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Hard work pays off

While September is regarded as the traditional end of summer – however disappointing it has been over the last few years - it does herald one of the most heart warming and positive events in which BIGGA is involved each year.

The Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year is a wonderful competition, and the final, with eight of the finest young greenkeepers in the country, invariably demonstrates that the industry is in good hands.

Matt Perks, from Ham Manor Golf Club, in West Sussex, and Plumpton College, became its 23rd winner last month and he can look to, among others, the current Course Managers of Turnberry and Sunningdale to see just how large the doors that can be opened by being the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year are.

Every student in the country has the opportunity to win, but if you are going to follow Matt next year you can read this month just how much work and effort needs to go into preparing if you are going to give yourself the best opportunity.

Matt recognised just how big an opportunity he had been given when he was nominated by Plumpton College and he was desperate not to leave any stone unturned to maximise that chance.

Matt's story demonstrates just how much the combination of inspiration and perspiration is needed to be successful, but often the element which is open to absolutely everyone is in lesser supply. While not everyone is necessarily blessed with inspiration, everyone can make sure they work hard and own whatever situation they find themselves in.

Matt's hard work has already won him the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award, but, at the age of 28, he has just been appointed a Director of the International Golf Course Equipment Managers Association

and he impressed enough to be one of nine volunteers selected to assist with maintenance at last year's Ryder Cup.

This month we also look at one of the most valuable, but perhaps underused, of all member benefits. The website's Bulletin Boards are the BIGGA members' very own version of Wikipedia.

If you want to know anything, and I mean anything, post the question on the Boards and your fellow members will come up with an answer for you. If that answer is something open to dispute then someone else will offer an alternative view and you can be sure that within a few days the consensus will provide as accurate an answer as you could hope to find from any other source.

But the Boards are not just a font of information, they can also offer support and solace to anyone looking for help in difficult times. In a solitary job, it is sometimes easily forgotten that, paradoxically, there are many others in similarly solitary positions, and the Bulletin Boards offer the chance to come together with colleagues to share problems and potential solutions.

If you haven't yet got involved go on and take a look. You don't have to become visible straight away by posting topics or providing answers. You can just observe from the sidelines but if you do have something you want to say the urge to post something might just become too great.

Scott MacCallum
Editor