



Chairman's Word

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

Students shine in Toro final

Warmest congratulations to Luke Turner on winning the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year 2013.

I'm fortunate enough to have been Chairman during two of these competitions, and I can't stress enough my pride in seeing enthusiastic, knowledgeable and personable young greenkeepers making their way in the industry.

I'd also like to extend my congratulations to all of the eight finalists.

Just reaching the last stage is a superb achievement which will really stand out on their CVs and set them up perfectly for success in the future.

Also, I know from speaking to them that they relished the opportunity not only to network and exchange greenkeeping advice and opinions with the other finalists, who work at a range of a courses the length and breadth of the UK, but also to visit BIGGA House.

For most of them it was their first visit and I'm delighted to say I heard several comments mentioning how welcoming our staff were and the generally positive atmosphere, which contributed to everyone socialising together in the evening.

This sort of camaraderie, shared knowledge and genuine friendship is unheard of in some industries and we should count ourselves lucky to be involved in it.

I would like to publicly thank Toro for their superb continued support of the competition, and also Sami, Rachael and Stuart from HQ who have put so much time and effort into the successful organisation of it.

I'm now hugely looking forward to the BIGGA National Tournament at Frilford Heath Golf Club.

We've increased the publicity around this event, dropped the entry price and increased the prize fund thanks to the generous sponsorship from Charterhouse and Kubota and I'm pleased to say this has led to a rise in the number of entrants.

I look forward to meeting Sid Arrowsmith MG, his team and all of the members who are looking forward to pitting their wits against this fine course.

Hopefully I will avoid becoming marooned in any bunkers as I did during



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last year's event at Irvine Bogside!

That couple of days during last year's National Championship in Scotland stood out for me last year and one major reason was the weather.

It felt as if summer finally arrived for a couple of days in Ayrshire in October.

Thankfully, this year we've had something approaching a good, dry summer.

Last year featured a depressing number of cancellations of golf days and other events organised by BIGGA members.

I know many of you go well out of your way to arrange these events, and I'm delighted to hear that this summer so many of them have been great successes played in glorious weather.

Please support these events if you

possibly can – keep an eye on the new-look Around the Green plus Section Facebook pages etc for details.

My focus hasn't changed during my tenure as Chairman – keep moving BIGGA towards becoming a must-join Association.

I've mentioned the benefits of joining so many times during my tenure as Chairman I must be starting to sound like a broken record but I make no apology for that – this was our focus when I took over and it remains our focus now.

Tony

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