



News from the Chief Executive

As the days get shorter it is hard to believe that we are only a few weeks away from the end of another year with my diary already having quite a lot of entries for 2008!

I have spent a considerable amount of time out of the office in November at various meetings and BIGGA events where it was interesting and rewarding to meet members. Two of these were interview sessions for the BIGGA delegation to the Golf Industry Show in America which is sponsored by Bernhard and Co. Once again this was heavily oversubscribed and the high overall standard of entry made it difficult to select the final ten that will benefit from this experience. Bernhards have also been working with the GCSAA to select ten American Superintendents who will visit Harrogate Week in January following the very successful launch of this part of the initiative in January 2007.

The main thrust of activity at Headquarters at the moment is towards Harrogate with a steady influx of bookings for both the education and the exhibition. Communication remains a big issue and arrangements are being made for members to hold an open session with the Board during Harrogate Week. This will probably take place on Thursday 24th January however final confirmation of the time and venue will be published in the January issue of Greenkeeper International and on the website.

While putting dates in diaries members are reminded that the AGM will take place on Wednesday 23rd January at 5.15pm in the Queen's Suite, Harrogate International Centre. Copies of the accounts for the year ended 30th September 2007 will be sent to Regional Administrators and Section Secretaries once the current audit is complete and will also be available on the day.

This being my last column for 2007 then I wish everyone a Happy Christmas and I hope that 2008 proves to be a successful year. I know that it's getting tougher in golf and those who do not rise to the challenge will find it even harder. Your Association through its Board, Staff and Region and Section Committees are here to try to help, this we hope to achieve by providing support, education and through developing a closer working relationship with the other major bodies in the industry. I encourage any member that has a concern or suggestion regarding the running of Association to contact either myself or a member of the Board. Remember communication is a two way process!

The Annual General Meeting of the Association will be held at 5.15pm on Wednesday, January 23 in the Queen's Suite, Harrogate International Centre.



John Pemberton



SCOTTISH – CENTRAL

Well done to all the guys who made it to the Dukes for the Autumn Tournament. Many thanks to Andy Campbell and his team for the excellent hospitality. The food was fantastic and the clubhouse staff made us all very welcome. Derek Robson, the Course Manager, and his team did an excellent job presenting the course, and the improvements to ground conditions and surface quality as a result of their work are tremendous.

Derek had set the course up for a fairly stiff challenge. Not to be outdone the weather made its own contribution. Fast greens combined with fierce winds, required a skilled touch with the putter, and nerves of steel. Results were as follows: Best Scratch, David Simpson, 76 (+1) 77; Best Nett, Paul Murphy, 85 (5) 80; 1.1 Archie Dunn, 87 (7) 81; 1.2 Kenny Mitchell, 87 (5) 82; 1.3 Charlie Macdonald, 87 (4) 83; 2.1 Alexander Walker, 96 (15) 81; 2.2 Willie Caswell, 102 (12) 90; 3.3 Andy Mellon, 110 (15) 95; Trade Prize, Pat Allan, 91 (6) 85; Guest, Ray Bisset, 114 (21) 93; Longest Drive, Charlie Macdonald; Nearest the Pin, Dougie Barr; Best Nett Spring & Autumn, David Simpson.

These scores might seem high, but those who were there on the day, assured me that only they could understand how difficult the conditions were – I, was tucked up in bed recovering from my flight home from Canada. David Simpson proved to be a worthy champion, and combined with his performance at the equally challenging Panmure in the spring. was enough to win him the 2007 Combined Trophy. Well done David. David's form was to continue, going on to win the National Championship which this year was held in Scotland at Dundonald Golf course and Kilmarnock Barassie. On behalf of the Section, I would like to thank the Course Managers and staff for providing a great test of golf, and the Captains and Committees for their hospitality, also I would like to thank Kubota for their sponsorship on both days. The starter packs and refreshments at the turn were much appreciated. Thanks also go to Peter Boyd and the BIGGA staff for making sure both days ran smoothly.

As for the tournament itself, the weather on the Monday was typical Scottish weather, heavy drizzle. This didn't dampen the spirits of all who played and a great time was had by most. I say most as a friend of mine found the going tough over the two days he had 200 blows, unlucky Dougie Barr, it made my score look good. The good news is that the Scottish Region won the team prize so well done to the eight scores that counted. (I wasn't one of them) Overall the two day event was great. I'm looking forward to next year's tournament down on the south coast of England.

The AGM this year was well attended and the new committee is as follows: Chairman – Derek Scott, Vice Chairman – Alan Sharp, Secretary/Treasurer – Andrew Mellon, Past Chairman – Andy O'Hara, Board – Archie Dunn, Patron – Kevin Brunton, Trade – Jim Finlayson, Student – George Pendrich, General Committee – Gordon McKie, Brian Heggie, Gordon Moir, Derek Robson & Graham Taylor.

Over the last year we have run two successful Golf tournaments, and nine educational events. In total 255 members attended these and feedback has been very positive. We hope to continue this success into 2008, and we would like to thank all the members for supporting