

Feature listing from September 2003

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; Helliidon Lakes; Power Mowers; Pest Control; Cutting Heights Survey; Nozzles

June 2005; Minchinhampton GC; Aeration; Rigby Taylor Profile; Chemical Useage; Top Dressing; Jim Arthur Tribute

July 2005; Loch Lomond GC; St. Andrews; Mini Excavators; Disease; Finance; Scholarship

August 2005; Ramsey GC; Open Review; Quad Bikes; Top Dressing; BIGGA Golf Day; Anthracnose; National Championship Preview

Chairman's Column



Wake Me Up When September Ends



Quote from a BIGGA member - Bulletin Board - August 2005:

"I had all but decided not to renew my BIGGA membership... I will wait to see what happens between now and the end of September"

You have just come in from cutting the tees, the middle unit was playing up and you are wet through and fed up. Whoever used the machine last did not fill it up as they were supposed to do and old so and so cut in on the 10th tee again and held you up. Bearing this in mind, I probably come quite far down your list of priorities but now that you have finished reading the job adverts, the section notes, done the crossword, checked to see if there are any juicy letters, I am hoping that the above quote might grab your interest enough to get your attention.

So, you are sitting there underpaid, getting no respect from your current employer and no one will give you proper training. You love the work but the work environment and your future prospects are depressingly uninspiring. You are not getting the recognition you deserve and you are being treated badly. 'So what are you, Mr Chairman, and BIGGA going to do about it?'

Well, having been Chairman for nine months I can relate a little to your frustration. I too am beginning to become agitated that I am not going to fully achieve my major goals in my one year of office. However, to answer your question, I can report that the business plan review is making good headway.

'The business plan review is making good headway? Just what is that supposed to mean. Words, words, words and yet more words. How is it going to help me?'

The business plan is a written statement of what we want our Association to do for its members. It will be specific with set targets and target times for our staff to achieve. For example we have already set a target of 200 additional members per year for the next five years. We set these targets in conjunction with our staff and once set, it is up to their professional expertise to attain them. In this way we can measure the performance of the Association and its staff and get them to concentrate on the areas we feel need most improvement.

'Alright, alright Kerran, we get your drift, but how is this going to help me?'

Well that all depends on the targets we set, but here are just one or two small examples of the goals I personally would want to see achieved.

EDUCATION

Equalise, in percentage terms, the numbers of members receiving BIGGA education in all categories of membership and then increase each category by 5% per annum. For example, an increase in Course Manager education only, without a corresponding increase in education for assistant greenkeepers, would not be acceptable. Equalising the education for all categories of membership would mean that the HQ staff would have to find ways of getting BIGGA education to you, Joe Bloggs in the dead-end job, not just provide education for those who it is easier to provide it for.

Set up, by a given date, the opportunity for all new members to attend a residential course on subjects such as an introduction to BIGGA, how to manage yourself and your career and basic greenkeeping philosophy and practice. I believe we need to sell BIGGA to young greenkeepers, we need to show them we care about them and I believe that if we enthuse them early enough we will have supporters for life. It would be good for us but it would be even better for them.

WELFARE AND SUPPORT

Set up, by a given date, well-publicised and trained, local support panels, consisting of Regional Administrators, other greenkeepers and possibly sympathetic Golf Union officials for help and support with welfare matters. I feel that it would be much better, when you are vulnerable, to have an understanding ear to turn to in the first instance rather than a Legal Helpline representative who you do not know and who does not understand your industry.

COMMUNICATION

Set up, by a given date, a bulletin board exclusive to Regional Administrators and Section Administrators to improve communication and share best practice. We have Sections being very well run and Sections that struggle from time to time. If we could get all Sections sharing ideas directly, then I feel we could soon all benefit by offering more local activity and support. There is a wealth of talent and commitment out there in the Sections. It should be harnessed for the benefit of all.

I was with my daughter in the car the other day and she put on a CD. It was not my usual sort of music but I quite liked it so I asked her what it was. I was somewhat chided for not knowing it was 'Wake Me Up When September Ends' by Green Day. I am really hoping that our wavering member, quoted at the beginning, will, at the end of September, decide to stay with us and help us with the wake up call to all members to aid future greenkeepers through education and collective support.

It would be worryingly easy for our Association to become expert at providing only what the already advantaged amongst us want. With your support we can provide opportunity and advancement for all. There are many times when you cannot get help but there is never a time when you cannot give it.

K. Daly

Kerran Daly
Chairman