



## News from the Chief Executive

Plans for Harrogate 2006 are slowly coming together and as you will see from other parts of this magazine there will be a massive increase in education on offer when compared with previous years. This will be spread over a six day period and there should certainly be something for everyone, from Student to Manager, and no matter whether you are a Greenkeeper, Groundsman, Golf Club Official or perhaps employed in one of the other turf related activities.

On August 18 we held an Open Day for Exhibitors, both current and potential, at Harrogate International Centre (HIC). The morning included a presentation by myself, Rosie Hancher and Ken Richardson and was specifically designed for them to be able to gain a better understanding of the scope of Harrogate Week and give them an opportunity to discuss the future direction of our event with the BIGGA Management Team. The day was well supported and there was representation from all aspects of the broad exhibitor base. In explaining the benefits available to both exhibitor and visitor it quickly became apparent that it is generally not appreciated how complex an event this has become and how today it is much more than just a show with a few 'fringe' activities. The exhibitors would like to see more visitors from not only golf course or golf club management but also anyone involved in turf care, especially decision makers or those who influence decisions.

The advantage of attending Harrogate Week as a visitor, whether in full or in part, will be widely marketed over the coming months and a web site has been developed to enhance ease of access to information. The address is [www.harrogateweek.org.uk](http://www.harrogateweek.org.uk) and the site is now online. I encourage you to have a look at it and welcome any suggestions for improvement. These can be emailed to me at [john@bigga.co.uk](mailto:john@bigga.co.uk) or, of course, there is always traditional mail or telephone. Many of the exhibitors have offered to help with the promotion of Harrogate Week however members can also assist in this area.

I would like to thank HIC for use of the facilities on the Open Day, Crown Venue Catering for providing lunch, 2/10 Productions for managing the audio visual requirements and Joe Manby Limited for providing a registration booth.

I am aware that I and those of my colleagues based at Headquarters have not had as much opportunity this year as in the past to visit Region and Section events. We propose to address this by attending some of the Autumn and Winter events even though the workload at HQ shows no sign of easing off! I am also in the early planning stages of arranging more regular meetings with Section Secretaries, perhaps on a regional basis interspaced with a less frequent visit to BIGGA HOUSE.

Please do not forget that the Regional Administrators are members of HQ staff and as such attend HQ staff meetings on a regular basis. Communication is an ongoing challenge and we will be looking at ways of improving the flow of information. There is always an open invitation for anyone, member or not, to visit Headquarters and if you would like to incorporate this with a stay at the hotel then we can arrange for you to take advantage of our preferential rates.

**John Pemberton**

### SCOTTISH REGION

#### East

After a wet start to the year, summer has finally arrived with record temperatures in July putting a smile on the face of both greenkeeper and trade alike! There have been a few reports of brown patch, which I am familiar with from my time in the Thames Valley, but I have never seen north of the border before. A disease which attacks bents and fescues, it frustratingly leaves our old friend poa annua alone.

On behalf of the Section I would like to congratulate Craig Gilholm, former Deputy to Colin Irvine at Muirfield, on his appointment as Golf Course Superintendent at Royal Liverpool. With the Open Championship at Hoylake next year I am sure Craig will not have much time to draw breath. Also on the move is former Section member Alan Purdie, who has been appointed Course Manager at a new golf complex in Northern Cyprus - look out for visitors with buckets and spades Alan.

A young man making the headlines at present is John Gallagher (Junior). An extremely talented golfer, John made the decision to take a year out from his career as a greenkeeper at The Merchants to concentrate on his golf. This is already proving successful with a runners up medal and a quarter final finish at the recent Scottish Amateur Championship at Southernness.

Finally the autumn outing will be held on September 21 or 22, the exact date and venue to be confirmed shortly.

Mike Dooner

#### North

Well here we go, this is my first news report as I have taken over from Iain Gunn, who has now moved on to a new position as Head Greenkeeper at the North Shore Golf Club in Blackpool. A long way from Strathpeffer I hear you say, he will be able to take his frustration out on the donkeys on the beach now instead of sheep. That will be a nice change for him. I am sure we all wish him the best of luck, so now on to the rest of the news as there has not been any from our Section for a couple of months due to the change over.

The first thing I would like to do from the Committee and members is pass on our condolences to John Crawford and his family on the sad loss of his partner, Ailsa, our thoughts are with them.

The North Section held the National Tournament at McDonald Golf Club, Ellon, on June 23 and the course was in great condition, there was not a blade of grass out of place. So well done to John and his squad, also well done to Peter Boyd as the competition ran as smoothly as ever. Congratulations must go to Mark Main, from Moray, for winning the Friendship Trophy (Best Nett) at Ellon and qualifying to represent the North Section in the BIGGA National Championship in October - Martin will be chuffed. I will let you know how he gets on as soon as I hear, but the best of luck for now.

By the time this news reaches you we will have played in the Norrie Whytock Trophy at Auchterarder. The team was John Geddes (Captain), Mark Main, Neil Kidd and Dean Mitchell, so hopefully we will have retained the trophy.

As you are all aware our autumn outing is at Garmouth & Kingston Golf Club on Thursday September 15. Hopefully it will be a nice day and a good turn out. I would hope everyone will have their money in before the date as I would prefer not to be taking money on the day.