We wish Neil Ballingall all the best in his new job at the Sam Torrance golf complex near St Andrews. As soon as we hear who replaces him at Moray GC we will let you know. Also on his time with us is Gordon Wright who has left Aboyne to work at Inchmarlo. Good luck to him in his new post.

Tain, along with Royal Dornoch, Fortrose and Nairn Dunbar have recently hosted the inaugural Highland Golf Classic which unfortunately was hit by the Foot and Mouth misinformation epidemic. In early January there were nearly 100 entries with entries daily, then Foot and Mouth hit the UK and entries dried up. By the time the competition was played there were only 70 participants.

It is a shame that here in the North we are losing visitors when the nearest outbreak is over 200 miles away!

We can only hope that those who played enjoyed it enough to come back next year and bring others with them, so that this event will blossom into a major annual tournament bringing much needed visitors to our area.

At the time of writing, the Foot and Mouth epidemic seems to be under control and hopefully we can still have a good season in the North with many visitors playing our lovely courses, bringing in the revenue needed to purchase the new machines etc we require to do the job even better than we do already (if that’s possible!)

I had a great time in Edinburgh recently at Section member, Gordon Mickie’s wedding, spending most of the time with his other members Gordon Moir and Icky Urquhart, and no, we didn’t spend too much time talking about greenkeeping, honest! Ian MacLeod

Central

We start this month by welcoming another two members to the Section and they are Joe Wallace from Glasgow’s Celtic Golf Club, North Lanarkshire and Joe and Steven Couper from Brigend and District Golf Club in West Lothian.

And now some members who have moved recently, Albert Arnotzd and Shaun McMillan who have both moved from Dunnikier golf course to Lochore Meadows, or “The Medics” if you come from that neck of the woods and Steven Ewing has moved from Letham Grange to Thornbury Golf Club near Bristol. We wish them every success in their new positions.

SECTION EVENT? www.bigga.org.uk/events.html

As I said in last month’s news the spring tournament was fully subscribed very early, but, due to the number of members who wished to take part, Scottsraig Golf Club kindly granted us times for another 20 players which meant we had an attendance of 78 with 72 playing.

This is the highest number we have ever had at a Section tournament, so, in future, get your entries in early, as all clubs may not be so accommodating as Scottsraig.

Our sincere thanks go to everyone at the golf club for the courtesies and hospitality which was extended to us on the day, especially Head Greenkeeper John Moffat and his staff for having the course in excellent condition so early in the season, the clubhouse staff who kept us fed and suitably refreshed throughout the day, Club Captain Rod Ford, who did us the honour of presenting our prizes and to Club Secretary Barry Liddle for all his assistance in making the day possible.

Obviously with so many players it made for a long day for those who were out early but the majority were able to remain for the presentation of prizes, prior to which one “older” member was heard to remark “This never happened in my day.” The reason could be that in “your day” we were lucky if 28 and not 78 attended a golf tournament. That’s what we call progress! And long may it continue!

Rewards & Prizes were as follows;

Best Scratch
K. Stirling, Kingsbarns, 75;
Best nett
W. Woods 78 - 47
Cat 1
1. Jim Logan, St Fillans 78 - 2 - 76 h/b; 2. K. Mitchell, St Andrews, 81 - 5 - 76
Cat 2
2. Chris Powley, Dinsdale Spa, 71;
1. Jarvis, Alloa, 93 - 16 - 77 h/b
Cat 3
2. A. Pearson, Grangemouth 97 - 21 - 76;
2. G. McRae, Ratho Park, 98 - 19 - 81
Stewart’s Quaich
D. Sturrock, Colinton and Duddingston; 2. K. Mitchell, St Andrews, 160 - 6 - 154; Paton’s, K. Brunton, Greengate, 76; 1 - 75; Guest, B. Liddie, Scootsraig, 80;
F. Longest Drive, J. Dorling, Aikens
Nearest the Pin
S. Smith, Lundin Links
50/50 Draw
W. Bell, Tulliallan

Phone a friend? www.bigga.org.uk/contact.html

North

More new members to welcome to the Section this month. Frederick Elsden, from Longside GC; Colin Atton, from Aigas GC, Beauty; Michael Marn, from Forres GC; Allan Paterson, from Tirlandi GC, Shetland Isles, and last but not least we welcome Frank Spencer, from Boat of Garten GC. The Section is getting bigger and bigger every month, so we like to think we must be doing something right!

South

A general knowledge quiz was held at Darlington Golf Club, organised by the Section Secretary, Barry Walker. It was well attended and a good night was had by all. Eventual winners were Ian Pemberton, Martin Hargrave and Tony Cheesborough.

Thanks to Barry for his efforts.

Turf Care had a bowling night at Teeside Park. A great night was had by the many that were there. A big thank you to Terry Charlton and his staff for organise the event and providing a meal afterwards. After the meal Section Chairman, Tony Smith, announced that he had asked Terry Charlton to be President of the Section.

Congratulations to Martin Wood, of Weareside Golf Club, and Tony Smith of Weareside Golf Club, who have just passed their Level 3 at Houghall College.

The spring tournament took place this month at Weareside Golf Club; the weather was superb, as was the course. A great day was had by everyone thanks to Barry Walker and his team for their efforts and to Weareside Golf Club for allowing us to use their facilities.

Cat 1 (Border Sports)
1. Andy Wood, Seaton Carew, 73 h/b;
2. Martin Woods, Weareside, 73;
3. Ritchie Hood, Mount Oswald, 75.
Cat 2 (Adur)
1. Phil Hargrave, South Shields, 68;
2. Tony Burge, Richmond, 73 h/b;
3. Allen Reid, Saltburn, 75.
Cat 3 (Greengrowing Supplies)
1. Mark Brown, Brancepeth, 69;
2. Chris Powley, Sedgefield, 71;
3. Ian Pemberton, Bedale, 76.
Best nett
Phil Hargrave, 68.
Best gross
Andy Wood, 77.

A big thanks to the trade for their support of this and other Section events. The draw for the Carraw sponsored Supper is set for the event and anyone who wants to know their opponents should contact Barry Walker on 0191 5650891.

And, finally, I have moved to Ramside Hall Hotel and Golf Club. I was sorry to leave the Wynyard Club, but the opportunity of working on one of the top courses in the area alongside one of the finest greenkeepers in the country, Roger Shaw, was just too tempting and so far it's been everything I expected and more.

Any news contact me on 07719 193581

Steven Jaques
Mid Anglia

Our first golf event of the year took place in early May; our spring tournament at Overstone Park GC over 36 holes. After the exceptionally wet spring, it was a relief to have dry conditions and an enjoyable day all round. Twenty-eight Greenskeepers and Trade members entered on the day and the results were as follows:

Best nett
Leon Cant, Brocket Hall, 73.70
Best gross
Gary Boulton, Dunstable Downs, 73.73

Morning round
1. Mark Ellis, Stocks, 68;
2. Nigel Phelan, St. Andrews Hospital, 71;
3. Leon Cant, Brocket Hall, 72.

Afternoon round
1. Leon Cant, Brocket Hall, 70;
2. Gavin Sinkless, Mount Pleasant, 73;
3. Gary Boulton, Dunstable Downs, 73.

Longest Drive, am and pm
Chris Yeoman, Tilsworth.

Nearest the pin, am
Tom Houghton, Pytchley.

Nearest the pin, pm
Geoff James, John O’Gaunt.

Our thanks to Philip Helm, Course Manager, and the golf club, for their hospitality. Our main sponsor of the day was Rigby Taylor once again, represented by Mark Stigwell. Thanks also to all other trade members for their support.

Those entered into the Lodgeway Four Ball competition should have received the completed draw by now. Please ensure that these games are played as soon as possible, to avoid the problems experienced during last year’s event.

Our next golf event is the summer tournament, to be held at Harpenden Golf Club, Hammonds End, on Wednesday August 22.

Paul Lockett

East Midlands

On March 26-27 I attended the BIGGA Section Secretaries meeting at BIGGA HOUSE. This is a biannual meeting, and again it proved to be very informative. If any member has any queries regarding their membership benefits etc please get in touch with me and I will attempt to help you out.

The evening lecture held at Kirby Muxloe GC on April 10 proved to be a very successful evening with 32 delegates listening to our four speakers, covering varying topics. Sam Maclean and Peter Hampton spoke about Bernards Grinders and grinding in general, Ken Richardson, CPD and my own subject was Greenskeeping in Canada. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Sam, Peter and Ken for their presentations and to all those members who supported the evening. I would also like to thank the following committee members for donating a prize for the raffle. Gavin Robson, Richard Barker, and Andy McGreal. Also thanks should go to Andrew Astle of Alpha Amenity for his generous prize donation. I would also like to thank all those committee members who helped in the smooth running of the evening. Finally, one last thank-you should go to John Cooleidge, Steward, for a great chicken curry meal, and to Kirby Muxloe GC for hosting the evening. Remember, with your support we can arrange more evenings like this.

On August 15 the Section will host the annual East Midlands v East of England Golf match at Cotgrave Place G.C. We require a team of ten so anybody interested in playing can contact me by telephone or Email. The first tee is booked from 3.45pm followed by an evening meal. So again please try to support your Section.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome back Peter Larter as our Regional Administrator. Antony Bindley

East of England

Unfortunately the first Section golf day at Luffenham Heath had to be cancelled due to flooding, but we will rearrange it for later in the year.

There was not a cloud anywhere on the second outing at Cleethorpes GC, and the course looked in excellent condition thanks to Les Howkin and his staff.

This year’s sponsor and hopefully for many more, was Amenity Technology. Thank you to Graham, from Amtec, who brought along some great prizes. Other sponsors on the day were Tower Sports, Atkins, Scotts, Lincsgreen, Rigby Taylor, Greensprice and Mansfield Sands.

The winners on the day were;
1. K. Hodges, Ryston Park, 35pts;
2. R. Moody, Lincoln GC, 32pts;
3. G. Macdonald, Newark GC, 30pts;
4. S. Lidgard, Kenwick GC, 29pts;
5. R. Aitken took the trade prize with 37pts.

Nearest the pin for the Lambs Cup went to P.Fell.
The Purdy’s Longest Drive cup went to Les Howkins.

The Section was delighted to welcome Jim Brown, Northern Section Chairman, who played at Cleethorpes.

The meal by the caterers was recommended by the club secretary. Apparently it was their speciality and I could see why. The fish, chips and peas tasted as if it had just been caught. Thanks to the Club for a great day out.

Forthcoming Events
May 24 - Evening Seminar IPM talk by Simon Barnaby of Scotts, sponsored by FTS.
June 12 - Match against Stewards/Secretaries at Ryston Park.
June 28 - Section Golf day at Spalding sponsored by PGM

Devon and Cornwall

The Foot and Mouth crisis now seems to be improving with fewer cases being reported. The crisis has had a big effect financially on the Region with Westurf having to be cancelled with the loss of deposits at the show ground and hotel. Also the Section has been slightly hit with the loss of March 1 meeting at Thurlstone Golf Club. To address the loss of this meeting we have arranged a Section meeting to be held at Thethorne Golf Club Nr Lancington on Tuesday, June 19, hopefully the meeting will be sponsored by Avoncrop but this has to wait to be confirmed as the Region has offered companies the chance to sponsor all four Sections in a one off payment at a very competitive cost. Only time will tell if this has a detrimental effect on the Section.

Details for our summer meeting are as follows; Bacon roll & coffee on arrival, golf tee times between 12.30pm-2.30pm, non golfers to attend for a non-golfing evening. There will also be an opportunity to welcome back Peter Larter as our Regional Administrator. Roy Forster will be the main speaker on turf technology.

For more information please contact me on 01288 534158.

Richard Whyman

South Coast

Did you see me on the telly? No, then you missed a real treat! I was interviewed by the legendary Carl Tyler, the man who reads the weather on Meridian News, about the gold fish found at Salisbury. You must have heard about that. No again? Then I shall tell you about it.

On one of the very wet days in April we had 15 gold fish come down in one of the heavy downpours. This amazing phenomenon is so rare that we had national newspaper coverage, dozens of radio interviews and I was the lucky one who had to be interviewed on Live Television! At one point I could see why. The fish, chips and peas tasted as if it had just been caught. Thanks to the Club for a great day out.

For a quote, sample and peace of mind call Rolawn on Tel: 01904 608661

Rolawn

The finest turf from tee to green

Medallion turf for golf tees is typically sown as Aberfelf (Perennial Ryegrass) 25%, Bargreen (Chewings Fescue) 20%, Barcrown (Slender Creeping Red Fescue) 35%, Limousine (Smooth Stalked Meadow Grass) 20%.

All the cultivars we use are highly ranked in independent testing by the STRI (see "Turfgrass Seed 2001" published by STRI).

If rapid establishment, high wear tolerance and slow regrowth after mowing are important to you - specify Rolawn Medallion for your tees.

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South West and South Wales
Paula Humphries
Tel: 01228 362134

Devon and Cornwall

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of the competition will be printed next month, and not this.

The team led by new Captain, Knobby Knight, started with a 3.5 to 1.5 victory over the Secretaries team, and to Cowdray Park for let-the-trade so he could win a golf day.

A special thank you to Steve and his manager, Rigby Taylor, for providing the prizes sponsored once again by The Secretaries of the competition will be printed in next month's edition.

Nearby the Pin on the 3rd Lee Holloway and longest drive on the 14th Jonathan Smith.

Thank you to the sponsors Driving Force Leisure, Sheerwater Leisure, and Vitax.

Essex

This year's spring meeting sponsored at Frinton GC was in doubt due to adverse weather conditions so in

Northern Ireland

I would like to start this month's report by apologising for the omission of notes in last month's magazine. Due to a sudden family illness I was unable to make the deadline but thankfully normality has returned and my wife’s health has improved. The event scheduled for Downpatrick Golf Club towards the end of March had to be cancelled because of the Foot and Mouth restrictions. The committee hope to arrange an alternative date later in the year for this event.

I had the pleasure in attending a recent major Turguff seminar at Lisburn Golf Club. The seminar was organised by the Scots company and its NL director John Linton. The main speaker was the world renowned Turguff scientist, Dr James Beard. Many interesting topics and issues were discussed including nutrition, hydrophobic dry patch, top dressing compaction, GM plants, reclamation of mown greens on greens and the resulting problems, irrigation water quality, and creeping bent grass as a good alternative. It turned out to be a beautiful day to be playing golf on such a fine golf course,

Even if it did start a bit on the cold side. A total of 37 members turned out to support the day of which 12 walked away with prizes. The day consisted of an 18 hole morning medal and a 9 hole Texas scramble after lunch.

The morning round was sponsored by John Shaw Machinery and the results are as follows:


Best trade or guest - Alan Burtap.

Nearest the pin on the 3rd Jon Hill.

Finally, to the grass trail ground at the Manor House for use of their facilities. I would also like to thank the Secrets of the South West for turning up to play with us from as far as Cornwall and Devon or as close as Bath. The next match is against the South Coast in August. You can contact John Kenningham on 01454 646837 if you want to consider (don't offer to play him at snooker).

The South West Section Event? www.bigga.org.uk/events.html

Sussex

I have a confession to make. Those of you who read last month’s limited the green would have read that I said “by the time you read this we would have already played our spring meeting at Cowdroy Park.” Well I can only put this down to the fact that I was looking forward so much to playing a course which had not turned itself into the Sussex equivalent of the Everglades, that I must have dreamed I had already played, in reality we were not due to play Cowdroy Park until April 19. By the time you read this we would have played our spring meeting at Cowdroy Park. Thursday the 5th turned out to be a beautiful day to be playing golf on such a fine golf course,