

## Feature listing from June 2003

**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

**April 2004;** Know your Rules; Tournament Preparation; Landmarks in Greenkeeping; Security

**May 2004;** Goodwood Club; Seed or Turf?; Biological Product Survey; Water Features; Recycling; BIGGA Environment Competition

**June 2004;** Fairy Rings; Biologicals; The Grove; Kubota Profile; Turf; Sand and Rootzone

**July 2004;** Royal Troon Open Preview, Mowing, Disease Analysis

**August 2004;** Neil Thomas Memorial Golf Day; Open review; Royal Cinque Ports; Irrigation; Mowers (2); Saltex Preview; Best Practice; Top Dressing

**September 2004;** Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Preview; Ravensworth Golf Club; Turf Disease; Royal Holloway College; Tractors; The Greener Approach to Greenkeeping

**October 2004;** STRI 75th Anniversary; Kenwick Park GC; Ecology; John Deere National Team Championship; Best Practice; Top Dressing; Saltex Review; Aeration

**November 2004;** Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Final; The BIGGA National Championship; Comrie GC; CV Advice; Drainage; Construction; Fences

**December 2004;** BTME & ClubHouse Preview; Henley GC; Grass Identification; Trees; Environmental Winner; BIGGA Delegation; Interview Advice; College Listings

**January 2005;** Sir Michael Bonallack; Parkstone GC; Machinery Servicing; Ransomes Jacobsen Scholarship; Recycled Products; John Deere Team Championship; Tees; Negotiation Advice

**February 2005;** Harrogate 2005 Review; Meet the Chairman; Environmental Competition; Tyres; Coombe Hill GC

**March 2005;** Alwoodley GC; Difficult Areas; Drainage; Irrigation; Greens

**April 2005;** Augusta Syndrome; Thornhill GC; Difficult Areas Part 2; Turf Tonics; BIGGA Delegation; Fescue Grass

**May 2005;** Hellidon Lakes; Power Mowers; Pest Control; Cutting Heights Survey; Nozzles

## BIGGA membership - What's it worth?



I have recently been interested to read members postings on the website bulletin board about the cost of membership and note the varying views on this topic. Some members feel that current subscription rates are too high and that they don't get much for their money, while others feel that they would happily pay double for what they get from the Association.

The cost is a very subjective matter, as with many things in life. What some call cheap, others call expensive. I suppose that value for money depends upon how often you use the service and how useful it is to you personally. Rather like golf club members, those who play regularly get a much better deal per round than those who play only a few times each year.

It may surprise some to know that member's subscriptions make up only about 25% of our income. This means that 75% of our income comes almost entirely from business with the trade, such as BTME and magazine/directory advertising. In other words, if for any reason we were to reduce our reliance on these external forms of income then subscriptions would have to increase fourfold for us to maintain our current services.

While we cannot envisage a situation in which all of our external income would suddenly evaporate, we are aware that such heavy reliance on external revenues is not the healthiest of situations, hence the need to increase steadily subscription rates over and above inflation. It must be borne in mind that our relationship with the trade is mutually beneficial and they prosper from a well organised, ready made customer base. Our steady progress is, I am sure, just as vital to them as it is to us.

Subscription rates for Course Manager/Head Greenkeepers and Deputies have traditionally been based on cost. Direct benefits to these members have been costed out and the rate set to equal that cost. Rates for Assistants and First Assistants are below cost and therefore subsidised by other members. This is because research has shown that they tend to use the services less, they tend to have less disposable income to afford membership and we wish to encourage new, young members into the Association.

So far I have concentrated on the facts about membership and subscription rates and I hope it has given you a clearer picture of why things are as they are but, as I stated earlier, it is really all about what you get for your money. Well, I could list all the direct member benefits such as subsidised education, expert assistance through the magazine and the website, insurance, legal helpline and discount card to name but a few.

For me personally, however, these are not solely what membership is all about. What it is about is camaraderie, fellowship and mutual support. It affords us all the opportunity and great privilege of being able to try to assist young greenkeepers in the way that we were so warmly and ably assisted by more experienced BIGGA members in the past.

Without BIGGA I know I would not have visited so many golf courses and talked to so many greenkeepers willing to share their problems and their expertise. I would not have met so many friendly and genuinely supportive people and I would not have so readily taken on board the values of others that

served to round my education beyond the point of me thinking the world owed me a living.

If you want to know what BIGGA is about, then ask those on the website who have just received invaluable help and support from their fellow members. Ask those young men who have just attended their first Regional seminar or Section golf match and discovered the great bond of camaraderie within our industry. Ask the young greenkeeper who is about to complete a day out raking bunkers at St Andrews in the Open Championship and will be sipping beer with experienced and friendly Course Managers willing to share both their experience and their sense of humour.

Ask the Section Committee members up and down the land what they get out of it? Why do they spend so much of their valuable time and effort late into the night organising events for other people? I guarantee their answers will not centre on money and materialistic values.

I would like to think that we pay our subs, not so much for what we can get out of it but for what we can put into the respectable profession we have chosen to follow. It, rather selfishly, gives me great comfort to know, that some of my subscription is used to support those who need support the most. BIGGA supported me when I needed it and I see the subscription as a small price to pay for the strengthening of our Association whose stated aims are to aid the disenfranchised, reward the diligent and advance the prospects of us all.

When buying a car we make value judgements on whether it is a good deal or not and whether we will end up winners or losers, but what price lasting friendships, mutual respect and the shared bond of our profession?

'For when the One Great Scorer comes  
To write against your name  
He marks not that you won or lost  
But how you played the game'  
(Grantland Rice 1880 - 1954)

Kerran Daly  
Chairman