

# Chairman's Column

## WEATHER WOES

As I put pen to paper I can tell you that the rain proves to be my greatest challenge yet. The MET office declared that Warwickshire was the wettest county for August, and I feel we will take the prize for September too as we have had over 100mm up to the 15th.

The decisions that face any golf Course Manager in these conditions are harsh and not without consequence, the ripple effects for our retail departments and the resort in general, with loss of revenue has a major impact. I feel for all the disappointed golfers we have had to turn away here but on a professional level there is no doubt in my mind that the weather is rendering many courses unplayable, including ours. My Vice Chairman, Peter Todd, of the London Club, said in an article this year that his place in normal years is drier than Damascus. Can we have some of that up here, Peter?

Preparing and planning for a televised event like the Quinn Insurance British Masters can take so much out of everyone involved. The team effort is massive and logistically takes much planning. I want to thank all my team for the effort so far, and considering the sheer drenching they have had, literally from dawn 'till dusk some days, I think they can be happy with the final results.

My role as Chairman took me to the Toro Greenkeeper of the Year final on Monday, September 15, it was a diversion from 'tournament mode' and the evening went well with Matthew Wormald, of Luffenham Heath, winning. It was nice to see him again after he volunteered at our tournament last year. I knew he was going to be a future star. Also, I would like to congratulate all the finalists and talking to them at dinner they all had a great experience at Aldwark despite it being a little nerve wracking.

My diary dates and meetings for October as Chairman take me to the quarterly Board Meeting and the National Championship, sponsored by Kubota and held at East Sussex. I'm looking forward to meeting up with some of the guys who are regulars at the National Championship. I think it will be a tough test of golf and hopefully they will have had better weather in the run up that we have had. I have no doubt that Scott Litchfield, the Course Manager, will have it in great shape. There is also the Ray Day Memorial golf day the next day at East Sussex and there will be team from BIGGA HQ representing us there. That same day I will be attending the opening of Ransomes Jacobson's new golf course in Ipswich...

You find me now writing just after the British Masters for which we had 20 volunteers from throughout the industry from as far afield as Finland and Spain as well as a UK contingent. It had been a busy week in the build up to the opening day - double shot gun Pro Am - and as you know these events are never as smooth as first planned. And as usual, the weather interfered with our arrangements, although we expected it to be the rain it was in actual fact the fog. It gave us some major complications and delays.

For the first time in my experience since 1997, it's the first tournament that hasn't kept to the daily schedule and it was an eye opener for me and



everyone else involved. We came through it very well and credit to the greenkeeping staff who did a great job through the hardest conditions. From build up through to tournament it had been incredible this year, and I would like to thank everyone for their efforts and time. The scoring was great and the course, and particularly the greens stood up to the test well - we got pleasing reports from all round which is fantastic.

We have had some great final day pairings with Michael Campbell and Lee Westwood. But in the end as you know it was Gonzalo Fdez-Castano who challenged Lee Westwood for his title, with a nail biting play-off playing the 18th hole three times in order to win the Quinn Insurance British Masters 2008. A great finish!

**Kenny Mackay**  
Chairman



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