



News from the Chief Executive

The deadline for the Spray Master competition came and went in June with sadly only a handful of applications arriving at BIGGA House. I find it a great pity that lack of interest from the Association's 6,500 members has resulted in the cancellation of this event leaving the sponsor somewhat disillusioned. Perhaps the chance to win a free trip to the GCSAA Show in Anaheim and some spraying equipment for the club was not a big enough prize! On a more positive note the BIGGA annual charity Golf Day at Aldwark Manor, was a great success with all tee times being taken. I would like to thank all competitors and sponsors for their support resulting in a surplus of £1,400 that will be donated to the Chairman's chosen charities that are Breast Cancer and Testicular Cancer research.

Although still over 6 months away, Harrogate Week 2007 seems to demand more and more time from everybody in the office. Over the coming months look out for details of how we intend to develop what is already considered to be the leading event in the industry. Working in partnership with the GTC, the R&A, the EGU, the AGCS and the PGA, we aim to provide much more education than ever before. While golf will always be the core theme, it is important that a clear message goes out that the event is not just for greenkeepers. No matter what your connection is with turf management, horticulture, club or stadium management, landscaping etc, there will be something for you, both in the exhibition and on the education programme. Watch out also for details of the free park and ride scheme that will be introduced in 2007, enabling amongst other things a greater freedom of choice for accommodation. The newly formed Harrogate Week Steering Committee debated the alcohol ban at its recent meeting. It was recommended to the Board that the bars at certain designated catering points be reinstated and the Board cautiously agreed to this for 2007.

The BIGGA website is currently being reviewed with plans for a major redesign on the drawing board. This will include on-line shopping, improved membership renewal facilities and an upgraded bulletin board. Headquarters staff will also have greater control over day-to-day content management, much of which at present has to be sub-contracted at considerable expense. If you have any suggestions for improvement of the website please let Rachael (rachael_p@bigga.co.uk) or Gemma (gemma@bigga.co.uk) in the membership office know.

I have been campaigning with the R&A for limited free access to the Open for members of our Association. Regrettably the Championship Committee has rejected the proposal on the grounds that a precedent would be set that other bodies could quote. Naturally I am disappointed with the outcome, however I will continue to discuss the point with the R&A in preparation for the 2007 event. BIGGA will once again have a marquee within the tented village and I hope that members and their guests will avail themselves of the facilities. I wish Craig Gilholm and his greenkeeping team at Hoylake every success for the event and I am sure that this is going to prove to be a popular Open venue.

Next month I will review BIGGA's working relationship with other organisations, the Association's membership recruitment plans and progress regarding the change to limited company status.

John Pemberton

SCOTTISH REGION

Ayrshire

The links at Southernness were in pristine condition and with a stiff wind, the course proved a stern challenge to the 44 in attendance. Our thanks to the committee, for allowing us the use of the course and facilities on the day. Thanks also, to the catering staff for a hearty meal and friendly service.

Results were as follows: First Class. 1. Phillip Dick, Dumfries & County, 36pts; 2. Denis Tweddell Turnberry, 33pts; 3. Steven Higgins, Ardeer, 31pts; 4. Keith McCartney, Dumfries & Galloway, 29pts.

Second Class. 1. Sid Mercer, Skelmorlie, 35pts; 2. Ronnie Bunting Ballochmyle, 33pts; 3. Martin Lothian, Turnberry, 32pts; 4. Paul Tulloch, Bogside, 31pts. Trade Prize went to Robert Bruce.

Should have more to report next time, until then I hope you all aren't enjoying the World Cup too much, as that will mean my team are out. Adios amigos

Any news or constructive criticism to denis.t@hotmail.co.uk or 07939 104701.

Dennis Tweddell

East

As I write this report in early June, summer has finally arrived, with sprinklers and wetting agents in great demand. Hopefully this will be the catalyst required to produce good putting surfaces. I am sure most of you will agree it has been a long time coming.

I have two weddings involving Section members to report this month. The first was held in the Borders on April 28, with Donald Campbell, Course Manager at Cardrona, marrying the lovely Lynne. I understand that quite a few greenkeepers were present on the big day including Robert Hogarth, who made the long journey north, from Dorset.

The second wedding was held on June 3 at the Holiday Inn in Edinburgh, when Peter Ormiston, Course Manager at Uphall' tied the knot with Elaine. Interestingly both the couples spent their honeymoons in Mexico - it must be the place to go these days. On behalf of the Section, I would like to offer the newlyweds congratulations and best wishes for their futures together.

On Wednesday, May 3, Thomas Sherriff & Co Ltd and Eyemouth Golf Club played host to the fourth running of the John Deere Team Championship.

21 teams from Lothian and Borders competed in a 3 player Texas Scramble and though conditions proved tough, the team from Gifford Golf Club consisting of J. Combe, G. Milne and N. McEwan, returned a superb 65 to pip Jedburgh Golf Club (66) and Duns Golf Club (67) to the title. In winning, Gifford will go onto the national finals on Tuesday, September 12, at the East Sussex National and hopefully onto the World Championships at Reynolds Plantation Resort, Georgia, USA.

Thomas Sherriff and John Deere, wish to thank all participating teams for taking part in a great day's golf, and our hosts, Eyemouth Golf Club, for the courtesy of their course and tremendous hospitality.

A big thank you is due to Ian Lauder, of Thomas Sherriff and Co, for the above report.

Finally, on May 24, my wife departed for Vancouver to visit her mother. The peace lasted approximately 48 hours, when our son arrived home with his usual collection of bin bags full of dirty washing. Come back Roz, all is forgiven - I mutter under my breath.

Until next month.

Mike Dooner