



News from the Chief Executive

Another Open Championship comes and goes and what a surprising, but very worthy, winner we have! Congratulations to the R&A on the success of the event but the real champions were Chris Whittle and his team for preparing a magnificent course. The BIGGA Support Team put in a lot of hard work in helping Chris and also surpassed the expectations of the R&A and the players when it came to the condition of the bunkers.

They represented the Association with true professionalism and I was proud to receive plaudits on their behalf on several occasions. It was pleasing to sit down with the members present and in doing so you soon realise the value of networking. New friendships were forged and old friendships renewed.

Try as we may we do not seem to be able to arouse the interest of the media though. We put out daily press releases in the Media Centre, Scott and I had interviews with press and we were in regular contact with the BBC. The odd mention came over but it really is not big enough news for journalists and commentators to get too excited about. Nevertheless we will continue to develop a working relationship with the media and I congratulate BIGGA's communication team, Scott and Melissa, for all their efforts.

The BIGGA Golf Day - the Neil Thomas Memorial Day - in June was a great success and we will be sending a cheque for just over £2,000 to the Children's Heart Specialist Ward at Leeds Hospital which is our chosen charity this year. Thank you once again to all those companies and individuals who made the day possible by giving their financial support.

This week I have had the privilege of attending the official presentation to Bernhard & Co of the Queen's Award for Excellence by the Lord-Lieutenant of Warwickshire. Stephen Bernhard is quite rightly proud of his team who have all contributed in some way or other to the company's success. In a climate of change within golf it is important that we all take heart from such an achievement.

During August we will be reviewing our own Business Plan and preparing budgets for the coming year as well as putting the membership categories and the Constitution under scrutiny. We must never lose sight of the need for the commercial arm of the Association, after all it is this part of the business that funds the majority of what we do.

Finally, I hope that members will take an interest in the National Championship, sponsored by Kubota, details of which are elsewhere in this issue of Greenkeeper International. It's your tournament and so please support it. New for this year will be an optional Stableford competition on Day 2 for those whose performance on Day 1 did not meet expectations!

John Pemberton
Chief Executive



SCOTTISH REGION - AYRSHIRE

Hi everyone, hope you're all well. It seems we're gonna get robbed of another summer if things don't change sharpish! As Jim Royle would say "Global warming my a**e!"

First, a quick mention of the Scottish National Greenkeeper's Tournament played at Irvine Bogside in June. Derek and his team had the course in truly superb condition and I'm sure all 70 entrants had a great day. Maybe more so for the local competitors as home soil advantage was quite evident at the Prize's table! Go on Ayrshire!

June also saw the British Amateur, contested over the Ailsa and Kintyre courses at Turnberry, where the dry Spring weather leading up to the Championship saw both courses running firm and fast.

Due to blustery conditions during the two strokeplay qualifying rounds the cut was made at 8 over. Although the weather played its part, the recent strengthening of the Ailsa was also a significant factor. Heavy showers overnight helped take some of the fire out of the course for the remainder of the week and it was Dutchman Reinier Saxton who triumphed over 17 year old Englishman, Tommy Fleetwood.

By the time you read this the Senior's British Open will have been played at Royal Troon, I just hope there's some warm sunshine that week as I'm looking forward to going along to watch as much as possible!

Our match against the County Down Greenkeepers' will be played on Friday, September 19 at The Pines in Dumfries. They are hoping to bring over 16 players to defend the Shield so anyone wanting to get in on the glory of being in the first Ayrshire team to get their hands on the magnificent Shield, please let me know. As we'll probably be celebrating well into the night - let me know if accommodation is required as Duncan has kindly offered to help with these arrangements.

The Pines is a popular venue in September with our Autumn Outing being contested there on Thursday, 25th. It will be interesting to see if Iain Barr can hold his nerve and preserve his well earned lead from the Spring Outing to lift the Harry Diamond Jug. Methinks it would be wise if the front-runners played the course on the previous Friday? You know it makes sense!

Sadly, Gordon Haughie, who worked on the course at Southerness for 18 years before his retirement and was a stalwart at Section events, passed away in May. Our thoughts are with Gordon's friends and family at this difficult time.

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Around the Green



CENTRAL

So far it has been a busy old season for most greenkeepers with lots to attend to on the golf course.

First off a reminder about our Autumn outing which is at Dunblane on September 4 where we have the tee from 1pm until 3pm - so spaces are limited. Chris Pearson and his guys have been very supportive of the Section in the short time Chris has been in the area so please let's fill all the tee times on the day for them.

The cost for the day is £25 per person which includes soup and sandwiches on arrival and a two course meal after the golf, plus the prizes for those who play well enough! Remember, the only way to enter is by printing the entry form from the website, www.biggacentralsection.org.uk and returning it to Andy Mellon at Elmwood with the entry fee. Entries without the cheque will not be accepted as the Committee do not want to handle cash on the day.

Before then, David Cole, from Loch Lomond GC, will give a presentation to the Section at Elmwood on August 20 based on preparations for the Scottish Open, again there are more details on our website and sometime in October we are hoping to have Tim Liddy talk to us about the alterations he has made to the Dukes Course. Other educational evenings may be arranged at short notice before then so keep making a regular visit to the site.

July 2 finally saw the opening of the Castle Course by HRH the Duke of York, who at the opening ceremony praised the work of greenkeepers generally, referring to them as the "unsung heroes" which was a great accolade for the profession as there were a lot of very influential people at the ceremony.

The Castle actually opened for public play on June 28, the same day as the 9 hole course at Hill of Tarvit opened. Situated just outside Cupar, this is a course which has been restored from old plans to something akin to what was there in the early part of the 20th century where you go along and hire hickory clubs and dress up in the costumes of the period. Run by the National Trust for Scotland it is well worth a try for something completely different.

Congratulations to George Pendrich who has been appointed Head Greenkeeper at Scotsraig Golf Club following the departure of the Section's Vice Chairman, Alan Sharp. George has come late in to greenkeeping from a career in the army and has experience from working at Gleneagles and under Alan for a short period at Scotsraig as well as having just completed his HND in golf course management.

Finally, on the move is Greg Kilgour who has left Elmwood to work on the new project underway at G West. We wish him all the best for the future.

Gordon Moir



EAST

I start this month's report with the wonderful news that Graeme Wood has returned home after spending the last 16 and a half months in intensive care. He and his wife Helen have moved to a newly adapted home in the village of West Barns, which is near North Berwick. I am sure everyone in the Section will join me in wishing them both best wishes for the future.

On Wednesday, July 2 all roads led to Goswick with the Club hosting a regional qualifier (British Open) for the first time. The preparations for the big day took years of planning and are a testament to the course alterations carried out by George and the staff a few years ago. The team were ably backed up by former Goswick apprentice Mark Pagan and his crew from Eyemouth. With the greens stimping at 9.5 and the wind blowing it presented a fair test to the 90 competitors of whom 11 qualified.

On the same day Old Hands Musselburgh Golf Club hosted their third regional qualifier with the course in excellent condition, but with the wind blowing, scoring was on the high side. In the end after a playoff there were 12 qualifiers.

The Scottish BIGGA Championship was held this year on Monday, June 23 at Irvine Bogside. We have found over the years that any event, run by our administrator Peter Boyd, runs smoothly and this one was no exception with not a glitch from start to finish.

The greenkeeping team led by Derek Wilson is to be commended for the presentation of the course on the day. The East Section winners all came from Eyemouth with Mark Pagan picking up the Head Greenkeepers prize and Douglas Greenshields the assistants prize. The Berwickshire lads hired a minibus for the day with Mark drawing the short straw by carrying out the driving duties, allowing former mentor George Thompson a few drinks in the bar!

The British Ladies Amateur Championship was this year held at North Berwick West in mid June where Scottish Chairman Stuart Greenwood is Course Manager. At present Stuart is also Captain of Kilspondie Golf Club, proving he sets the standard in multi tasking!

Our congratulations this month go to Gail and Kenny Mail (West Linton) with the safe arrival of their daughter Ellie and to Lynne and Donald Campbell (Cardrona) who are celebrating the arrival of their son Ian.

The current first assistant at Dundas Park, Robbie Murdoch, recently flew to Las Vegas where he married long term partner Lynsay. On his return a reception was held at the Cluny Clays Centre near Kirkcaldy.

On the trade front, prices keep increasing with the warning of more on the way!



Around the Green

HOT OFF THE PRESS: The new Head Greenkeeper at The Glen Golf Club is Derek Kerr who is currently working at Gullane. He commences his new position on August 4.

Mike Dooner



NORTH

Hope all is well with everyone and that summer has finally come to you all and we are well in the swing of the cutting season.

John Geddes, Hugh Maclatchie, Jimmy Mac and Billy Craig attended the Scottish National Tournament down in Irvine on June 23 - thanks for that guys I know it's a long way to go and not win anything eh. What do you mean Jim won something in the senior Section, Jim's not a senior is he? Oh yes he is! Well done Jim. It's about time we had someone else in the veterans section instead of the above, not you Bill. Those shoulders of Billy's will be getting so sore what with all the carrying of Jim you'll be doing.

There has been somewhat of a baby boom up here in the North Scotland Section. Martin Fullerton of Murcar Links is a proud dad for the second time. His fiancée Steph gave birth to a baby boy called Jamie in the middle of June. Also becoming a dad is Simon Hoy of Peterculter. His wife Kathleen gave birth to a baby girl but they are yet to decide on a name.

Two new starts to report at Fortrose & Rosemarkie. Kevin Taylor has moved from Spey Valley to become Kevin Fowler's First Assistant. Kevin also informs me he has now managed to find an apprentice, Ian Belshaw.

The Secretary, Dale Robertson has asked me to remind you of the Kirriemuir outing. I know it's a little while away but he is concerned that people may have lost their forms. If you have lost your forms and you think you can't go because of this, fear not! Dale has said to ring him if you intend on going and then you will be able to pay on the day. He won't send you another form as this is defeating the object of sending them both out together to keep the cost down. Phone him on: 07711274525 and he will put your name down for the outing.

Down at Murcar Links this month, from July 6 we have the European U18 Girls Championships. Brian struggles to get us to work at the best of times but this week he has got no hope due to the distraction of the blonde Scandinavian girls. It is a good experience for us all and I think we're all enjoying it.

That's it for this month so if you do have any news then don't hesitate to give me a shout on: 07813889374.

Have a good month

Ben Brookes Murcar Links



NORTHERN REGION - NORTH WEST

The North West Section played the North Wales Section at the vale of Llangollen Golf Club on June 10 and what a scorcher it was, I got sunburnt and the north wales lads were just too hot for us to handle as we lost 5-1. Well done to the north wales team and unlucky to our team (wait till next year), if you have not played vale of Llangollen Golf Club you are missing out, the course was in splendid condition thanks to Jeremy Hughes and his staff but the setting is just fantastic, well worth a visit. A great day was had by all who played in the summer tournament at Chorlton come hardy Golf Club. The course was in fantastic condition and many thanks go out to Dave Berry and his staff not only for the condition of the course but also for the free beer on the 10th tee. Thanks also go to the committee for allowing us courtesy of the course and to the caterer for the lovely food also to Bathgates for sponsoring the longest drive and nearest the pin.

If you fancy a day out at Penrith Golf Club then the Whitelaw bowl is the answer here are the details - Venue: Penrith Golf Club - www.penrithgolfclub.co.uk. Date: Wednesday, September 10. Tee: From 12noon - 2pm. Three course meal and prize giving. Contact: Phil Dewhurst, Area Sales Manager, Rigby Taylor Limited, 07768 180604.

We have courtesy of the course, but I do not yet know cost of meal. If my memory serves me right, it's usually between £10 and £20. Phil Dewhurst is organising the day so Please contact him on the above number.

Our next fixture in the Section is the autumn tournament which takes place at Davenport GC on Thursday, September 4. Don't forget to put your name down as early as possible, please send a cheque payable to BIGGA north west Section for £20 to Bill Merritt, The Lodge, Beacon Park Golf Club, Beacon lane, Dalton, Wigan, WN8 7RU. Billy can be contacted on: 07985175825. I am looking for any ideas or suggestions for venues for 2009. I have a few already but if you are happy for us to play your course please contact me on 0151 2894625 or: jsheehan@blueyonder.co.uk

Chris Sheehan



NORTHERN

First there was Ernest Shackleton in the early 1900s, then there was Sir Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tensing Norgay in 1957, and now we have the "BIGGA 4" IN 2008! That's right, the Northern Section has indeed got its own explorers. Tito Arana, Jim Brown, Steve Heaton and Dave Thackray



have taken to the world of mountaineering. They have recently reached the summit of Helvelin in the Lake District.

Unfortunately after walking up in relatively good conditions as they approached the summit the cloud came down and in the words of Tito, "robbed them of a good view from the top" (slightly stronger language was used in this statement but can't be printed for legal reasons). I am pleased to say they all made it back in one piece so well done guys and we hope the cloud holds off next time.

Cookridge Hall was the venue for this year's Presidents Day held on July 2. John Watts and his team produced a fantastic course so we all thank them and everybody at Cookridge for a superb day. Thank you also to Adrian Holroyde and Bob Wild Grass Machinery for their sponsorship of the day. The results on the day are as follows: Bill Mountain Trophy = Tony Gerrard. 1.1 N Coultish, 1.2 D Collins, 1.3 A Baxter; 2.1 F Stewart, 2.2 A Speight. 2.3 J Watts; 3.1 J Baxter, 3.2 P Colley, 3.3 S Heaton. Trade: 1. E Carter 2. P Larter.

Please don't forget this year's Invitation Day is on Thursday, August 21 at Shipley Beckfoot Golf Club and the Autumn Tournament is on Wednesday, October 1 at The Alwoodley Golf Club. I'm fairly certain that both days will be very popular so please get your names and payment in early to avoid disappointment due to the fact we have got limited availability at both events.

If anybody has any news regarding the Section and its members then please get in touch.

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NORTH WALES

I personally have been looking forward to August, I'm away to sample the delights of Bulgaria for a fortnight, sun, sand and no work. Bliss!

The annual North Wales V North West match took place at the Vale of Llangollen Golf Club on June 10, with the north wales team using their home venue advantage to take a comfortable win (well done lads). Thanks to both teams for giving up their time and effort to represent their sections also a big thank you must go to The Vale of Llangollen Golf Club for hosting the match, for the excellent course and scrumptious food.

The Vale of Llangollen also hosted the Welsh Open youths championships in May with 66 of the best players aged under 21 from the U.K and Europe competing over the three day event.

Conwy Golf Club hosted another successful Ryder Cup 2010 Welsh senior Open. This European event is highly regarded and saw a lot of top name players competing over the excellently set up course and with players like Woosnam and Lyle making their Welsh seniors debuts anticipation was high

for a local win and the crowds broke all attendance records. Congratulations go to Dave Lewis and his staff for the testing course produced by them for us all to see on sky sports.

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Johnny Evans Johnny.Evans@tesco.net



MIDLAND REGION - MIDLAND

Well what's this I see, the ugly mug of our old friend Steve Wood in July's Greenkeeper International. I thought we had rid of him, but no, Steve has been instrumental in the setting up of the new Greenkeeping Association in Bulgaria BGGGA. By God he can't even speak English let alone Bulgarian! Only joking mate. Good luck with it all mate.

Our Summer Tournament was held at Stourbridge GC on July (get it?). The course was in superb condition and the weather for a change was great. Our thanks to C. Beet(s) and his fine team for preparing the course to such a great standard. The results of the day were: Best Gross: D.Pugh. Nett; 1. D.Pugh, 2. G.Turner, 3. C.Beet, 4. R.Beacham, 5. D.Fellows, 6. S.Scott. Our thanks to Bathgate Leisure for the main prize table which was kindly presented by our Mr.Starter/President J.Hammond. Longest Drive: G.Turner. Nearest The Pin: S.Harvey. Our thanks to Sherriff Amenity/Nigel Tyler. Best Trade: T.Cheese. Drinks around the course were kindly provided by Turners. Our greatest of thanks to Stourbridge for affording us such a lovely venue, and thanks to The Green Chairman Mr.Bob Grindley for his hospitality and refreshingly informed speech. It was interesting to note Craig's new nickname by his members being 'Son of Lamech'.

Our Autumn Tournament is to be held at Fulford Heath on September 25, start time 2pm. Our AGM is also to be held there with an approximate start time of 6.30pm. All are of course welcome to contribute their thoughts regarding our section. Should any one require a specific answer to any question please give me written notice prior to the AGM regarding such.

It gives me great pleasure to report that within the John Deere National competition the team from Trentam Park consisting of G.Cunningham and his Green Chair and House Chair have made it to the Turnberry stage after winning the Midland stages. My only concern being that at such Turners' R. Page is to play. Rob does not play golf! Let's hope that the format is 3 from 4 to count. Well done and good luck.

And finally, just time to thank our sponsors of this month's calendar page Advanta/M.Gresty. You can contact Matt for all of your seed needs on: matthew.gresty@advanta-seeds.co.uk

Looking forward to seeing you at Fulford Heath and hearing your learned council.

Try to keep dry Noah, Sean McDade



Around the Green



EAST OF ENGLAND

So August begins, where has the year gone so far! Hopefully the weather will have improved by the time you read this, as I write a 10 minute "shower" has just dumped half an inch of rain upon us, however after last year we can cope with anything!

More from the crazy world of Immingham, I turned up to work a couple of weeks ago to find that my office had been broken into and trashed. It is on the side of the pro shop so no-one was in our sheds, but all my paperwork, brochures and clothing ended up on the floor. At least it is a good excuse for a tidy up and a clear out, plus I will finally get a more secure door put on. Our CCTV showed someone in red overalls trying to break in to all our premises, the police have this description so any Toro reps heading my way had better be careful what they wear!

More fun and games at Cleethorpes, where Head Greenkeeper Rob Welford also had an encounter with the police. When turning up for work early one morning he found his car park half full of a variety of armed police, riot squad and dog section. When approached by an officer with a machine gun he was told that they were on exercise in the area and needed a base for the morning. Personally I think it is a bit of an over the top way to deal with the seniors section not repairing their pitch marks!

Our latest golf day was at Cleethorpes Golf Club. A total of 21 players turned up to do battle with the wind howling across the course. The course was in excellent condition and we were well looked after by the clubhouse staff, however we were let down by not having fish and chips for dinner! The results were as follows: Greenkeepers - 1. Steve Hopkins, 34pts; 2. Graham MacDonald, 33pts; 3. Rob Welford, 33pts; 4. Ash Cox, 32pts; 5. Rob Bemment, 30pts; Trade. Carl Chamberlain; Longest Drive. N. Skinner; Nearest the Pin. Unfortunately none of us hit the green on the 150 yard par 3 hole!

Once again many thanks to Cleethorpes GC and to Tony Jenkins, of F.G.Adamson John Deere dealers for sponsoring the day.

Our next golf day is the big one! Forget the "Duel in the Sun" and the "Rumble in the Jungle", it is time once again for Greenkeepers vs Trade "It gets easier and easier!" This is the fourth playing of this fixture and once again the greenkeepers will be looking to maintain their unbeaten record. Any greenkeepers interested in playing should contact Alan Walker and any trade reps brave enough to take us on should contact Gary Cooper, of STG Amenity Supplies. Both team Captains are trying to bring in "ringers" for their teams so we will see what happens on the day. The venue for this event is Immingham Golf Club on Tuesday August 19, tee off at 1:30. Arrive early for bacon buns and coffee and some quality pre match banter.

www.eastofenglandbigga.com
Steve Beverly



BERKS/BUCKS & OXON

The Gem Rose Bowl Summer Tournament this year was held at The Lambourne Club set in 180 acres of breathtaking parkland in the heart of Buckinghamshire. The Par 72 championship course, designed by Donald Steele, provided a strong challenge from the back tees with acres of rolling terrain and six lakes coming into play. With seven par 4 holes over 400 yards, long established oak trees that must be negotiated in the fairways, the course provided a tough challenge with well struck irons giving you a chance to attack the well protected greens. All who played had a great day.

Sean English managed the best score of the day with 39 points. The results were as follows: 1. Sean English, Blue Mountain; 2. David Marshall, Lambourne; 3. Matt Weatherstone, Ellesborough; 4. Carl Small, Ellesborough; 5. Simon Mallock, Sonning; 6. Jim Howard, Lambourne. The longest walk after a gruelling 146 shots plus went to Clinton Jackson, Ellesborough. Trade Prize - Ben Smith. Nearest the Pin and Longest Drive went to Matt Greasty, from Advanta Seeds. Well done Matt it was great to see you and look forward to seeing you at more BB&O events in the future.

A big thanks to The Lambourne Club for allowing us courtesy of the course and to Jim Howard and his team for preparing the course to a fine standard. Thank you to General Manager, David Ham, for arranging the facilities and to the superb catering and bar staff who ensured a fine meal and a great day out.

Thanks to Jon Beck and Ian Richardson for the usual culinary delights cooked up at the halfway hut.

Thanks to our sponsors Gem Professional's, Gary Tait, Clive Parnell and Richard Haines, who turned up in force to support the day and to the lovely Lynne Nelson who travelled a long way from company headquarters in Lancashire to attend the day and present the prizes to the winners. Well done, Lynne.

Dan Lightfoot, from Bearwood Lakes GC, has broken his leg in two places, ouch, while playing five-a-side football with a few colleagues. Dan nearly had to have his foot amputated as the break was of a serious nature, but thumbs up, hopefully Dan will make a full recovery and return to work as soon as possible. We look forward to seeing you at The Frilford Heath Turkey Trot in November if you can make it.

Bill Paterson Junior has a new job at Oxhey Park GC, near Watford, as Head Greenkeeper, also new to the ranks and promoted to Deputy Course Manager at Harleyford GC is Dan Blinko. Best of luck in your new roles.

Bill Paterson, from Beaconsfield GC, has got every copy of Greenkeepers International since it was first published, but after a spring clean, and with new offices constructed, has found it hard to store all these magazines. We are looking for someone who is able to store and become the custodian



and make use of these magazines, either to use for education or research material.

On the education front, Alec MacIndoe is well underway in planning a seminar for us all, sometime in late autumn, date to be confirmed, but as soon as more information becomes available this will be on the website.

News around the green this month has been a bit sparse, however if there is any news or views you would like to share with the section please get in touch. Information on section events can be gleaned from www.bbo-greenkeepers.co.uk

Mark Day
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SOUTH EAST REGION - KENT

Hi guys, just a brief report for you this month as not much going on.

Firstly a massive thank you to Peter Todd and Glenn Kirby at The London Club for organising the course walk around their magnificent venue just prior to the start of the European Open. It certainly was an eye-opener for those of us who haven't had the experience of dealing with the demands of pro-golfers and setting up infrastructure for the hospitality areas in preparation for many thousands of spectators.

I've been watching the tournament all this weekend and, apart from some great golf, have been full of admiration for the results that the many staff who have worked tirelessly under Peter and Glenn's very professional stewardship have managed to achieve.

Many congratulations to everyone involved for hosting such a successful tournament and let's hope you are able to keep the gig for a few years there.

Good luck to our website designer and updater, Danny Stunt, who has moved from Redlibbets to Chislehurst Golf Course. Looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible at Canterbury Golf Club next week. Full report and results in this column next month.

Happy Holidays!
Rob Holland

BIGGA's Regional Administrators

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EAST ANGLIA

The Happy Wanderers all made their way safely to Woodbridge Golf Club in June. Then the fun began. The course was lovely and well presented by Steve Peters and his team, however, only six greenkeepers scored over 30 points. One was Ian who actually won with 36 points (but we won't mention him - he's good).

There were also six greenkeepers who did not return, one was Steve Peters on his own track, four still have not returned and one was found hanging from a tree by his putter. Seriously though, (do I do serious?) it was a terrific day and everyone enjoyed it - well done Steve.

The prizes were presented by the Chairman of the Board of Management (blimey, that's posh) Colin Ryan, to the following: 0 - 9 Handicap, 1. Peter Howard (same old faces), 36pts; 2. Graham Hurren, 34pts; 3. Rob Boyce, 31pts. 10 - 18 Handicap, 1. Ian Willett (see what I mean), 36 pts and overall winner on countback, 2. David Child, 31pts; 3. Dave Roofe, 29pts. 19 - 28 Handicap - (Real Golfers), 1. Steve Freestone (he's back), 25pts on countback; 2. Andy Baker, 25pts; Adrian Goode, 25pts. G & T's, 1. Chris Pearson, 35pts; 2. Steve Dickinson, 32pts; 3. W Richards, 31pts. Longest - Steve Dickinson, Nearest - Mark Broughton.

I must just mention a couple of old faces returning to the fold. One was Alan Carter - does this mean our handicap system will be resurrected? Hello Mate.

The Second was Steve Freestone, who left us about 14 years ago, been around the world in more ways than one and returned to Eaton last year. Welcome home son (figuratively speaking of course).

The Main sponsors of the day were Earnest Doe & Sons. The other, equally important trade lads and lassies were: Baileys of Norfolk, Aitkens, SISIS, Bartram Mowers, John Deere, Ben Burgess, Textron, Tomplinson Ground Care, Tacit, Rigby Taylor, Collier Turf Care and anyone else who knows me.

I almost forgot the man who had a shower and left his clothes in the car! Step up Steve Millard and collect your loo seat.

Thank you once again Woodbridge for a really great day out.

Mick Lathrope

Section Notes -

Can all notes be emailed to: melissa@bigga.co.uk
by the 5th of the month prior to publication please.
Suggested word guide: 500



Around the Green



ESSEX

It seems no time at all since I wrote the last Section news; time is just flying at the moment. Wednesday, June 25 saw around 50 of us gathering at Warley Park Golf Club for our summer qualifying medal and what turned out to be a fantastic day. Fine weather greeted us, but an easterly wind kept the scoring high, the temperatures were also on the high side and a nice note was the drinks buggy that appeared piloted by Mat Wise from Ernest Doe & Sons was a welcome site. Not knowing the course went against a lot of us with many scoring unusually highly. Records show that this was our first visit to Warley Park and wow what a challenge, I can only remember a one or two holes where you could actually see the green from the tee. Doglegs, hills and water - that's how I would describe Warley Park.

Course Manager, Dominic Rogers, and his team had laid the course out in superb condition, fast greens, with tees sensibly far enough back not to punish too much and pin positions placed in tricky but fair positions, nothing silly for our summer qualifying medal.

The meal was well received after trekking up and down all those hills. Our thanks go to the trade and members that helped with the raffle table. The Club, Captain Mr Roy Westhorp thanked us for being there, before presenting the prizes. He played in a four ball at the rear of the field with Dominic, plus Warley Parks General Manager, Nick Hawkins and Club Secretary, Keith Regan. With two out of the four in the prizes, (that's what happens when you have a bit of local knowledge).

Our thanks go to the Stubbins family for the chance to play the course and to the course and catering staff for the effort they put in on our behalf.

To all the Section sponsors, thank you once more. Pictures from the day are on the website: www.essexbigga.co.uk where details and links to all our sponsors can be found, long with links to other interesting sites.

The results from Warley Park are: 1st Gross: Ollie Homewood, Warley Park GC, 81pts; 2nd Gross: Roland Hughes, Forrester Park Golf & TC, 84pts; 3rd Gross: Ian Denny, South Essex Golf & Country Club, 90pts. 1st Net: Antony Kirwan, 81 Net 75 ocb, Lexdon Wood Golf Club; 2nd Net: Dominic Rogers, 83 Net 75, Warley Park Golf Club; 3rd Net: Ray Clark, 90 Net 76, Channels Golf Club. Guest Prize: Keith Regan, 87 Net 71, Warley Park Golf Club. Trade Prize: Andy Turbin, 82 Net 72, Ernest Doe & Sons. Longest Drive: Ian Denny, South Essex Golf & Country Club

Nearest the Pin: Andy Toomey, Boyce Hill Golf Club. 2008 Spring Tournament Qualifiers: Adam Millward, Richard Linin. TBC. 2008 Summer Trophy Qualifiers: Ollie Homewood. TBC Antony Kirwan,

Arnold Phipps-Jones essexbigga@talktalk.net



SOUTH WEST & WALES REGION - SOUTH WEST

Education, Education, Education. Tony Blairs principles back from when he came into power in 1997 - and very good ones I've always thought.

It was particularly pleasing to see a good turnout for the recent "Agronomy Afternoon" given by the STRI at Chippenham GC. (That Chris Sealey is a braver guy than me - having two experts, and about thirty greenkeepers plus Patronage Partners etc sifting through his course with a fine tooth-comb). Andy Cole treated us to a walk-about on the course, taking samples, looking at heights of cut, examining Chris' hugely different soil types on the greens, and drawing conclusions from them all. One of the most telling statements was - "these greens are clay based, and they're always going to be clay based - why try to grow fescue, and who says you can't have a good putting surface composed of poa and bent on a green like this"? How true - if you have a particular soil type- the most important stance is to try and grow those types of grasses which are suited to that soil. Don't be tempted to try and grow a "foreign" grass, because it just doesn't often work.

The walk was followed by John Lockyer in the classroom at his very best - naming no names, but giving some very good examples of how not to grow good grass on a quality rootzone, and how to avoid the pitfalls of the modern time. Coupled with a very comprehensive machinery demonstration by Keith Kensett, this was a very worthwhile afternoon, and one that we hope to repeat in the future. Well done to all those who attended, and thanks to our Patronage Partners whose sponsorship made it possible.

The Section Team got to grips with the Secretaries at Stinchcombe Hill recently. With the new Management Partnership of Wayne and Paul Garland, one of the strongest Section teams for years swept the Secretaries aside by four matches to two. Thanks very much to everyone who played, and thanks to Stinchcombe Hill for their courtesy. The next matches are both in August, at St. Pierre and Remedy Oak, so if you'd like to play, give Wayne a call.

I'm off on holiday to Italy very soon. Eurostar to Paris, and then the Stendahl Sleeper train to Verona (one of us is an aero-phobic). I notice that Eurostar have publicly announced that they are "putting measures in place to significantly reduce their carbon footprint". It is hard to imagine how - watching 2000 tons of steel and glass thundering through the French Countryside at 300 kph - a wind turbine at each end of the track perhaps? No - don't be silly - Paperless Ticketing - that's how. Clever - I'd never have thought of it.

I took the Minch staff to Sunningdale to watch the International Open Qualifying on June 30. Rob, my youngest is working at Sunningdale on a college placement, so an ideal opportunity. Rob's learned a lot since starting - in particular - the bigger the tournament, the earlier in the morning the work starts (and of course the later the finish!) And how do they get those beautiful pure stands of heather rough for which Sunningdale is famous? Strimmers, that's how. So if you ever feel tired of strimmering - just imagine doing the rough with it - all the rough. Mile after happy mile of strimmering over the top of the heather knocking any grass or weeds down.



The course looked absolutely fantastic – greens cut at 3.5mm, 10.5 stimpmeter, and watered mainly by hand – newly built bunkers with heather banks, most of the green and tee banks flymowed for presentation – just perfect. A credit to Murray Long and the team.

I watched Darren Clarke unfortunately fail to qualify who was playing with Thomas Levet - who also just missed out. The way those guys hit the ball – miles down the fairway – strategically placed second shots, and good bunker play when needed. Spare a thought though for Jose Maria Olazabal who just missed out in the play-off for the final Open Championship place, having shot a 65 round the Old Course in the afternoon.

I'm just starting to put together next year's fixtures – if your club is prepared to hold an event – please do let me know.

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SOUTH COAST

Firstly the Section would like to wish Mike Buckle the very best for his retirement. Mike was very well known and respected in his role as Head Greenkeeper at Highcliffe Castle GC. Mike has been at the club for 30 years - the last 15 in the position of Head Greenkeeper. He started his career in farming but unfortunately had to seek new employment when the family lost their tied property. So Mike started at Highcliffe and the rest is history! Mike loves gardening and will be spending many happy hours of his retirement tending his lawn and flowers. We would like to wish Mike and his wife Mary many happy years ahead. We also congratulate Mike Cartwright in his new role as Head Greenkeeper at Highcliffe.

How the year just flies by! We are steadily working our way through the fixture list. Looking at the fixture card I see that our match with the South West Section is approaching and is on Wednesday, August 27. This year we are on home ground at Remedy Oak Golf Club. It must be our turn to win this year! Those who are playing in this match, from both Sections, we wish you all a great day and look forward to the result. The next Golf Day is the Autumn Tournament which will be held at Salisbury and South Wilts Golf Club on Thursday, October 9. The AGM follows the golf and it is very important to attend and support your Section. If you cannot make it for the golf please come to the meal and AGM. If you would like to play or just attend the meal and AGM please contact our Tournament Organiser Kevan Glass at the following address: Apartment 1, Forge Side Court, Lepe Road, Langley, Southampton SO45 1SS or on mobile 07859 053054 or on email: glassy2003@hotmail.com.

The South Coast Golf Management Trophy was held at Petersfield Golf Club on June 27. The venue was excellent and the course was in immaculate condition. Well done to Kevin Clue and his team for the immaculate condition and presentation of the course. Thanks also to Petersfield Golf Club for the courtesy of the course and for their hospitality. A big thank you to our sponsors

Scotts. There was a total of 14 teams. The weather was a bit unsettled with the appearance of a few showers but nothing to bother the players. The winners for the second year running were Southwood GC with 86 points, 2nd, on count back, Barton on Sea GC and in third place Hayling Island GC with 83 points. The nearest the pin competition was won by David Gough from Burley GC and the longest drive by Tony Locke from Burley GC.

That's it for this month. If you are going to Saltex please call in the Vitax stand if you have any news or views or contact me in the usual way. See you soon.

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DEVON & CORNWALL

Hi all just a quick word about last months report which never happened due to the fact I was away.

Anyway as you all know the Brabazon Trophy, one of the top amateur events was held this year at Trevoze and apart from the weather which was a bit inclement on a couple of the days went very smoothly. A lot of hard work was put in by Neil Taylor and his team leading up to it, especially the last couple of weeks. The course was presented in excellent condition with praise particularly for the greens.

Neil would like to say a big thank you to Ashley his first assistant and the rest of his team for their efforts, also thank you to Scott Gibson from St Enodoc, Keith Kemp and his lads from W. Cornwall and Andrew Dunstan from Newquay for their help, it was much appreciated. I hope I haven't missed anybody out! With the smooth running of this event and the way the course was presented there's a possibility other top events could be held here in the future, which would be great for our Section. The winner of the event was 24 year old Steven Uzzell from Yorkshire with scores of 64 & 67, 19 under par. Considering one week ago the Yorkshireman had to pull out of his debut appearance for England against France with a bad back, this victory I would imagine was very pleasing.

I would just like to give a quick mention to Graeme Gallimore our Head of Education who is currently organising some excellent workshops for the near future and hope everybody is taking advantage of his efforts.

As I write this the weather is misbehaving again, here we are early July and it's raining again and the temperature is more like autumn than July! Never mind saves a bit of wear and tear on the old irrigation system so not all bad! I have seen some golf courses in wonderful condition on my recent travels, so keep up the good work everybody!

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