AROUND THE GREEN

Keeping in touch with news and comment from the regions

Section secretaries and correspondents should note that the closing date for 'Around The Green' copy is the first day of the month preceding publication - eg. copy for February issue to be received by January 1st. This means that section scribes must think ahead by at least one clear month and send relevant new copy before the appearance of the current issue. All out-of-date announcements will be rejected. Co-operation in meeting these deadlines will be much appreciated.

BUCKS, BERKS AND OXON

This column is so up-to-date I've decided to give it a title. Various ideas have been tossed around and my final choice is 'hot and fresh'. On that theme, we have another fine victory to add to our list of conquests in 1991, this time perhaps our most notable and dangerous, for we beat The Section Secretaries by 5 to 1 at Ellesborough GC on October 31st. This is something we would all like to crow about, but considering it is almost wage review time I think it's best that we just say how lucky we were and no doubt the secretaries will get their own back next year!

Thanks go to the Ellesborough staff, secretary Ken Flint, head greenkeeper Dave Childs, and Alma Cheshire for the marvellous catering. Also we thank Bob Stewart - for the secretaries - and Golf Turf Equipment for the magnificent shield donation.

Our other golf event in October was the Autumn Invitation at Sonning GC. It must be some sort of justice that over 30 greenkeepers, all of whom had been praying for rain over the past months, should get so thoroughly soaked throughout the day. Never again will I doubt The Great Greenkeeper In The Sky! Weather apart, the day was a resounding success, thanks in no small part to the sterling efforts of our section secretary, Bob Woodward, whose tireless work made this the smoothest run event we've had yet. RESULTS: 1st overall - Colin Vince and Andy Elney, 2nd - Phillip Slater and Paul Wakefield, 3rd - Bob Woodward and Terry Jackson. Best a.m. - John Bevan and Dennis Ellington. Best p.m. - Simon Robinson and Owen Cooper. Nearest the Pin - Alan Collis (a.m.) and Steve Craddock (p.m.). Longest Drive - Ian Pierce (a.m.) and Simon Robinson (p.m.) Special thanks to Sonning GC, especially secretary Peter Williams, Club captain Derrick Howes, who presented the prizes, and course manager Alan Collins and his staff, for an excellent day. Finally, our trade friends from Parkers, Sta-Brite, Rigby Taylor, Pattissons, County Mowers, and Maxwell Hart, with a special word of thanks to Bernie Wall, who walked round with a score card when one of 'ours' decided not to play the second round.

Just a few reminders to tidy things up, with a gentle reminder not to forget our Gentlemen's Dinner at Frilford in Feb '92. Tickets are avail-

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The section held its annual Autumn Tournament over the Peebles course on September 10th, with bright sunny weather shining kindly upon us. Our thanks as always go to the captain and council of Peebles for courtesy of the course and clubhouse facilities and to the green staff and catering personnel for their respective excellence. A total of 46 members, guests and traders entered the tournament, which was won by a well-briefed and highly professional Scratch – G D Thomson, Goswick, 1st Class – S Melville, Lothianburn, 2nd Class – A Wylie, Newbattle, 3rd Class – N Stalker, Torphin, Veter – G Stavert, Peebles, Aggregate – S Dixon, Newbattle, Fourthly – R Thomson and G Sturtevant, Peebles.

A presentation was made to one of our senior members upon his retirement, S Dixon presenting an inscribed clock to George Stavert from the section and wishing him a long and happy retirement. George has been a member of the section since 1967 and although asked on many occasions, he always declined to hold office. There have, however, been few occasions when George has not appeared at our events and we all wish him every success.

The William Woods Memorial Trophy took place at Swanston GC on October 3rd, a howling gale greeting us on arrival and remaining throughout the day. Needless to say, scores were on the high side and local knowledge helped in the end, with Swanston GC being the eventual victors. Our thanks to the captain and committee for course courtesy, Chris and his staff for the course preparation and the catering staff for grand food. Let us hope the weather can be better organised next year.

The last tournament of the year was the match of East Scotland v The North East of England. It is always a pleasure to meet our old friends and on this occasion victory went to the English. Our thanks to Dennis Jones, Doug Donne and Henry Fry for their help and indeed to GC for making the event look forward to with keen anticipation.

On behalf of the chairman and committee, may I thank everyone for their support throughout the year and express the hope that you will continue to give us solid support throughout 1992. I am sure you will air your views at the AGM on December 4th at Kingsknowe. Always remember that this is your Association and we want to run it the way you would want it.

WILLIE BLAIR

LONDON

A good turn-out of 40 members and guests descended upon Horns GC for London's section Autumn Tournament on September 30th, George Whitty having prepared the course to his usual high standards. The competition was fierce and competitive, the battle that ensued eventually producing a worthy winner in S Cox of Abridge G&CC, with 40 Stanford points, duly pursued by M Storey of Hatfield G&CC on 39 and Norman Exley of Northwood GC on 38 points. It seems that the architect for the S.E. is making the collection of trophies something of a hobby! Our playing guests were D Edie, R Croi and R Drake.

A London team travelled to Ashridge on October 10th to inflict a 3-1 defeat on a representative Mid Anglian team. The game was arranged to foster closer relationships with our near neighbours and a return invitation was mooted for next season. The lovely course at Ashridge lent itself perfectly to the very friendly day and was thoroughly enjoyed by all participants. Our sincere thanks to George and his crew for a superbly turned out course.

There will be a seminar at Aldenham on Feb 26th, and I hope to see many more of you at this event. Other scheduled events, details will follow in the next newsletter. My sincere good wishes to all our members for Christmas and the New Year.

BRIAN KELLY

SOUTH WALES

Our Autumn Tournament was held at Morriston GC on September 18th, with numbers down on our annual average. The reasons for this drop are many, for weather and, no doubt, are easily explained by the individuals concerned. The competition was medal play over 18 holes, with scores very 'up and down', though the winner of the Presidents Shield, Graham Cox, produced a very creditable net score of 67. The best gross score was that of Stephen Price with an 83. Second nett came Doug Donne with a 76 (on count back), Gerwyn Price, also on 76, was in third place and Peter Lacey was fourth with 77.

A raffle was held to swell the coffers and resulted in Anthony Smyth winning golf balls, with Dennis Jones, Doug Donne and Henry Fry all taking away a bottle of something warming. This was followed by a lecture evening, first with Frank Chute of Modern Maintenance Products (MMP) giving a company sales presentation on lubricants, greases and fire extinguishers, complete with slides. He also touched on such items as industrial glues, adhesives and compounds that can be utilised in repairing irrigation piping. A sales package prepared specially for greenkeepers is available, those interested should let me know.

Next came Dr Paul Wilson from Agriplan, who addressed us on the subject of Agrimaster and Agriland fertilisers, bucking up his talk with revealing tests and trials successfully carried out by the STRL.

Our annual match against the South West was held at St Pierre on October 3rd, with a tied result at three games all resulting in our retention of the tournament for another year. Our thanks to St Pierre management for courtesies received and to course manager, David Jones, and his staff for making the day so enjoyable.

Pennard GC was the venue for our seminar on October 4th, attracting greenkeepers, local authority representatives and green chairmen. A total of 80 people attended the John Deere/Power Cut Jointly sponsored event, enjoying the demonstration of Power Cut machine on display and listened spell-bound to a presentation by Howard Storey of John Deere on the John Deere range and their applications.

Dr W G Rees, BSc, MA, PhD, FRCS, a soil scientist and former Head of Agricultural Chemistry at Glasgow University gave a talk entitled 'Grass Care Stems with Soul Care' with Neil Squires, BSc, closing the meeting with a talk on agronomy before chairing a question and answer session.

Our thanks to the Pennard GC committee for granting us the facility for this seminar and to their secretary for his valuable help in organising the mailing of letters to golf Clubs. Additionally, thanks to Colin Murphy, Malcolm Rees and Pen-}

ned head greenkeeper, Colin Reilly, all of whom did sterling work behind the scenes.

Finally our congratulations to Paul Hopkins and Nigel Owens on additions to their family and we hope they are coping with the inevitable sleepless nights! Our final competition will be the Christmas thrash at Pyle and Kenfig on December 11th. We'll play for the Vitax Shield and follow with our AGM. Arrive by 9.30am please. A very merry Christmas to you all.

PHILIP SWAIN

NORTH SCOTLAND

The decision to change our 1991 lottery format, running it on the World Match Play proved to be very successful. Almost everyone filled their tickets and made it the best section money winner thus far. This is vital for the continued running of the section, providing as it does the means to keeps prices down and provide support in sending three delegates to BTME in January. For the first time since our lottery began, the major prizes were won by greenkeepers, with Robbie Allan of Hazelhead GC drawing Seve Ballesteros and winning £100 and Stephen Sullivan of Craigielaw GC drawing Nick Price for second place. Other prize winners were: 3rd (£50) M Donald, 21 Windsor Rd, Mastrick, Aberdeen. 4th (£40) I Ross c/o Tain GC. Others winning £20 each were S McPherson, c/o Mathew Glou, Perth. S Hay, 4 Furner Place, Peterhead. E Urquhart, 4 Ness Hs., Forrose and I Thom c/o Westhill Inn. The £10 winners were: A Low, c/o Westhill Inn. J Sweeney, Birkenhill, Elgin. Kate Foster c/o Donside Paper, Aberdeen, and I Phillips, 22 Harley St. Stklo.

Plans are afoot to stage a conference, similar to the one of last year in Aberdeen. Our hope is that it will be staged at the Dundee College of Further Education around Nov/Dec 1992, with attend- ance fees again being held to a very reasonable level. The committee would welcome any fresh ideas for speakers.

GORDON MOIR

NORTH EAST

The now traditional four-ball matches against our arch rivals - the East of Scotland section - took place at Goswick GC on October 8th. The result was a close affair until the very last match, with our North East team finally making it with a 3 1/2 to 2 1/2 result. Our thanks to Goswick GC, George Thompson and his staff for splendid preparations, the captain of Goswick for presenting the prizes. Finally a special thanks to Stewarts of Edinburgh for sponsoring the competition yet again. Results (S. E. players named first): G Lauder & I Johnson beat G Wood & G Thompson 2 & 1. B Wilson & G Atkinson halved with S Greenwood & W Blair. J Richardson & S Cram beat J Neillien and R Dugan, 1 up. U P Robi- son & K Ruthford lost to R Bullock & S Melville, 5 & 4. C Parkinson & R Black lost to P Bowden & A Holmes. S & G Dope & A Wright beat S Dixon & C Yeaman, 2 & 1.

JIMMY RICHARDSON

SHEFFIELD

May I apologise to section members for lack of news over the past two months. This was due to a misunderstanding over deadline dates, which I kept missing! Now this is sorted out 1 = 28
enthusiastic Neil Whitaker, for providing the perfect ending to our golfing season on October 30th. The great attraction of playing both the Duke and Duchess courses proved irresistible to a full field of greenkeepers and was undoubtedly a most fitting season finale. Woburn was at its autumnal best, wreathed in the colourful tints that only Mother Nature can provide, and in a condition that would have brought reams of praise in the golfing press had ours been a PGA Tour event. Though we are not Tour players, we can and do appreciate such excellence and our vote is clearly stamped – NEIL WHITTAKER.

Casting an expert eye over both courses, one could not fail to admire the architectural excellence of the late Charles Lawrie, whose design career spanned an all-too-brief span, cut short by his untimely death at the age of 53. There is little doubt that the Duke & Duchess courses were his greatest legacies.

So another year of fixtures is over, a new committee has been elected, and I am bowing out gracefully by taking this opportunity to thank all those who have made my spell as secretary so enjoyable. Throughout the year we have been very well supported by so many members and traders that to thank them individually would take up too much space. I would be bound to miss someone out and rather than risk unintentional omission, I give a hearty thanks to one and all for continued support, which is much appreciated. All that remains is for me to wish everyone a happy Christmas and to ask that you continue to support YOUR section, which belongs to you, you know.

GEOFF SMITH

MIDLANDS
The warm welcome given to us at the recent Open Day of Brockton Golf Club was much appreciated, with many Midland section members commenting on how much they enjoyed the event.

During the winter we plan to hold two lectures, in January and March, and members will be advised more fully in our next fixture list, which is due in December. May I take this opportunity of reminding you all of the all important AGM, which will take place at Edgbaston Golf Club on December 16th, starting at 3pm. Please try and attend.

DEAN CLEAVER

NORTH WEST
How are things in the North West? One can only assume that there are no problems, and that everyone is happy. How do I arrive at this assumption? Simply by recalling the North West Section AGM, which was held at Mersey Golf Club on October 24th, which called for our member- ship of 335 greenkeepers to attend. From this figure of 335 only 16 people turned up, eight of which were members of the committee! Whilst we must go to the Brend family, who kindly allowed us the opportunity of reminding you all of the all important AGM, which will take place at Edgbaston Golf Club on December 16th, starting at 3pm. Please try and attend.

RICHARD WHYMAN

MID ANGLIA
Rounding off our year, we must give heartfelt thanks to the generosity of Woburn’s Alex Hay, along with the Club’s fine team of greenkeepers so ably master-minded by the irrepressibly

ROGER SHAW

EAST ANGLIA
This report will start in the summer and finish with a merry Christmas, such is the time span to catch up. First to Stowmarket GC in August, a lovely course and a record turn-out. Warm welcome from John Daul, Stowmarket Captain, who also presented prizes and won nearest the pin on the 10th (83°). Bob Chapman was actually 2’ away, but his shot was off the 1st tee – good old Bob! The longest drive was won by Peter (John Daly) Howard. RESULTS: (handicap 0-18) 1st Alan Carter (32 on course). (handicap 19-28) 1st Paul Fletcher 38, 2nd Steve Pigott, 3rd Richard Mitchell. Guest: John Riches 36. It was nice to see a few more players from Norfolk and our thanks to Stowmarket GC for a grand day out.

Our congratulations to Ranald McNeil on his course management appointment at Quietwaters and on fathering a baby girl. Also to Steve Denton and Mike Fance, both with new babies, Steve a daughter and Mike a son.

Next to Gog Magog in October, a record breaking turn-out of 70 players coming from as far afield as Sussex and Surrey. The course was in good ‘nick’, as was the meal, and the awards went as follows: RESULTS – Ian Rutter, Peter Howard 78 gross. Handicap 0-18 – 1st Stephen Patison 37, 2nd Stephen Cox 36, 3rd Stephen Freestone 34. Handicap 19-28 – 1st Stephen Pigott 41, 2nd Richard Mitchell 39, 3rd Ernie Hart 33. Longest Drive – Steve Dickinson (300 yards) nearest the pin – Dave Wilkinson (46°). Guest prizes: 1st John Jackson 42, 2nd Harry Shelley 39. Prizes donated by Rhone Poulenc, Siemens, Rigby Taylor, Cowies, Ransomes, Colliers and Ernest Doe. Our thanks to all the trade members for their support.

There were reports of slow play and in future a penalty will be imposed on offenders (clocked times). The captain of Gog Magog offered a good closing speech, welcoming us back and saying he had never stood before so many greenkeepers before – except at the Club’s AGM of course, captain, and our thanks for a grand day out.

I said I would end with a merry Christmas, so to all East Anglian section members, wherever you are, a merry Christmas.

MICK LATHROPE

KENT
It is always a great pleasure to play Knole Park, and our Autumn Tournament played there on October 8th was once again a fabulous day. I have to admit that for many years it has been one of my personal favourites. The course was have been to see more members present, especially as Peter had given freely of his own time to be with us.

Arrangements are in hand for the preparation of a 1992 calendar of events, and once dates are finalised all members will receive a complete fixture list. That’s it for now, save wishing you all a very merry Christmas and a prosperous new year.

BERT CROSS
prepared to the very highest order by Andy Arthur and his merry men and I hope he will pass on our thanks to the staff for their exceptional hospitality.

The morning play produced some pretty unspectacular scoring, due perhaps to the super slick putting surfaces. Our thanks to Sta-brite and Chris Sharp for donating the new Sta-brite shield and handsome trophy, awarded to the medal winner, John Rootes with a nett 69. John was followed closely was Steve Phillips with 70 and Malcolm Arthur with 71. The scratch prize was won by Ian Rawlings.

The afternoon saw a man Texas Scramble played, with much better golf and won (not unsurprisingly by the rest of us) with a gross 67 by the Rootes, Rawlings, Stapley combination. Personally, I feel the man responsible for 'arranging' the tees has much to answer for and I am still pressing for a steezards enquiry. Why did nearly all the teams have a combined handicap of around 50, with my team on 64? A credit here to the boys of Sittingbourne and Bircham for a battling 73. I must apologise for the initial confusion over handicaps and the missing raffle tickets, but as some may know, these were in John Millen's hills and he was away on Joint Golf Council Business. I have not seen such an expression of relief as that on David Wood's face when the mislaid cheque book finally surfaced! Perhaps the highlight of the day was the presentation of awards by Knole Park's greatest son, Sam King. Sam is a pro from the great era of the 30s and 40s. His list of achievements are all that remain of the original 18, a ladies championship course laid out by James Braid for the army, which has been in the ground for 50 years or more) will still germinate if given the right conditions.

One good talk deserves another, and this led to an informative talk by Eddie Sims and Bigga's National Chairman, George Malcolm, graced by the presence of Management Golf Services, this followed by ICI's Dr Ronon, long serving assistant at Baildon GC, and some reconstruction and reinstatement is required to many of the bunkers if it is to withstand the tests of modern golfing traffic. All is not lost however, for with the environmental Golf Services, this followed by ICI's Dr Ronon, long serving assistant at Baildon GC, and with splendid contributions from seven lively discussions which included some very welcome new young members a very happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

The January Winter Lecture will be at Came Down GC on January 15th, the speaker being the Army's John Arthur and Malcolm Arthur with 71. The scratch prize was won by Ian Rawlings.

SAFETY

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AROUND THE GREEN

29 - Phil’s talk concentrated on the practical side of conservation, and with the help of slides Phil showed the sound results achieved at Hankley Common following a calculated conservation programme over the past years. A substantial roast luncheon followed, with Jack McMillan opening the post prandial session by telling us of his experiences in Europe, with emphasis on his recent ‘French Connection’. This did not stop Jack from hopping back across the channel occasionally, expounding upon his well known views of winter play and the stress factor involved for both course and greenkeeper!

The final speaker of the day was our Executive Director, Neil Thomas, who presented a comprehensive paper on the present and possible future programmes over the past years. The winners afterwards celebrated with champagne in the clubhouse of Richmond GC. May I take this opportunity to wish ALL members a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

CLIVE OSGOOD

SOUTH WEST & WALES REGION

None can deny that the now well established Huxley Bowl has been concluded with a fine win (for the third time!) by Alex Armitage and Paul Weston, beating Paul Mayne and Mike Oram on the last green after 36 closely contested holes. The winners afterwards celebrated with champagne in the clubhouse of Richmond GC. May I take this opportunity to wish ALL members a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

CLIVE OSGOOD

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AROUND THE GREEN

30 - believing that the professionals are making overtures to eventually take over from the R&A in controlling British and European golf, he was spurred by such convictions into making an impassioned plea for the grass roots to at least be aware of the situation. He was equally passionate in condemning invidious attempts by Club professionals to take over the 'management' of golf courses, without getting their hands dirty of course, (there were a couple of vocal Club professionals/managers in the audience) suggesting that their essentially commercial interests would have dire consequences. Above all he urged greenkeepers - interspersing his comments with documented case histories of those 'warm climate' methods that had proved both disastrous and costly in our colder climate conditions - to remain ever vigilant and to learn from past mistakes and avoid repeating them. His address was loudly applauded.

It could be said that safety regulations and The Law is a subject guaranteed to be about as exciting as watching Astroturf grow, but this is never the case when the speaker is the hugely entertaining Jon Allbutt. Jon has the skill and personality to cut through the gobbledygook of official government publications and ministerial edicts, with the wit to interpret even the most tiresome of regulations and make them appear almost as interesting as The Ryder Cup. There is none finer than Jon and his warnings of the consequences, should one be tempted to flaunt the law on such diverse subjects as chainsaws and pesticides, held the audience spellbound and he quite rightly drew both loud acclamation and the bulk of questions at question time.

From the floor came one question from an eminent head greenkeeper, Ivor Scoones, which brought both wry smiles and a silence in which one could hear the proverbial pin drop. 'Why', he asked, 'since 'The Way Forward' condemns large committees and favours their abolition, does the Joint Golf Course Committee have such an indefensibly large committee?' The question remained unanswered.

DAVID WHITE

MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

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