

Have you booked your place on the Region's package to BTME 2002, which includes transport, accommodation & entry to the BTME show. This year the seminar sessions are extra.

Richard Whyman

### South Coast

Firstly, many apologies for the lack of Section notes for the last couple of months. The problem has now been rectified and normal service has been resumed. As you read this many of you will have played in the winter tournament at Barton-on-Sea and been to the Section AGM. I know your committee work extremely hard on your behalf trying to make the Section a success, so it would be nice to see more people supporting the coming events. We, as greenkeepers, are always busy but we should put time aside to attend Section events. As the New Year approaches our minds turn to BTME. For those who have not made the journey to Harrogate then I can thoroughly recommend it. It truly is a week not to miss as the learning experience continues. Paula Humphries can be contacted for those interested in the South West coach trip, which is excellent value for money.

As a Section we must congratulate Adi Archer and his team at Broadstone Golf Club for their success in winning the BIGGA Environment competition this year. We were fortunate to play Broadstone this summer and were able to see how much hard work they have put in to their heathland restoration project over the past years. They are indeed a credit to our section and to all greenkeepers. Lastly, it just leaves me to wish all our members a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from your committee.

Alex McCombie

### South Wales

It is with great sadness that I have to inform the members of the recent sudden passing away of Paul Robinson, former Head Greenkeeper of the Pyle & Kenfig Golf Club. Paul had been retired from the club that he devoted his entire working life to, for only 10 weeks.

Paul was a well respected father figure of the greenkeeping fraternity in South Wales and was renowned for his wit and sense of humour. Just being in his company was fun itself!

He was an ardent supporter of BIGGA and was the treasurer of the Section for over 14 years.

It is said that Paul took only one holiday in his entire working life, many years ago, to Malta for a week! From then on in he took his holiday entitlement in half days as he couldn't bear to be away from the course that he tended to and cared for so very much.

A lovely gentleman, generous and humorous, he will be sadly missed.

The final of the Rigby Taylor Matchplay Doubles Competition was held recently at the Royal Porthcawl Golf Club, where Daryl Bray and Steve Mills took on Jamie and Herbie Probert.

The match was a tight affair with the conditions making for an exiting finale to the competition. The high winds eventually overcame the driving rain and the sun shone for the remainder of the match, which saw Jamie and Herbie triumph on the 16th green.

The golf course was in excellent condition and those who weren't playing but who supported the match were lucky enough to be treated to a what's what and what's happening to the course in time for the British Amateur Championships next year, from Course Manager David Ward.

Our sincere thanks to Roy Barker and Dave Carvey, our Rigby Taylor representatives, for organising the day and for their splendid hospitality. A truly enjoyable day was had by all!

Congratulations to Kerry Jones, of Garnant Park Golf Club. Kerry who has been the Head Greenkeeper of the club for four years was recently promoted to Golf Manager at the course.

Congratulations also to Huw Morgan of the Wildernesse Golf Club, near Sevenoaks in Kent. Welshman Huw recently won the Toro sponsored Excellence in Greenkeeping award to add to his list of achievements.

Don't forget to book your place at the Winter Tournament/AGM/Christmas dinner, at the Pyle & Kenfig Golf Club on Wednesday, December 12. Teeing Off is from 10.00am, the AGM is 3pm and the Christmas feast is served at 5.30pm. Numbers will be limited.

Peter Lacey



### Northern Ireland

The AGM will have been held at Rockmount Golf Club on November 29. The structure of the new committee for 2002 will be detailed in the January magazine notes.

I would like to congratulate Alan Strachan, Course Manager at Royal Co Down Golf Club on winning the Irish final of the Excellence in Greenkeeping Award which is sponsored by

Toro and Lely Ireland. Alan will go forward to compete in the Great Britain Finals later this autumn.

Our three members who travelled over to the National Championship at Royal Birkdale at the beginning of October enjoyed the experience immensely and would like to thank BIGGA for organising the event. Noel Crawford, Andrew Wray and Michael Feeney came in with reasonable scores in the difficult conditions but didn't feature in the prizes this year. Greenmount College in Antrim moved their annual prize day from June to September because of the Foot & Mouth crisis. This year, congratulations go to Jane Beattie on becoming the top student on the NVQ Level II course. Jane is the first female greenkeeper to complete the NVQ course at Greenmount College.

Another training option, which is now offered to greenkeepers in Northern Ireland, is the fast track Level II & Level III Greenkeeping course, run by Myerscough College in Preston. The two courses are currently taking place at Malone Golf Club in Belfast. The advantage of the fast track system is that each level can be completed in 12 months with classroom attendance reduced to six to eight days. The College Tutor presenting both courses, is Owen Mullins from Dublin. Owen is a final year student at Myerscough completing a degree course in Turf Science. If anyone would like further particulars on the fast track NVQ's ring Bernhard at Myerscough College on 01995642205.

Lastly, I would like to welcome William Black from Tandragee Golf Club to the Section this month.

Ken Henderson

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Last month, Shaun McMillan, from Kinghorn Municipal GC, certainly knew his numbers when he correctly identified all three telephone numbers.

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**Recruitment**



**DUDDINGSTON  
GOLF CLUB  
LIMITED**

require a

**GREENKEEPER**

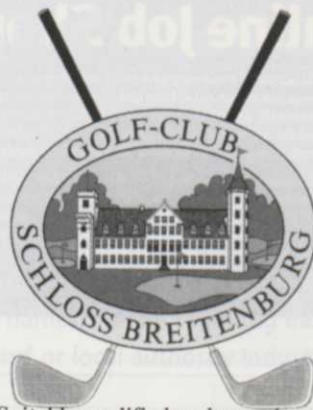
The structure and management of the green staff at Duddingston Golf Club has changed during 2001, and to support the ongoing development of the course we invite applications for an experienced greenkeeper to join the green-keeping team.

We seek a qualified greenkeeper, with experience in all aspects of turf management, who is able to work on his own initiative.

An attractive remuneration package is available.

Applications with a brief career history and experience/qualifications should be sent to:

General Manager,  
Duddingston Golf Club Ltd,  
Duddingston Road West,  
Edinburgh EH15 3QD



Suitably qualified and experienced

**DEPUTY HEAD  
GREENKEEPER**

required for 27 hole course,  
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reply to - Head Greenkeeper, Golf Club Schloss  
Breitenburg e. V., 25524 Breitenburg, Germany

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**FOR GREENKEEPERS BY GREENKEEPERS CHAT GREENKEEPERS**

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You will need to live in Portugal and preferably speak either Portuguese or Spanish as well as English. Knowledge or experience of growing and establishing crops in a warm season climate is also required. Having a mechanical aptitude is preferred as is knowledge of turf (sod) related machinery although this is not essential.

A comprehensive award package is offered to the successful applicant and assistance will be available for relocation and expenses. All enquires should be addressed to Peter Knight in confidence using the contact details below:

CampoSol LDA, Apartado 123, 7645-909 Vila Nova de Milfontes, Portugal.

Tel: 00351 283 990 010 Fax: 00351 283 998.411

E-mail: camposol@mail.telepac.pt

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Applications in writing with C.V to:

Mr. J. McGuire, Head Greenkeeper  
Horne Park Golf Academy Ltd. Croydonbam Lane,  
South Godstone, Surrey RH9 8JP

## Chobham Golf Club

require an

## ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

An opportunity has arisen for an enthusiastic individual to join our Hard working team. Candidates must have at least NVQ Level 2 and preferably a current Spraying Certificate.

Pay commensurate with experience

No accommodation available

Apply in writing with full CV to :-

Scott Reeves, Head Greenkeeper, Chobham Golf Club,  
Chobham Road, Knaphill, Woking, Surrey GU21 2TZ

## FREE online Job Shop Ads!

If you didn't already know, BIGGA upload all recruitment advertising from the pages of Greenkeeper International to coincide with the launch of each issue. Many Greenkeeper members have found the online recruitment section to be of great benefit, particularly if they have left their magazine at work! They can simply log on at home, to the BIGGA website, and access all of the latest jobs available in the fine turf industry. Also, if a member is looking for employment, their advert will appear in this database for prospective employers to read.

Any member who has found themselves out of work as a direct result of the Foot and Mouth Outbreak may wish to take advantage of the BIGGA website to help find another club. As a special service to members the Association will allow you to post a Job Shop advert on the website, listing your experience and qualifications, offering your services free of charge. Further information can be obtained from the Sales & Marketing Department at BIGGA HOUSE Tel: 01347 833800 email: sales@bigga.co.uk

Please note: This offer only applies to website adverts and not those which you wish to appear in Greenkeeper International.

Please print clearly, and keep your entry to under 100 words.

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## GREENKEEPING STAFF FOR THE GROW-IN PERIOD

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Applications in writing with full C.V. to:

The Golf Course Superintendent, Lanitis Development Ltd  
PO Box 50203, 3602 Limassol, CYPRUS.

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For an 18 hole course situated west of London.

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Please reply in writing with current C.V. to:  
The Secretary/Manager Wyke Green Golf Club (1996) Ltd.  
Syon Lane, Isleworth, Middx, TW7 5PT.

## Wearside Golf Club require a **DEPUTY HEAD GREENKEEPER**

Applications are invited for the position of Deputy Head Greenkeeper. The suitable applicant will be experienced and qualified in all aspects of greenkeeping. A practical knowledge of turf management, machinery maintenance and irrigation systems are essential.

Good man management skills and experience in course improvements would be an advantage.

Please apply in writing enclosing a full CV by Friday, 28 December 2001.  
The Secretary, Wearside Golf Club, Coxgreen, Sunderland SR4 9LT

## **2 Assistant Greenkeepers**

### Betchworth Park Golf Club

2 Assistant Greenkeepers required. Qualification up to NVQ2 or equivalent. Spraying Certificate an advantage. Salary based on experience, salary scales based on the Standing Committee recommendations.

Minimum 3 years experience on Golf Courses.

Applications in writing please to:-

Betchworth Park Golf Club, Reigate Road, Dorking, Surrey RH4 1NZ

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require a

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Bob Bulbrook, Service Manager, The Burdens Group Ltd, Spalding Road, Sutterton, Boston, Lincolnshire PE20 2ET  
www.burdens.com

## DEPUTY HEAD GREENKEEPER

### Worthing Golf Club

Applications are invited for the position of Deputy Head Greenkeeper.

The successful applicant will be responsible for the day to day management of one of Worthing's two courses, reporting to the Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper.

The applicant must be qualified to at least NVQ3 or equivalent and hold spraying certificates PA1, PA2A and PA6.

The highest standards of presentation are required and experience of managing a team of Greenkeepers is essential.

Applications in writing with full CV should be addressed to:-  
Robert Short, Worthing Golf Club, Links Road, West Sussex BN14 9QZ

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(North of England)

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All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Closing date for applications 19th December 2001.

Applications containing CV to:

Mr R M Aitken, Managing Director, Aitkens Sportsturf Ltd,  
Aviation Road, Sherburn In Elmet, North Yorkshire, LS25 6NB Telephone 01977 681155

# Safe in the knowledge

## Sandy McDivot takes a positive look at the current economic climate

This month I would like, if I may, to comment upon the long-term job security outlook for we keepers of fine turf. I believe this to be a timely exercise seeing as the world economy appears to be in nose-dive mode at the present time. So making the assumption that we have not made any serious tactical errors recently, such as head butting the Lady Captain, or engaging in something other than social intercourse with the Chairman of Green's wife what is the likelihood of us being voted off as the weakest link. I would say that there are only three potential reasons for such a predicament. The first is incompetence, the second, golf course change of use and the third, a general public shift away from golf to other activities.

The first of these is somewhat irrelevant and should be highly unlikely given that nearly all greenkeepers of dubious abilities have thankfully vanished to other industries, such as the health service or politics. Many moons ago I once worked for a Head Greenkeeper who knew nothing about turf or indeed any other subject and who would only sporadically turn up to work in order to hurl some foul mouthed abuse at we long suffering assistants before falling into a nearby bunker in a drunken stupor.

He was to greenkeeping what Prince Philip is to foreign relations, yet remarkably he remained in the same position for some six years before all the greens started to take on the characteristics of evil smelling brown porridge and the committee had to reluctantly dispense with his services. Even to this day, one hears comments from old members of that far off committee stating that this moron was the finest greenkeeper the club had ever known, but I disregard such declarations as sad hazy romantic yearnings for the past, combined with acute senile dementia.

So what of the second cause for job loss, that of golf course change of use. Well given the current profit margins available in agriculture, I think the chances of courses reverting back to farmland are somewhat unlikely. But as more and more courses are proprietary owned and the industry becomes proportionally more competitive, then courses could start to be developed into other potentially more lucrative schemes, such as housing construction or equestrian sports facilities. In fact I have recently heard of a course undergoing such change of use. This I understand was brought about by negative market forces, cash flow uncertainties, questionable location and the fact that the course in question was c\*\*p. This I hasten to add, was no fault of the Course Manager but a result of chronic under funding together with employment of a course designer that looked like he had gained his qualifications at catering college.

An unfortunate case, but one that is by no means exceptional.

But what of the other potential threat to our livelihood. What are the chances of the game simply going out of fashion and thereby necessitating golf course closure on the grounds that no one would be seen dead playing the game? Preposterous you may think but wait, years ago the game of billiards was all the rage. Great halls housing dozens of tables were to be found in every town but who on earth plays the game now. More recently the sport of squash appears to be on a life support mechanism.

Even as we speak, sports centres across the land are knocking down the intervening squash court walls and filling the resultant void with trendy new exercise machines.

However, it is my humble opinion that on this front we have little to fear. The game of golf seems assured to grow in popularity for the foreseeable future and as a result we greenkeepers will be in ever-increasing demand with resultant theoretical wage increases to boot. The main threat to the growth of the game is expense but as skilled Course

Managers are able to maintain their courses to a high standard within tight budgetary controls, I see no problem here. Yes there are courses that cost ludicrous sums to maintain, but because they are in the minority and usually of championship standard, even they have a steady stream of affluent masochists ready to cough up the folding stuff in anticipation of five hours of ball searching torture. And if they don't, then the course simply reverts back to the more profitable pay and play option.

So how can I be so sure that more and more people will take up the game? Well with so many new courses on the scene, waiting lists have all but disappeared and anyone can obtain membership without having to spend several years in obsequious grovelling mode in an effort to get the dreaded interview. Then there is the fact that the game is starting to come to terms with its elitist image problems of the past. The social and dare I say it, ethnic barriers, have quite correctly departed from the game.

Tiger Woods may have complained of experiencing prejudice towards him in his formative years but that was far away. I remember recently listening to a radio interview of a young black professional golfer who had spent his junior golfing days playing at that well-known course near Reading, Calcot Park. The interviewer repeatedly brought up Tiger's past troubles in an effort to get the young golfer to dish the dirt on golf clubs in this country, but eventually this line of questioning was abruptly brought to a halt when the golfer stated that it may have happened to Tiger but he personally had never ever received anything other than total encouragement from the golfers of the Berkshire club, or indeed any other golfing venue.

Then there is the subject of role models that have taken to the game. What a huge benefit they have been. Certainly Tiger is one of the very best recruitment vehicles we could ever have asked for. Then there is Prince Andrew, he likes nothing better than



# Iron and Greenke



to play a round. The fact is the sport is appealing to people from the most unlikely walks of life. Alice Cooper for instance, the boa constrictor loving 70's rock icon of domestic fowl oral decapitation notoriety, has so devoted his life to the game that he has managed to get down to 4 handicap. Smokey Robinson, former soul singer has created his own miracle by replacing his drug addiction with golf addiction.

Robbie Williams the womanising, beer drinking rock star rebel that the youth of the day so admire for his moral standards, plays to a 14 handicap. Likewise that other figurehead of high ethics and gentlemanly behaviour; Chris Evans. Then what about the England football squad. Rumour has it that half of them play golf to single figure handicaps and seeing as they thrashed Germany 5:1,

we have living proof that mastery in the art of golf, brings with it the total co-ordination so requisite in the lesser sport of football.

With even the communist republic of Cuba embarking on a golf course construction programme, we can assume that the great game has received full social acceptance throughout the world. But will the public keep playing once they have taken it up?

Well here we have another couple of tricks up our sleeve. For one thing golf is a game that can be played right up to the moment of death of mind and body. Indeed many of the members at the great links of Sludgecombe appear already to have progressed to at least stage one of this condition, if not both. The other weapon in our armoury is that for some reason the game is highly addic-

tive. I do not know the time explanation for this phenomenon but once people get going they simply cannot stop. I have a friend who has been playing once every two weeks for several years and has yet to score lower than 50 over par. He hates the game with a passion. It destroys him both physically and mentally every time he plays. Yet can he give it up? No he cannot.

Because hidden within the depths of shanks, duffs, twitches and air shots, there is always an effortless stroke that sends the ball soaring towards the target. It is this shot that transports him briefly to his own personal Nirvana and this shot that brings him back a fortnight later for further punishment. Desmond Morris would probably have put the brief exultation of this experience down to our hunter instinct that

years to see projectile sent to target, as it was when our very survival depended on a well executed launch of the spear towards quadruped. Sigmund Freud would probably have us believe it is all down to childhood sexual repression and back this peculiar theory up with references to our utilisation of equipment such as balls, shafts and holes etc.

Either way, of all sports, few can match golf in getting the participant to those levels of emotion that explore the boundaries of incontinence. I remember the birth of my son, Dexter, the heir to the McDivot estate (an Austin Montego estate to be precise). Complications set in and towards the end of the 12-hour ordeal there were four doctors and two midwives, each with worried looks on their faces, engaged in a tug of war exercise in an attempt to get the little blighter out. Now that was worrying, but I have to say the tension levels for me did not quite match that experienced when faced with a tricky down hill four foot left to righter for the 20 pence greener. Still I have to say, the elation of actually seeing the little lad pop out was at least equal to that of slotting a 12 footer, for a birdie on the last.

Of course I play little golf these days, due to Mrs McDivot's grave concern that it could lead to me experiencing temporary enjoyment, but I still fully understand the levels of emotion that the game can inflict on the innocent.

So there you have it. Conscientious, learned professionals that we are, we have little to fear as regards us swelling the Job Centre queues. Just study hard, engage in friendly banter with the members, blame the odd brown patch on a mutant nematode and never take a fortnight's holiday in June.

Sandy McDivot:  
Head Greenkeeper, Sludgecombe  
Pay and Play.

## Feature listing from December '99

**December '99:** Agronomy; Security; Environment Competition Winner; Toro Award Winners

**January 2000:** Greens Construction; Awkward Jobs; Sandy McDivot; Agronomy; Toro Award review

**February 2000:** BTME2000 review; Committed to Green interview; Rookery Park GC; Engines; Chairman's profile; Environmental Management

**March 2000:** Cleobury Mortimer GC; Course Furniture; R&A Conference Report; Cutting heights; Avoncrop profile; Valderrama report; Westurf preview

**April 2000:** Fortrose & Rosemarkie GC; Utility Vehicles; Irrigation; Seed breeding; Gem Professional profile.

**May 2000:** Ross-on-Wye GC; Top Dressing; Course Mapping; Compact Tractors

**June 2000:** National Championship preview; Spraying; World Education Conference review; Environmental Management; Mowers

**July 2000:** Open Championship Preview; Dougal Duguid Court Case Report; Pest Control; Aventus profile; Course Conditioning

**August 2000:** Open Championship review; Water Features; Saltext preview; Charcoal; Malone GC; Royal County Down; Grand Tour Scholarship

**September 2000:** Blowers and Sweepers; Berkshire College Academy; National Championship roundup; Gordon McKillop interview; Winter health checks

**October 2000:** Toro Awards Preview; Ronald Fream; Irrigation; Saltext Review; Pest Control; Woburn GC

**November 2000:** Grass Cutting Machinery; Clandeboye GC; Drainage; National Championship review; Leatherjacket management

**December 2000:** Toro Awards; Making the most of your Dealer; Budget Boosters; BTME2001 preview; BIGGA/Bernhards CGSA delegation preview

**January 2001:** Communication; Tyres; Turf diseases; Kingsbarns Golf Links; Environment Competition Winner - Dyke GC; Talking Heads - Pest Control

**February 2001:** BTME2001 review; Winter Mowing; Irrigation; Broadstone GC; Hedges; Security

**March 2001:** York GC; Greens Maintenance; Meland GC; Norway; Greens Mowers; BIGGA Essay Winner; Grass Science profile

**April 2001:** Lightning detection; Brockett Hall GC; CGSA report; Fairway Mowers; Irrigation; Sward renovation; BIGGA Essay winner; Turf Disease

**May 2001:** Foot and Mouth Disease Special Report; Maintenance Facility report; Bunker Sand; ATVs; RainBird Profile; Fineturf Genetics; BTME2002 countdown; Electric-powered machines

**June 2001:** Stoke Park Club profile; Stuart Cagle MG; Tractors; Leaf Spot Disease; Take All Patch; Construction

**July 2001:** Royal Lytham profile; Tees Mowers; Fertilisers; Green Grasses; John Deere profile; Sandy McDivot; College Listings

**August 2001:** Aeration Survey; Machrie GC profile; Rough Mowers; Saltext Preview; Dr Alan Gange - environmental research; Hayter Profile; Ponds; Open Championship review; Toro Student of the Year profile;

**September 2001:** Ryder Cup preview; Chafer Grubs; Drainage; BIGGA National Championship preview; Sandy McDivot; Machinery Maintenance; Soil Analysis; Wild Flowers

**October 2001:** Major Award for Walter Woods; Royal Portrush GC; Portstewart GC; Irrigation; Soil biodiversity; Leaf collection systems; Scotsturf preview/ Saltext review

**November 2001:** BIGGA National Championship review; Environment Competition winner; Spraying; Toro Awards Preview; Cutting regimes; Dyke GC



# ... and so to Sutton United



Another much travelled month taking in Germany and Scotland and many points in between.

The German trip was to Dortmund as the guest of the German Greenkeepers Association at their annual Conference and Exhibition. As you would expect it was a superbly organised event with top quality speakers and instantaneous translation of the papers. Among those speakers was Bruce Williams, a Past President of the GCSAA who was there with another GCSAA Past President, Gerry Faubel.

We also had the opportunity to visit a local golf club and the Borussia Dortmund and Schalke 04 football grounds. The Schalke Stadium was particularly impressive because, like the Millennium Stadium in Cardiff it has a retractable roof, but in this case the turf is wheeled out on pallets between matches.

One point that was made was that they were still having problems with it because it is being stored too close to the stadium and shading was still a problem. We were actually asked not to go on the pitch because they didn't think the turf was up to it. Another point made was that the Bundesliga insist that the pitch is in place five days before a match. Having said all that it didn't seem to bother Schalke as they beat Arsenal a couple of days after our visit in the first phase of the

Champions' League.

The real reason for my visit was to speak on the occasion of Claus Detlef Ratjen's retirement as President of the German Greenkeepers Association. Claus is a wonderful fellow and a man who nurtured a vision of uniting greenkeepers throughout Europe. He worked unceasingly in this regard and was rewarded when FEGGA was formed in '96. He was a guiding light behind the Federation and went on to become its Chairman. Greenkeepers throughout Europe have a lot to thank him for.

It was a real pleasure to pay tribute to him as I always feel that with Claus he is so friendly that he makes me feel welcome even in my own country.

My next trip was to Scotland for Scotsturf which was very much a flying visit but a very enjoyable one.

Although not a BIGGA Show it is very much a greenkeepers' occasion with a great deal of relevance to our members. In fact I, although a long way from home, did a little bit of business during the day. It was a successful Show from BIGGA's perspective. The new location for the stand meant everyone had to walk past and Cheryl and Pauline were extremely busy making contacts for Greenkeeper International and BTME, while Peter Boyd, as always, was at the helm.

While I've talked about two trips I did make I must mention one I was unable to undertake. Circumstances dictated that I was unable to travel north for the final of the Toro Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping and the Toro Student of the Year Awards but I was absolutely delighted to learn that the two winners came from the South East. Huw Morgan and Andrew Pledger are two worthy winners and I'm sure they will be superb ambassadors for the Association during the

next year.

Nearer to home, those of you who know me well must be amazed that I've reached December before mentioning my beloved Sutton United, but one look at the Ryman's League table will show you why. We're not too good in the league and we're out of both the FA Cup and the FA Trophy. As a Vice President of the Club I haven't been able to get there as often as I should have been as BIGGA business has taken priority but perhaps with the season we are having that is just as well.

Even nearer to home, I thought I'd got away with it when the Gentleman's Dinner was cancelled earlier in the year but it came round again. We were lucky with the weather, as ever there was a good turnout and it seemed everyone seemed to enjoyed themselves. I must confess that I'd been away on my travels and Mick Haynes and the rest of the team had prepared the course and I was delighted that Mick and the team were given due acknowledgement and appreciation for the great work they had done.

Still on the course it seems that the season just gets longer and longer as, as I write, we are still cutting fairways as least once a week and we've only just got underway on our winter programme.

It just leaves me to wish all BIGGA members and their families a Happy Christmas and a wonderful and prosperous New Year.

**Clive Osgood, Chairman**