



News from the Chief Executive

I am sure many of you anxiously followed the progress of the European Ryder Cup team on Sunday, either listening on the radio like me, or perhaps watching it on Sky. What a contest and what a result! Congratulations to the team and to their Captain Ian Woosnam. The strong bond between the European players and their overwhelming camaraderie was self evident and while the American team consisted of a group of very talented players, to my mind they lacked that little something extra that makes a team. I suppose a smile comes easier when you're winning! In a different type of contest were eight finalists of the Toro Student of the Year Award, held recently at BIGGA HOUSE. The standard of competitors' rises year on year and my congratulations go to the winner Mike Emptage, who was nominated by Hadlow College. A full report on the final will appear in next month's magazine.

My colleague, Ken Richardson, continues to beaver away on the Health and Safety Management System project with the help of various members of the task group together with significant input from Health and Safety consultants, Exact. The result of this project is scheduled to be released at Harrogate Week. I am currently awaiting confirmation of sponsorship of the project and hope to be able to give full details of the scheme in the November issue of Greenkeeper International.

In October, UK members should receive their copy of the Member's Handbook, a benefit that I hope they find of significant interest and value. Additional funding has been secured to be able to provide Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers with a pocket diary that they will receive before Christmas, regrettably the costs of providing one for every member are prohibitive, there may however, be a few spare diaries available on the BIGGA stand at Harrogate on a first come first served basis. October also sees the launch of the Harrogate Week 2007 'Continue to Learn' education programme that has grown in size and stature compared to previous years.

I hope that you will take time to study the brochure that contains details of workshops and seminars organised not only by BIGGA but also by many of the leading bodies in the industry. Exhibitors have also been allocated education time and many have taken the opportunity to give presentations to visitors on technical and product matters.

Harrogate Week is not just an important event for BIGGA it is also a key event in the turf and club management industry as a whole. Despite the absence of some major machinery manufacturers in January 2007, there will never the less be an impressive event that you really cannot afford to miss. All visitors in January 2006 will automatically be pre-registered for the exhibition and they should receive acknowledgement in the post in due course. Harrogate Week has its own website that contains full details of the event, the address is: www.harrogateweek.org.uk

I hope that members will make every effort to support their Association by attending Harrogate and in doing so, demonstrating to the exhibitors that you value their investment in BIGGA's future. Please do not be under any illusion that BIGGA can continue in its present form if funding issues are not resolved. The profit from Harrogate Week is vital to the future well being of the Association and a roller coaster of lean year, fat year is not sustainable.

I am saddened by the relatively poor number of entries for the National Tournament; at the time of writing we have received only 60 applications. If you have any thoughts on how this decline can be turned around, please let me know. Finally, I am pleased to report that we have appointed a new company to re-design the Association's website with a targeted launch at Harrogate Week 2007. The new site will incorporate many of the suggestions that members have made in recent months and will also give the staff at HQ far greater ease of information input. We recognise the growing value of the site to members and have taken the opportunity of a grant from the R&A to make the changes possible.

John Pemberton

Around
the Green

SCOTTISH REGION

East

As I write this report, September has arrived with a definite autumnal feel to the air. After the prolonged dry spell, which brought its own problems, the borders were hit with 70mls of rainfall during Friday, August 18. Due in part to the dry spell, there have been wide spread complaints of "Anthracnose" resulting in a boom in sales of potash based products.

The following report is courtesy of Graeme Bryce, Greenkeeping lecturer at Oatridge College: Scottish Open - Loch Lomond GC 2006 - "Team Oatridge" comprised of Barrie Lewis, Ratho Park; Murray White, Longniddry; Iain Ramsay, Edinburgh Leisure, The Braids; and Daniel McGarrell, Holland Bush, and their lecturer, Graeme Bryce. They set off to Loch Lomond GC to participate in the maintenance of the course for the 2006 Scottish Open. Three of the four students are currently undertaking an SVQ Level II in Greenkeeping/Sportsturf and are just about to enter their second year. The other student, Barrie Lewis has achieved his SVQ Level II and will be entering SVQ Level III this academic year. Both Iain Ramsay and Barrie Lewis won their respective year prizes through hard work and effort and were awarded their accolades at the Oatridge College prize giving in June this year. Barrie also won through to the final Toro Student of the Year 2006.

Under the direction of Course Superintendent, David Cole, the Oatridge team were divided into various groups of greenkeepers who had specific tasks to complete. The tasks included, bunker maintenance, divotting, switching fairways, maintaining paths and other means of golf course maintenance.

The Oatridge team were extremely well looked after for the entire duration of the tournament week and mixed in well with the resident greenkeeping crew. The maintenance of a golf course of this magnitude aids in inspiring these up and coming student greenkeepers and helps them to realise exactly what they could achieve with determination and hard work.

Plenty of photographs were taken as a souvenir of the tournament week and will be looked upon fondly, especially the photograph taken with the Scottish Open winner Johan Edfors. Hopefully Oatridge will be able to provide the necessary support for years to come.

"Team Oatridge" would like to thank all of the Loch Lomond greenstaff who were absolutely fantastic in helping the guys feel at home and for making sure they made the most of their experience. They would also like to thank their respective employers for allowing them the time off.

The Willie Woods Tournament was held at Haddington GC on Wednesday, August 23, with sunny conditions being the order of the day. The results on the day were as follows: 1. S Lamb and R Kelly, 36pts; 2. R Burgon and R McMulloch, 36.5pts. Longest Drive - P Ormiston and M Pagan, Nearest the Pin - I Kinlay and R McCulloch.

A big thank you is due to Haddington GC for courtesy of the course and to Norman Wood and his greenstaff for their efforts on the day.

A date for your diary is Saturday, December 9, when the annual dinner dance is being held at The Kilspindie House Hotel in Aberlady. A function not to be missed, tickets are available from your Secretary Kevin Hodges or any committee member.

On September 3, our trade hit the headlines for all the wrong reasons, with a full page article in Scotland on Sunday on the demise of GCNI. A much respected trade journal, which reported information at the cutting