

Chairman's Column

ALL GOOD THINGS MUST COME TO AN END

As I write my final article, it is with some amazement that the year has passed so quickly - we are now already back at Harrogate Week and into January, for what hopes to be a fantastic exhibition and education forum. I believe it is a must for Greenkeepers and Groundsman alike - indeed any other sports' Managers would also benefit from attending the week, meeting exhibitors and looking at planning for the year ahead.

Our new Chairman, Peter Todd, is taking over at a tough time but I believe he will be an excellent Chairman and help the Association build bridges in all sectors of the market place.

It will be an extremely busy year, speaking from experience, and it is fantastic that he has the support of his Club in such a tough financial climate. My own advice for him is just to be aware of how quickly the year passes - before you know it you are half way through.

At the moment we are now seeing the backlash in the economy, especially on the golf courses as we are in our traditionally quieter months, and financial decisions are having to be taken with regards to staffing levels and costs. It is important that we can improve our versatility over the next few months and hope that we at least get a good start to the year, in terms of weather, to encourage the golfers to return to the high numbers in the spring - something that we haven't really seen in the last few years.

I always seem to be talking about the weather, but hopefully we can have a positive outlook in 2009 and we can have a big year with golfers responding by coming to the courses in their droves.

Great weather allows us to produce a higher quality of turf, again something that hasn't really been open us is in the last few years with the prolonged wet weather. This, in turn, might see new golfers coming to the courses to play. In turn, we have to be more open to all levels of people and standards than we have perhaps relied upon in the past. Pricing issues may be addressed this year also which will again open up the availability of golf to families and a wider audience.

Finally, I would like to thank my family, Maria, Iain, Ruth and Cameron for their support in my role as Chairman over the last year. Also, my employers the Quinn Group, and, in particular, Nigel Gray, for allowing me to attend at lot of events, on behalf of the Association, and allowing me to make a



big commitment to the benefit of BIGGA.

It has been my privilege to enjoy this opportunity and I have learnt much and met with many great new and old people within the industry.

I look forward to seeing you all at Harrogate and best wishes everyone for 2009.

Kenny Mackay
Chairman

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