOUNCE NEW APPOINTMENT

Sherriff Amenity, turf care and sports equipment suppliers in the UK, have appointed Tim Combs as an amenity specialist responsible for covering South Wales and the South West.

Tim, who has a degree in turf management, has spent fourteen years in the turf care industry including spells at three different golf clubs in the New York metropolitan area, the last as Course Manager.

"Tim's appointment continues the growth and development of Sherriff Amenity in the UK", said Mark Pyrah, Director of Sherriff Amenity.



CHAMPIONSHIP SUPPORT

RANSOMES JACOBSEN
A Turf Company

BIGGA acknowledges the support of Ransomes Jacobsen for the BIGGA National Golf Championship, held at Alwoodley Golf Club in Leeds in October.

Unfortunately the Ransomes Jacobsen logo was missed off the review of the Championship in the November issue of the magazine and we would like to rectify that omission this month.