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john@bigga.co.uk

Head of Learning & Development

Sami Collins
sami@bigga.co.uk

Head of Membership Department

Tracey Maddison
traceymaddison@bigga.co.uk

Contact Us

BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Alne, York, YO61 1UF
info@bigga.co.uk
www.bigga.org.uk
Tel – 01347 833800 | Fax – 01347 833801

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Editorial

Communications Manager / Editor

Scott MacCallum
Tel – 01347 833800 Fax – 01347 833801
scott@bigga.co.uk



Design

**Design and
Production Editor**
Tom Campbell

Tel – 01347 833800
Fax – 01347 833801
tom@bigga.co.uk



Advertising

Sales Executive
Kirstin Black

Tel – 01347 833800
Fax – 01347 833802
kirstin@bigga.co.uk



Sales Executive
Jill Rodham

Tel – 01347 833800
Fax – 01347 833802
jill@bigga.co.uk

Printing

Warners Midlands Plc, The Maltings, Manor
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WELCOME FROM THE EDITOR



Credit, where it is due

I happened to watch a bit of the England v France game on the telly last night. To be honest I was still basking in the glory of Scotland's triumph over the Faroes the previous night, but I tuned in anyway to see if the Auld Enemy could match our achievement.

Just before the start the commentator threw in the comment that there were now no issues with the Wembley pitch and that it had even coped with an American football match recently.

I didn't watch the entire match, but that as the only comment I heard about the pitch.

Now go back a few months and you would have thought the poor playing surface was a national tragedy.

There was much hand wringing, opinion - of varying degrees of expertise - was being freely spouted on every media outlet under the sun.

This ranged from gardeners and agronomists to players, managers and commentators all of whom had something valuable to offer on the matter.

The idea that the state of the pitch might influence England's 2018 World Cup bid ramped up the anxiety even more.

Indeed the column inches on the subject could have covered the playing area at Wembley several times over.

The new Desso Grassmaster pitch laid earlier this year has obviously made a huge difference, but progress would not have been made without a great deal of planning, thought and sheer hard work by recognised experts in pitch maintenance.

It is a success story but one which elicited no more than a throw away line from a match commentator and, unless I've missed it, very little comment in the same press and media

which were so quick to jump on the story when it was a negative one.

It comes back to the adage that "No news is good news", but it is a bit galling for all concerned that they come in for a pasting when the news is bad and very little in terms of positive comment when they have turned something around and done a superb job.

It is exactly the same with golf courses. The spike bars are full of people pontificating on what they perceive to be wrong, but the numbers who will seek out the staff and congratulate them when have just enjoyed a superbly presented and maintained course are very much fewer.

I can't let this column pass without saying something about BIGGA's much loved Chief Executive, John Pemberton, who has decided to move on.

Life at BIGGA will not be the same when he finally walks out of the door for the last time next April.

John still has a few miles left on the clock and I'm sure he will use them wisely. I also know that it will enable him to spend more time with his lovely wife, Judith, and, dare I say it, on the fairways, and, no doubt, in the rough, of Fulford Golf Club.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all.

Scott MacCallum
Editor

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