



Chairman's Word

National Chairman, Tony Smith, gives his thoughts for the month

Support at Wentworth, and a sad farewell

I have now officially retired, leaving my position at Teesside Golf Club after 32 terrific years. It seems ironic that I've left after the wettest year anyone could remember, when we had a sewage pipe burst twice and were forced to close on so many occasions.

Now I've left the sun is shining – maybe it was me! It was a very cold spring – although it was a little drier – but fingers crossed the recent warmer weather will mean you lucky members are all out there preparing your courses with pride as I know you love to do. I say lucky because I am already missing preparing the course at Teesside.

I wish you all a good summer that will help you continue to produce the superb standard of courses which are admired throughout the world by other turf professionals.

At the end of May I was fortunate enough to attend the BMW PGA Championship at Wentworth for two days, more for business than pleasure. It was the first to be held with Kenny Mackay overseeing course preparation.

I have to congratulate Kenny and his team on the fabulous presentation of the course. As ever, conditions were not ideal with largely dank and overcast conditions during the week, but Kenny and his team dealt with all the challenges superbly.

I'd also like to congratulate the members of the BIGGA Support Team who gave up their own time and made their own travel arrangements to back up the efforts made by the Wentworth team. Well done – your superb contribution did not go unnoticed.

The Wentworth tournament is the only time the European Tour International Schedule will visit England this year but it is a huge event on the golfing calendar and provided us with the chance to catch up with many industry bodies and individuals during the week.

These challenging economic and climatic times make working together even more essential if we are to ensure the industry survives.

2013 has been hectic year so far for BIGGA and for me in my travels around the Regions and Sections, so a slightly quieter month has come as a welcome change. I was pleased to have the opportunity to attend a Midlands Region board meeting



STRI Environmental Awards winners on the 17th at Wentworth

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meaning I have now had the chance to spend time with all five Regional Boards during my first ten months as Chairman.

I am grateful to all the Section and Regional officers and board members who give so much of their precious time to help the Association function and remain focused on the needs of the membership.

A sad event last month was the semi-retirement of our South West & South Wales regional administrator Jane Jones, she has served the Association with great commitment and will be missed by many as she takes half a step back in her career.

I am delighted that she intends to stay in touch with the golf and greenkeeping industry and hope that our paths continue to cross. I'm sure all of you, particularly the members of her Region, will join me in wishing her well.

We have recently launched the 2013 BIGGA National Championship, which this year will be held on the Red course at the first-class Frilford Heath Golf Club in

Oxfordshire. This fabulous 54 hole facility is maintained superbly by Sid Arrowsmith MG. Through generous sponsorship from both Kubota and Charterhouse we have been able to significantly increase the prize fund on offer particularly for the overall scratch competition, whilst we have also reduced the entry fee. I want to see a packed field contesting for the various prizes on offer so hope to see you there in October.

Last year's event at Irvine Bogside was a huge success (apart from when I used up about eight shots in bunkers on the 18th) and I'm sure this event will be too, so get your entry form in quick.

As always I am happy to discuss any matter with BIGGA members, my contact details are below.

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