Ayrshire

There was no news last month with nothing much to report. As I type these notes on May 3 we are basking in glorious sunshine prompting a first flush growth of the season. It’s difficult to believe that only last week we were enduring sleet, hailstones and Baltic-like temperatures. Those of us who had played all the events at the spring outing will be able to relate to these conditions.

The spring tournament was held at Western Gailes Golf Club on Wednesday, April 26. It was played under extremely testing conditions described above. It was commendable that more than half the field actually returned a scorecard when the course was the only sensible option of the day.

My thanks to David Woodbyrne, of Southerness, who inspired me to continue when Brian Inglis of Greenock retired. He quipped in his Irish accent “Sure you can only get so wet and I’m going to stroll around the other half of this magnificent golf course. Don’t let me kip you off the game here I’ll just join the game behind”.

I’m glad I battled on to make the prizes. Thanks David. The prize lists are listed below.

Best scratch - Alan Forrest, of Western Gailes, with a little bit of local knowhow.


Chairman, Duncan Gray, in his presentation speech welcomed everyone for attending on such a terrible day, with mention to Regional Administrator Peter Boyd and National Administrator, Elliott Small. He commented that it was a privilege to play at such a prestigious venue for our spring tournament and thanked the captain and committee of Western Gailes for granting us courtesy of their course. Jim Devlin and his greenstaff were thanked for presenting the course in such line conditions. The greenkeepers of the staff were also thanked for keeping everyone well fed and refreshed all day.

The annual challenge match of the Regional versus the Secretary Association was played at Luffness New Golf Club where I had the honour of partnering Tom Murray of Ratho Park to a narrow victory in an overall 8-2 success for the Greenkeepers. The only order Ayrshire representative was Keith McCartney, of Dumfries and Galloway, who partnered our R A Peter Barr to victory. Ian Barr told me that he has been appointed Interim Head Greenkeeper with a view to a permanent appointment if all goes well. Congratulations to Ian on his promotion Keith and I’m sure it won’t be long before you make an impression to confirm your position. Remaining on the promotion subject, new Skip is David Leith with the lowest gross score, and Alex Robertson with the lowest nett score from both the autumn ’99 and spring ’00 tournaments. Congratulations to them and I am sure they will do their best to bring the trophies back to the Central Section.

The autumn tournament is at Stirling GC in September and hopefully we can have just as large an attendance. The entry forms will be sent out in plenty of time along with details of the next four tournaments and any allocation of “Club 2002” tickets.

I am still waiting for the match report regarding the football match against the West Section. It’s either very long or Andy is still trying to make up his mind as he’s trying to make his team’s performance. Congratulations to the winners! The match’s winner of “Club 2000” is Owen Brown with ticket number 0057. The cheque is on its way to you Owen. Congratulations!

Next month is the first of our bonus draws, when the prize will be a massive £1,000 so get on the ball for next month’s magazine, it could be your lucky number which is drawn out. That is if you bothered to buy your tickets!

The tickets have entered this year’s inter-club tournament which is now well underway. Please remember to phone me with the result as soon as you have completed each match so that results can be kept up to date.

North

Anyone out there wondering what happened to my Section notes in the April magazine? Well, I did send them in but they got mixed up somewhere along the line. First time they have gone missing in over eight years and I have been assured it should not happen again. Looking through them there are some results still waiting to be published. Members to the Section were Leslie Phillip, from Nairn Dunbar, and Graham Lornie, from Royal Aberdeen. Congratulations to Gordon McDonald, St Andrews, on his engagement to Susan. Unfortunately, as a result of this, he has moved to Edinburgh and joined the East Section, so the first time in class two is up for grabs again.

No new members this month, but one or two on the move to report about. Stuart Hog’s new First Assistant at Newmachar GC is Alex Walker, who has been promoted from within, while joining the staff at Fortrose is David Duggan, formerly at Ullapool GC. Paul Ross leaves Nairn to a new position as 3rd Professional to Frances Smith at Lumphnan GC, in Aberdeenhire. His place is taken by Ross Hamill, who worked at Craggan GC, Granton-on- Spey previously.

At the end of this month we have the Scottish Greenkeepers Championship here in our Section at Newmachar GC by Aberdeen. Let’s have a big entry from the North and hopefully we can win a few trophies over Dale Robertson’s excellent course. It is one of the toughest courses I have played, so get practising.

I have just received confirmation of my entry to the BIGGA National Championship in Lytham later this month. Hopefully on next report I will be able to tell you that I have won a place at our spring outing in Buckpool and am awaiting a refund!

Iain Macleod

Northern Region

North

The weather tried its best to spoil the spring tournament at Ramside Hall on the 11 April, but despite the persistent rain all 29 competitors completed their rounds, although some scorecards were expected to be near-hardly legible. The course was in excellent condition, a credit to Roger Shaw and his staff.

The categories sponsored by Border Sports was won by Darren Mcgee nett 73; 2. Andrew Wood nett 75; 3. Ian Rowe nett 76. Category 2 sponsored by GEM was won quite surprisingly by Olly Sheppard nett 69, who would have expected a greenkeeper from Richmond winning a category?! Second and third were the Wearside pair, Barry Walker, nett 70 and Tony Cheesne, nett 71. Category 3 sponsored by Sportlands was won by the bookies favourite and the housewives’ choice Ken Pearson, nett 70 and Dave Moe, nett 76. Prizes in each category were: 1st platinum - 2nd Personal Stereos. 3rd Cameras.

Best nett on par 35 sponsored by Rite Feed was won by Barry Walker.

The two qualifiers for the Scotts/Charterhouse national final in Blackpool are: Best Gross - Darren Mcgee. Best Nett - Olly
Sheppard. Good luck to both of them.

Entries for the Cleveland Shield, sponsored again by Carrs, were taken and a good response was had. Entrants will be informed as soon as the draw is made.

Any news contact me on 0780 8196538.

Steven Jaques

North West

Beginning of May and at last the weather has warmed up and the rain has ceased for the previous seven days, we had a dry day except for the last few holes, which gave the tillsenders a good soaking. The game should have been a match between the NW Section and the N Wales Section with two teams of six players, but the N Wales Section could only muster six players so the NW Section claimed the GEM trophy. This did not spoil the day for those who did turn up as we had a sweep and the day was enjoyed by all. I would like to thank Gem Professional for once again sponsoring this annual tournament which has been played for many years.

Thanks also to Mike Davie, Head Greenkeeper at Hazel Grove GC and his staff, for what must have been a mammoth task to have the course in such great condition and playable after the continuous rain. Thanks to Hazel Grove GC for allowing us courtesy of the course and the caterers for a great meal. I would also like to thank everybody who turned up to make it a great day and especially the six from N Wales. I am sure you thought it was worth coming.

The next tournament is the summer meeting at West Derby CC on Wednesday 28 June. Lunch will be served between 12 noon and 1pm. The tee will be available from 1.30 pm. All applications, including a cheque for £15 made payable to BIGGA N.W, to be sent to Peter Cross, Harthill Lodge, Harthill Road, Liverpool L18 3HU, no later than Friday 23 June.

Evening meal and prize presentations to be held on the 10 August at Fishwick Hall. I hope we've got that right now. Golf, silly game, far too complex for me. Think I'll take up quantum physics, far simpler and I bet it's far less irritating. Don't get me wrong, love greenkeeping, but the game just brings out the worst elements of human nature and I for one don't need the hassle that goes with it. Nothing ever goes smoothly. A lot of effort is put in and a load of rubbish comes out. Maybe I'm holding the clubs wrong. Now, seriously, I think that everyone involved in this industry needs to look at themselves when it comes to the game itself, analyse it truthfully and I think the majority wouldn't like what they saw.

See ya...

Dave Goodridge

Northern

It had to happen again. Our return visit to Bradley Hall GC for the spring tournament, sponsored by White Moss Amenities, was cancelled again due to the white stuff, heavy hail. With everyone playing at least seven holes and we had a count back over the last 3 holes played, the results are as follows:


Trade Prize, Mike Bircare, Longest Drive, Andrew Clark, sponsored by Acorn. Nobody reached the nearest the pin so this will be played for at another event. No silverware was presented, but the sponsor's prizes were given out as normal.

Many thanks to the Head Greenkeeper, Alan Court and his staff for the condition of the course, shame about the weather, and their assistance on the day. Thanks also to the catering staff for...
East Midlands

By the time you have read this article, this year’s spring tournament will have been played and enjoyed by 34 members with the best Nett and Gross winners qualifying for the Scotts/Charterhouse National Tournament.

The qualifier itself was played at the exclusive course of Chilwell Manor in Nottinghamshire, with prizes for the day sponsored by E T Atkins, Bourne Nursery Supplies, Tower Sports, Alpha Amenity.

On behalf of the East of England Section I would like to welcome Les Emery to his post as the new Regional Administrator for the Midland Region. If you hear of any news please telephone me on 01636 626364 or 0860 502464. Graeme Macdonald

East Anglia

At the end of the month several new members have transferred from the Midland Region, which were as follows:

1st - Richard Goddard, Shendish Manor 33 points. 2nd - John Blair, Brocket Hall. 3rd - Kevin Armstrong, John O’Gaunt 33 points. (winning order decided on countback).

Longest Drive was won by Geoff James, of John O’Gaunt, and Nick Winslow of Pytchley Golf Club.

The afternoon round - an 18 hole medal - was the qualifying event for the National Tournament, to be played at St Anne’s Old Links and Fairhaven Golf Clubs in September. The two golfers who qualify for this event are Russell Howson and Mark Whittle, both from Woburn who had a 72 gross and 79 net respectively. I’m sure they will be pleased to represent the Section and Midland Regional team at such a prestigious event. We wish them both well.

Our final thanks go to all our trade members, who once again supported our golf day; particularly well represented in the case of the radar, represented by Mark Pyrah, who provided the prize table. Simon Hedley, of Boughton Loam, was the best trade player on the day with a Stableford points in the morning round.

Teams who entered the Lodgeway Four Ball competition should have received the draw by now, please ensure all matches are played by the appropriate dates.

David Forsyth, of Mid Herts Golf Club, has been recruited onto the committee, having been appointed to replace Peter Larter. Paul Lockett

Midland

With record levels of rainfall recorded and the cold temperatures we have experienced in the last few months, it has not been one of the easiest months for all greenkeepers. It was then no great surprise that our scheduled spring tournament at South Staffs had to be cancelled, enjoyed the day, I do hope all of you who entered this tournament got the message and can make the rearranged date. I will therefore have to report all the results in next month’s report.

As I have mentioned in my previous report, the Midland Committee have decided to put together an agenda which sets out our intentions for the year to come. The agenda is as follows. 1. To organise and promote four golf tournaments for its members. 2. To organise and promote the golf tournament. 3. To organise and promote three matches against other golf associations. These will be dependent on the commitment of the section membership. 4. To organise an educational trip to a major golfing venue. This will be dependent on the commitment of the section membership. 5. To keep membership informed with any information that is of importance at section level.

Once again I would ask anyone who has information to put into this report please do not hesitate to get in touch with me. Jonathan Wood

South East

Golf Day will now be held at Haverhill Golf Club on a bright spring day. The 18 hole Medal competition was the section qualifier for the Charterhouse/Scotts National Tournament. The course was in excellent condition and all credit must go to Alan and his team; Glen, Jamie and Gary for all their hard work. Signs of the one inch of rain that fell the previous day were barely noticeable, although the amount and speed of water that ran through the stream on the course did add to the inherent difficulty of the conditions the day before.

Once again, many thanks Alan, Steven Nichols, Haverhill’s Captain, welcomed the Section and held the annual Presentation of the course and handpicking the hard work, organisating the day and ensuing things rang smoothly.

June 2000 Greenkeeper International
Around the Green


Toilet seat, M. Taylor again! This was won for failing to return the seat after earning the right to have his name engraved on it at our last meeting. As members of the Section know, this trophy represents those times when the BOTTOM drops out of your game, but in this instance I think Mike just wanted to sit on it a little longer!

Thanks to all the trade for their company and for their help with the prize table. Charterhouse, Scotts UK, Aventis, Rigby Taylor, Rushbrook & Sons, Sheriffs, Sisis, Tomlinson Groundcare, Toro UK, Turf Care.

Future dates and venues: June 9 - Rushmere; July 25 - Stoke by Nayland v Essex; August 15 - Royal Cromer; October 10 - Waldringfield Heath; December 19 - Thorpeness.

2001 venues: Felstowse Ferry, Eaton, Richmond Park, Purdis Heath and Thorpeness. Last, but by no means least, it was good to see Derek Farrington swing a golf club again. He appears well on the mend.

See you all at Rushmere.

Steve Millard

Surrey

I am typing this on May 5 and hopefully the second spring of the millennium has arrived and the gloom on the faces of our members has been replaced with the warm glow of anticipation of fine dry summer days with a hint of rain during the night. By the time you all read this in June, we will know.


Trade prize went to Steve Denton, of Rigby Taylor, who shot a magnificent nett 66 with Forrester Park Social Secretary, Peter Stuart winning the guest prize with a nett 69. Longest Drive went to Forrester Park Head Greenkeeper, Roland Hughes, and a surprise Nearest the Pin winner was Dominic Rodgers. All in all a very good day for the committee who, with the exception of Dominic Rodgers. Come on Dom, took home some lovely prizes including 'boof' coloured wind proof tank tops, or were they muscle tops?

Many thanks to Merrist Wood Golf Club for the courtesy of their course and a special thank you to Tom Smith and his team for the fine presentation. The only mild criticism from some of the longer hitters was that perhaps next time they should play from the ladies tees and the less able golfers should stay in the bar. Joking aside, Merrist Wood is a long course and a true test for all amatuer and professional golfers.

Our next Golf Day is on June 30 and the venue is Gatton Manor Golf and Country Club, somewhere in the deepest Surrey countryside. Please contact the Course Manager, John Davidson, who will be willing to supply, for a small fee, a map, a compass, a passport and the optional inoculations some think advisable when on safari.

Brian Willmott

Essex

New Members: Mark Paxton joins us from Canons Brook Golf Club in Harlow, along with Tony Hawkes from Regiment Way and Nicholas Pomfret of Bentley GC.

Golf Days: Forrester Park was the venue for this year's Charterhouse/Scotts sponsored National Championship qualifier and Avoncrop Amenity/Tuckwells sponsored Spring Trophy, with 40 people including trade and guests attending the day. On a wet and windy day and on a course with fairways no wider than your average 'A' road, scores were expected to be high, but all sections were won by scores within one or two of the par 72.

Qualifiers for the National Championship were: Best Gross, Andy Sheehan, Bentley GC. Best net, Tony Kirwin, Colchester GC.


Trade prize went to Steve Denton, of Rigby Taylor, who shot a magnificent nett 66 with Forrester Park Social Secretary, Peter Stuart winning the guest prize with a nett 69. Longest Drive went to Forrester Park Head Greenkeeper, Roland Hughes, and a surprise Nearest the Pin winner was Dominic Rodgers. All in all a very good day for the committee who, with the exception of Dominic Rodgers. Come on Dom, took home some lovely prizes including 'boof' coloured wind proof tank tops, or were they muscle tops?
Special thanks to past Captain, Dennis Cornwall, along with all the staff at Forrester Park for the hospitality shown. This should be extended to Simon Banks who did a great drag act doubling as a rather fine waitress.

The trade as usual continue to strongly support our Section, Rigby Taylor, Sherriff Crop Care, Gem Professional, Bourne Amenity, Banks Horticulture, Grass Roots and Driving Force Leisure all donated raffle prizes. Thanks guys. Longest drive and nearest the pin prizes were donated by Bill and Liam Galway, of Greencare Supply Company.

Our next event is the Summer Trophy held at Theydon Bois GC on June 13. Hopefully information will have reached you well before the publication of this edition of the magazine.

Education: As yet, John Sinclair has been too busy visiting bike shows and relaxing in Crete to arrange any seminars, but rest assured there will be more opportunities in the near future for you to get out of the house for a few hours and end up in the nearest public house. Who knows, you might even learn something in the process. Steve Croscdle.

Devon and Cornwall

The Westurf 2000 took place again at the purpose built arena at Westpoint, Exeter, located just minutes off the M5 motorway. The indoor arena created a superb atmosphere, very similar to BTME, allowing visitors to catch up on the latest developments within our industry.

Visitors also had the chance to sample the hospitality on the BIGGA stand and to meet our Chairman, Elliott Small, Executive Director, Neil Thomas and Tracey Maddison, who were on hand to answer any questions. The seminars were very well supported and run throughout the day.

Our congratulations must go to the trade companies exhibiting and even more people attending. Richard Whyman

South Wales

Very little to report this month. At going to press we had not played our summer tournament. Remember the summer tournament is at High Post on July 19, your entries are requested early and this time to Chris Sturgess on 07777 3138409 before 5pm please.

Welcome to six new members in the South Coast Section. Let’s see you supporting the golf and lectures. Anyone with information about prizes, promotions or just interesting facts about people and greenkeeping, please let me know.

Liam Galway, of Greenkeeping Education: As yet, John Sinclair has been too busy visiting bike shows and relaxing in Crete to arrange any seminars, but rest assured there will be more opportunities in the near future for you to get out of the house for a few hours and end up in the nearest public house. Who knows, you might even learn something in the process. Steve Croscdle.

South Wales

We gathered together on April 5 at Pencoed College for a combined BIGGA/IOG Quiz. Five teams of three people answered question from our very own Chris Tarrant, Malcolm Davis, Team 1 The Handsomes: H. Evans, T. Home, D. Hughes. Team 2 The Not Intelligence: P. Lacey, M. Gillard, P. Discombe, M. Cook. Team 3 The Poa’s: T. Home, D. Ward, P. Lacey. Thanks to score master Colin Murphy for the final outcome with team one winning with 52 points and a bottle of whisky each, lucky them: Team 2 second with 50 points: Team 3, third with 49 Points: Team 4, fourth with 42 Points: Team 5, fifth with 39 points. No wonder team 1 won they had Ted Cavell on their side who has seemed to have travelled the world like Fillias Fogg and team 2 had David Ward, an old seadog himself.

I can only express what I have heard about Westurf which was again a great success with many trade stands and good entertainment.

On May 3, at Southerndown Golf Club the Spring Tournament was held with best Gross 80, A Roach, Best Net 64. Steven Lloyd receiving the Cardiff Cup.

Both the Best Nett & Best Gross also won themselves entry to this year’s National Championship courtesy of Scotts. 2nd Best Net 65, Gareth Evans: 3rd Best Net 75 Bob Hanford just beating Chairman Adrian Panks by one shot. Thanks also to secretary Alan Hughes and to Southerndown GC for courtesy of the course and to G Johnson and his team. To the caterers for food and thanks again to Martin Townsend from Scotts for sponsorship of the day.

This years Match against GC

You’ll keep your hair on with Toro’s Groundsmaster. There are no shocks or surprises - just superb Toro performance, with high levels of safety, manoeuvrability and productivity. The Groundsmaster’s exceptional contour-following rotary deck gets into undulations and over humps with absolutely no scalping, and the machine’s agility gives a close-cut finish even on turf edges and around trees, bushes or water hazards. Whether choosing the large, highly productive 3000-D, or the more compact 200 and 300 series, you’ll get a smarter cut with positively no scalping.

Simply call Toro on 01480 226800 and we’ll arrange for a local dealer to contact you.

BRINGS QUALITY TO THE SURFACE
Secretaries is to be held at Tredegar Park GC on August 11. 1pm tee off.

Richard Hatcher

South West

Well, finally we have reached the halfway mark of the year and of course the weather in June will be gloriously hot. This is a far cry from the erratic spring weather we experienced. April had three times its normal rainfall and had depressed greenkeepers reaching for the bottle of Prozac. This was also the nearest we were made to abandon the tournament and the winners would be decided from a count of the nine scores only.

The rain came down in biblical proportions. However, it was nice to see a number of new faces attending a sectional event for the first time.

Paula Humphries and Martin Townsend, from Scotts, saw all the competitors off from the first tee. Everyone agreed that the Clevedon greenkeepers had done an amazing job in getting the course cut and looking superb despite the weather. The greens in particular remained excellent to put on, although eventually the rain won the day and a couple of the greens started to flood severely.

By the time everyone had passed through the 11th hole, a decision was made to abandon the tournament and the winners would be decided from a count of the front nine scores only.

The results of the National Qualifier sponsored by Scotts and Charterhouse were as follows: Low Handicap Winner, Gary Cook. Lowest Gross, Gary Cook. Lowest Net, Paula Humphries. Handicap Winner, Martin Townsend. And in third place Noel Davis. Runners up were Kevin Day and Ben Davies.

Without doubt, the main talking point of the day was a hole-in-one at the 11th achieved by Maurice Pearce. This was also the nearest the pin hole. Maurice then purchased a bottle of whisky and placed it on the bar for anyone to celebrate his achievement with him. At that very moment, Matt Hawker shot to the bar like a greyhound released from his trap and poured himself a large treble.

Once again thanks should go to Scotts and Charterhouse for their continued support of this event, the many local greenkeepers, catering staff and the secretary for allowing us courtesy of the course.

The next tournament will be the summer tournament at Erlestone Sands Golf Club in Wiltshire on July 13. I'm sure this event will attract large numbers.

Remember to contact me if you would like to participate on a particular training and education course. I am also still waiting for the first person to show an interest in taking over the monthly report writing and education and training officer. I step down at the next AGM in November, so someone will have to take over. Get your applications in early to avoid disappointment.

Paul Cunningham

Northern Ireland

It's the first week in May and I'm sitting outside the Green Shed writing these notes (on my lunch break I might add). The sun is burning the top of my head (after a closer than usual crew cut) and I'm watching golfers on the green just in front enjoying their golf; yes conditions as present are heavenly - great cutting days, fine growing conditions, and, with the sun shedding its golden glint over the course, everything looks superb. It was great to see the sun after such a long absence and it took my staff and me a few days to work out just what that great yellow thing was in the sky. But anyway, enough rambling, here's some news.

The first of our socialising events or golf days was held at Belvoir Park on Tuesday, April 11. The weather wasn't the kindest, what with heavy hailstone showers and a bitterly cold wind, but a turn out of around 35 ventured out to brave the elements.

The course was beautifully presented and full credit must go to Pat Devlin and his staff for the quality of the course. The catering staff who served up excellent grub that was eaten rapidly.

Our sponsors for the day were Drilling and Pumping Services. This is a company relatively new to our industry, which provides a full range of irrigation installation and superb back up. Alastair Wilson, the Managing Director and Partner, joined in the golf and afterwards at prize giving gave us a brief chat about the services his company provides. Drilling and Pumping services can be contacted on 028 9181 8347. Once again many thanks. The prizes were won by Stephen Brady, of Royal County Down, in first place, Gary Murphy, of Silverwood Golf Club in second, and in third place Noel Crawford, also from Royal County Down.

Apologies to the sponsors - our Chairman, Graham Wylie, wasn't there, but he allegedly attached the wrong date to the wrong day and in a tizzy completely missed the whole event. At least that's his side of the story, but no harm done as the day was a great success.

Congratulations to Terry Crawford and Nigel Attken who have been picked to go to St Andrews to join the BIGGA Open Championship Support Team. Volunteering your own time and holidays is very commendable and I hope you enjoy your trip.

New members to the Region are William Walker, from Royal Portrush, and Gavin White, from Portstewart Golf Club. We'll be delighted to see you at the event on June 30 sees the Annual Charity Event to be held at Clandeboye Golf Club. If you wish to play in this even phone Terry on 0410 076663 and book a tee off time.

Please do not turn up without booking as this is a very well attended event with up to 100 players, and you may find that you might not be accommodated.

A fee of £20, which includes your golf, supper and entertainment should be paid before you play on the day. This is open to all Greenkeepers, Secretary Managers and Green Conveyors, so please do try to make the effort to come along. It's a worthwhile cause.

See you later!

Iain Harrison

WHAT'S DIFFERENT ABOUT THIS PICTURE?

Remember the AQUA-ROOT black pellets which were much more effective than plain wetters? Now they are even better with beneficial micro-organisms for increased root bio-mass and improved plant health.

Please Contact Us.

Humate International, Inc. - www.humateintl.com