



# News from the Chief Executive

This month's article is coming from Jonkoping in Sweden where I am visiting the conference and exhibition of the Swedish Greenkeepers Association. The SGA and BIGGA have a long history of association and the Swedish greenkeepers feel that they have a strong bond with their counterparts in the UK. When I sit and talk to them it surprises me how similar many of the working conditions, golfer's expectations, politics and pressures are. If it were not for the language then I could well imagine that I was sat in any group in Harrogate during our own event in January.

Everyone that I have met has made me very welcome, they have always tried to speak English when in my company and speak highly of BIGGA and its members. Thank you everyone for your hospitality. There are about 600 golf courses in Sweden and the SGA has 2,000 members making it the next largest in Europe after BIGGA.

The Swedish greenkeepers are coming over to Harrogate in greater numbers thanks to the increased contact by BIGGA and this widens the networking opportunities and also helps keep exhibitors happy. The SGA also sit on the board of FEGGA and I have been having discussions with representatives about FEGGA's business plans and looking at BIGGA's possible involvement again. Membership of FEGGA is by no means part of our Association's current plans, however we continue to look to the future and I am in regular communication with FEGGA's Chief Executive.

Arrangements for Harrogate Week 2006 demand more and more of everyone's time at HQ and I find it hard to believe that it is now only just over three months away. This event is vital to the future well being of the Association and each year we strive to develop both the education and the Exhibition in an attempt to attract new visitors, not just from the UK but also from all around the world. Please take some time to study the brochure or visit the dedicated website, [www.harrogateweek.org.uk](http://www.harrogateweek.org.uk).

As you should know from my previous articles the Association is under great pressure to arrange an Exhibition only once every two years. Under the current conditions then this could spell disaster for BIGGA. It certainly could not stand the significant reduction in income and there would have to be savings made elsewhere. In the long term this can only be to the disadvantage of the member and the industry.

I like to think that the Association enjoys a very good working relationship with the exhibitors but every member has a part to play in the success of the event. Please support your Association and I am always open to suggestions for improvement, both with Harrogate Week and generally.

During the coming weeks I and my colleagues from HQ will be visiting some Section and Region events and we look forward to hearing your views.

**John Pemberton**

Around  
the Green

## SCOTTISH REGION

The Scottish Region has several changes to announce in relation to Harrogate Week 2006. It has been decided to withdraw travel to and from the Conference venue at Harrogate. Having taken everything into consideration the Board has decided it is no longer practical or cost effective to continue with this service.

As in previous years Harrogate Week will provide Seminars and Workshops. Two day, one day and half day workshops will be available. The cost of these will be intimated nearer the time but it should be noted they are not part of the Scottish Region package. However there will be a series of Seminars run by Trade firms at which everyone is welcome to attend free of charge.

The Regional Administrator will continue to arrange and book accommodation for anyone who wishes to attend. The accommodation will, as usual, be the Moat House Hotel, Harrogate. The cost of three nights accommodation on a bed and breakfast basis in en-suite rooms on January 24, 25 and 26 2006 costs £155.00.

Once all accommodation has been confirmed the Regional Administrator can provide names of all attendees, this will allow members to contact each other, make travel arrangements and perhaps share the cost of travel. The Regional Administrator has already contacted the National Rail Help line, 0845 7 225 225, and has confirmed that competitive rates and lower cost travel is widely available.

Booking forms for accommodation at Harrogate Week 2006 are available from the Regional Administrator.

Peter J. Boyd.

Regional Administrator

## East

It has been a strange year - wet during May and June followed by the long dry weeks of July and August. However the exception to the rule has been the Northumberland coast where George Thompson, at Berwick Golf Club, tells me they had 112ml of rain during a four week period in July/August compared to Colin Irvine, at Muirfield, who had 12ml.

On behalf of the Section I would like to offer congratulations to Stuart Greenwood, Course Manager at North Berwick Golf Club, on his appointment as Vice Chairman (Elect) of the Scottish Region. Stuart will commence his duties in November 2005.

I have two golfing events to report this month, the first of which is Willie Woods Tournament held at Haddington Golf Club on Thursday August 25. Our thanks go to the Captain for granting courtesy of the course, the club steward and staff for keeping all the competitors fed and watered and finally Norman Wood and his greens staff for presenting the course in excellent condition.

Results based on the better ball format were as follows: 1. Kenny Mail & Maurice Hood, West Linton GC; 2. Alan Campbell & H. Hogg, Jedburgh GC; 3. Kevin Hodges & D. Robson, Longniddre GC.

The fourth Christopher Yeaman Junior Trophy was held at West Linton Golf Club on Saturday August 27. This event is held annually to raise funds for hospital and care charities and has already raised about £12,750 for various good causes. The event takes its name from the son of the Course Manager, Chris Yeaman, and is organised by the family on his behalf. Christopher has received two liver transplants and extensive health care since he was hurt in a sledging accident almost 10 years ago.

The competition takes the form of a Texas Scramble and this year 65 teams of four played, starting at 7am and finishing at twilight. Scores were low with two teams achieving 54.25. Christopher's own team achieved a commendable 56.8 but failed to repeat the winning performance of an earlier year. With the benefit of a raffle and auction the total funds raised this year were approximately £5,200 which has been donated to Ward 6 at the Sick Children's Hospital in Edinburgh, and Radio Lollipop. Finally, Christopher would like to thank everyone within the fine turf industry, who contributed financially or otherwise, to help make the event such a big success.