We spoke to three of the major chemical companies to find out how they are marshalling their resources to fight a battle with ever decreasing weaponry.

Cast of thousands

David Agar, of Rhone Poulenc Amenity; Bernard Hedley of Rigby Taylor and Alan Shaw, of Scotts UK Professional, all gave their views on the worm problem...

**Rhone-Poulenc Amenity – David Agar**

The arguments for controlling casting worms in certain situations are well known and accepted. Not only do worm casts create a nuisance for both the golfer and greenkeeper by producing an uneven playing surface and affecting the roll of the balls but they also spoil grass surfaces in a number of ways. They are unsightly, prone to smearing and bring weed seeds to the surface where they provide ideal sites for weed establishment. Worm casts also encourage the spread of turf disease, and the presence of high worm populations in fine turf is likely to attract moles - with devastating effect.

There are 25 species of earthworms commonly found in the UK, three of which are responsible for the majority of worm casting problems. One of the fundamental problems is that earthworms are encouraged by the conditions necessary to grow fine turf grasses and cultural control is therefore very difficult without affecting the health of the grass. Consequently, when worm casting reaches an unacceptable level, chemical control is the only reliable option for the greenkeeper.

The number of products available for the control of casting worms has recently been reduced with the withdrawal of Camma-col from the market and there is no guarantee that the remaining products will not be placed under further pressure in the future. However, one thing that can be guaranteed is the fact that worm casts will continue to be a major problem for the greenkeeper regardless of the number of products available to control them.

So what is Rhone Poulenc Amenity doing to solve the problem both now and in the future? Well, not only do we have a number of existing products that we are actively supporting and defending but we are also investing in the development of new products. We have a number of exciting developments in the pipeline and have just been granted a new worm cast suppression recommendation for Mildothane Turf Liquid. The existing product range includes Castaway Plus and Cavalier which are both well known and widely used products. Castaway Plus is a leading brand containing the active ingredients thiophanate-methyl and lindane. Cavalier is based on carbaryl and is available only to contractors who can prove that they have equipment that meets the conditions stated on the product label - that is a closed cab and low level induction-bowl.

Mildothane Turf Liquid which is well known to many greenkeepers as a reliable and effective product for controlling turf diseases, can now be used to suppress worm casts. In addition to the 20L/ha recommendation for the control of Fusarium, Dollar Spot and Red Thread it now has an economical 7.5L/ha recommendation for the control of casting worms. Based on thiophanate-methyl, Mildothane Turf Liquid offers selective suppression of the main species of casting worms leaving many of the other species unharmed. This is because the product does not work by direct contact with the worms but is taken up by the grass and the treated material is then ingested by the worms.

In summary, it appears that there may be fewer options available to the greenkeepers for the control of casting worms in the near future but we at Rhone Poulenc Amenity are confident that the investment and development we are currently undertaking will ensure that we will always be able to provide an effective and economical solution to what will continue to be a major problem for the greenkeeper.
Over the years, the industry has seen an ever shrinking range of options for the control of casting worms on golf greens. That they need to be controlled on the greens is undeniable - the trick is formulating a product to do it that doesn’t also carry all sorts of unpleasant side effects.

One generation of greenkeepers will recall Chlordane - which was a highly effective worm killer - and its recall on safety grounds. A previous generation may have sworn by Mowrah Meal - equally effective and equally undesirable. Most greenkeepers today will also be aware of carbaryl - another worm killer which has been withdrawn because of health and safety issues.

That the approval for use of horticultural pesticides is regularly reviewed, has to be supported and

Alan Shaw, of Levington Horticulture

There is a distinct possibility that in the future there will be few effective worm killers available for use by the Greenkeeper. This is already the case in some European countries such as Germany where there are no such products available and where Greenkeepers have had to learn to live with higher worm populations.

At present in the UK one of the most effective chemicals approved for this use is carbendazim, the active ingredient within Mascot Systemic, however, even this material is now under threat.

Any future development of products specifically for worm control in turf by agrochemical manufacturers is also unlikely as the initial screening procedure for potential products carried out by agrochemical companies rejects active ingredients that exhibit any harmful effects to earthworms. This is because in Agriculture, earthworms are quite rightly regarded as beneficial organisms and any such effect on worms would be a great disadvantage.

If new products are not going to be developed, what about using some of the old products that were used in the past, e.g. Mowrah Meal, Derris Dust and Potassium Permanganate? These materials were used as expellants, they irritated the earthworms skin and brought the worms to the surface where they were collected. Unfortunately all of these materials had their drawbacks and their use was very time consuming. Another treatment which has shown promise and which is currently being investigated is the use of Mustard as a worm expellant, however it can scorch and large amounts of water are required.

It is likely that the use of sulphur containing materials to acidify soil conditions will become one of the most important methods of minimising earthworm populations. It may also be that machinery manufacturers will have to try to develop mechanical methods of earthworm control or equipment will be developed which can very effectively remove casts from the playing surface. Physical barriers to earthworm movement will also perhaps be included in the construction phase of greens.

Rigby Taylor Limited have always advocated the use of IMP (Integrated Pest Management) for the control of earthworms in turf, ie the use of all possible methods available to minimise cast formation without relying on chemical methods alone. Such methods include:

- The avoidance of pure organic fertilisers or top-dressings on sites where there are high worm populations.
- Acidification of the soil by application of sulphur or ammonium sulphate.
- The avoidance of alkaline materials, e.g. top-dressing and alkaline irrigation water.
- Boxing-off of clippings around approaches and surrounds of greens.
- Reduction of "thatch" build-up.
- Improvement of drainage.
- Brushing of casts off the surface if conditions allow.

Unfortunately, although these measures will help reduce worm activity, they will not produce the level of control that pesticide treatments can achieve and greenkeepers may have to learn to live with much higher populations of earthworms, unless new effective control measures are developed quickly.
applauded. If the Ministry did not do this we could still be flinging mercury and potassium cyanide around to control pests and diseases. However, the process has tended to result in more product withdrawals than there are launch- es. And in the case of worm cast control on the domestic market, has left the amateur gardener with no chemical control at all, following the withdrawal of carbaryl.

For the greenkeeper, however, Levington Turfclear (containing carbendazim), is specifically recom- mended for the control of the worm species which cause damag- ing and undesirable worm casts on the surface of the sward.

The non-casting worm species which are beneficial for drainage and soil aeration are largely unaf- fected.

As an added benefit, Turfclear is a proven fungicide which acts sys- temically against common turf dis- eases such as Dollar Spot and Fusarium Patch.

Its efficiency is unaffected by rain or irrigation, and no turf phytotox- icity problems have been noted when the product is used as recom- mended.

For the best results it should be applied as a preventative treatment in the Spring and Autumn to con- trol casting worm species and dis- eases, or at the first sign of attack.

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Keeping in touch with news and comment from the Sections

North

Another new member to welcome this month with Keith Dinwoodie, from Invergordon GC, joining the Section. There is a drive on to increase the membership of all sections just now and our Regional Administrator, Peter Boyd, should be in the area soon to visit clubs and try to recruit new members, while also speaking to existing members to find out ways we can improve our Association for the benefit of all.

The Scottish Greenkeepers' Championship at West Kilbride, Ayrshire is on the 23rd of this month. I know this is a long journey for our Section but hope there will be a good turnout of North members. The trip will be worthwhile as West Kilbride is a lovely course and I am sure Jim Paton will have it in great condition. I hope to be there depending on the Board of Management Meeting I will be attending around about that time.

I was watching the football on Sky television recently and thought it was great to see the Groundsman for the home team being interviewed before the game, talking about the pitch and his preparation for matches etc. Wouldn't it be good to see Course Managers at European Tour events getting the same air time to raise the profile of Greenkeepers, who, after all, are among the most important people during the week. It was also interesting that when asked if players came to complement him on the pitch at all, he said, no, they only speak to him if there is a problem and if the pitch is in good condition, he knows because there will be no comments. Sound familiar?

Finally, I was looking through my Section notes for June last year and noticed that snow was reported to be falling at the time. Well we just had quite a bit of snow again this year, but the warm weather is back again as I write this year's report. Here's hoping it is here to stay.

Iain Macleod

Ayrshire

The Spring outing was held at Stranraer GC on April 28 and around 40 members enjoyed the good weather and avoided the torrential thunder showers which hit the north of the county. The course was in good condition and the hospitality was very well received in the impressive new clubhouse. Our grateful thanks go to the Stranraer committee and staff for a most enjoyable outing.

The course proved a good test of golf as befits one which was, in 1952, the last James Braid ever designed.

The men on form were as follows:

The morning Texas Scramble was won by Ian McNab, William McMeechan, Martin Lothian and Steven Carmichael.

Afternoon Medal:

Scratch - W. McMeechan
Trade: Kenny Hunter.
Congratulations go to all prize winners.

Thanks go to our Secretary, Derek Wilson, for the organisation of the outing. I've heard no news this month so if
Keeping in touch with news and comment from the Sections

you have anything to report call me on 01505 683278 evenings, or 0498 634122.

Iain Barr
Central
The first golf event of the season was held in April when Ladybank GC was the venue for our Spring Tournament. We couldn't have chosen a better day for the 58 members and guests who attended, with the course in excellent condition and the sun shining throughout the day, everyone was able to forget about the cold weather of the previous couple of weeks.

Prize winners were as follows;
Best Scratch: K. Stirling, The Dukes, 74
Best Nett: D. Scott, Scoonie, 67
Cat 1: D. McAllister, Ladybank, 70; 2. E. Small, Tulliallan, 73
Cat 2: 1. S. Sime, Leven, 71; 2. A. Torrance, King James IV, 73
Cat 3: 1. A. Arnott, Dunnikier, 72. 2. G. McRae, Ratho Park, 84.
Stewart's Quaich E. Small/S. Raeburn, Tulliallan, 148.
Patron's: C. Horridge, MAC, 75
Guests: S. Herd, Leven, 76.

Our sincere thanks go to everyone at Ladybank, especially Head Greenkeeper, Ian Menzies and his staff, for their presentation of the course, the clubhouse staff, Secretary, Mr. Sproule, and to Club Captain, Joe Lonie, who joined us for the day and presented the prizes in the evening. Thanks also to the Scottish Patrons, Chris Langdon, for all his work in issuing and checking the score cards and to everyone who contributed to the raffle.

A member on the move recently is Scott Robertson. Scott has left Elmwood to start as an assistant at Strathmore, we wish him all the best for the future in his new employment and hope that he will still be able to attend our events. Another two members we hope to see at our events are Fraser Wright, from Lundin Links, and Michael Lindsay, from Scoonie, who join us this month. Welcome to the Section lads!

I was hoping to have some news of the activities of the world famous Leven Links Sporting Club but unfortunately their player/chief coach, Andy Vialli? O'Hara sustained an injury in pre season training (I think there was a spirit involved!) so has been unable to get started this season, and he says that "If I can't play, nobody plays". So we will have to wait a bit longer for news. In the meantime though, his much sought after A.O'H. tee shirts are again available following their sell out at Harrogate. If you want to obtain a collector's item just get in touch with Andy on his usual 0898 mobile number.

John Crawford.

West
Recently the Section has been quite quiet with only really the outing to report... but boy what an outing. A multitude of weather conditions were experienced starting nice and sunny with us dressed in tee shirts; then light rain, hail and finally thunderstorms. Sorry to say, after losing my ball, plugged at the 16th, I succumbed to temptation by walking in to avoid the lightning. Within minutes the course was unplayable. Never mind there's always next year.

On the day the results were:
Scratch: G. Bruen, East Kilbride, 73-5-68.
Best Scratch: K. Stirling, The Dukes, 74 b.h.
Best Nett: D. Scott, Scoonie, 67
Cat 1: D. McAllister, Ladybank, 70; 2. E. Small, Tulliallan, 73
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You know how it is - when the attraction's so powerful, you simply can't drag your eyes away! Rather like when you experience the effect of a TIS irrigation and maintenance system on a pitch or green.

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Keeping in touch with news and comment from the Sections


Trade Prize: D. Duthie, Aitkens, 76-3-71; Visitors' Prize: J. McCulloch, Cawder, 77-4-73; Longest Drive: Cat 1: G. Bruen; Cat 2: J. Stokoe; Cat 3: No Winner; Nearest the Pin, J. McCulloch; Putting Competition: I. Need.

Well done to all winners.

Now a few thanks. To Cowal GC for the courtesy extended to us on the day and to the Captain for putting up with my bad play. The green staff - for the condition of the course considering all the heavy rain for days before. Well done Kenny. The catering staff for their service and attention, also for the refreshments. Then to Peter Boyd for his starting skills. Brian Hillen and Derek Duthie for the cards and presentation work (prize giving).

To John Scott and Sandy for ferry work, cards, finances and other problems during the day. Robert Hogarth for prizes and helping out when needed, then Gary Burns for raffle ticket sales. Also Robert Bruce for delivering the flags for tournament display. The day went well because you all worked hard.

Finally to the prizes, of which many were donated by trade and committee. These events need support and we are all grateful for your continued help.

Now for special mention on the day two trophys were presented for Scratch Prizes and 2nd Class. Both trophies were donated and looked magnificent for which we are all delighted. The Scratch prize was a lovely Claret Jug which I'm sure will grace any mantelpiece beautifully. We have to thank Daval Industries for this and we are eternally grateful. David Happel, from Daval, said a few words of thanks.

The 2nd Class trophy is a lovely Rosebowl for which Paul Yates' wife will be very proud to show off. We thank Rigby Taylor for presenting us with his delightful silverware. David Carson, of Rigby Taylor, apologised for being unable to attend.

The numbers were 55 and considering the trip this is excellent. Well done all those members.

Finally congratulations to Steven Hogg on his appointment as Course Manager of Crow Wood Golf Club. We wish him well and look forward to seeing him at future events. Stuart Taylor

North West

After a slow and fairly stressful (for me) start, we eventually received 90 applications for the Mere Seminar on March 19. People always seem to leave things until the last minute and 10 days before the seminar the numbers were 40. Please in future if you intend playing in any of the tournaments or attending any other Section events be early with your application so that I can keep my sanity. A total of 600 application forms for the seminar plus fixture lists were posted to NW members and out of the 90 delegates there were only 35 greenkeepers, the remaining 37 being members of the trade and local authorities. Many hours hard work go into organising the seminar and members have requested more education, so please try to support your committee in future by attending organised events.

The seminar "Construction and Management of Sports Turf" by PDA Agronomy Ltd was of the highest quality with excellent speakers. David Stansfield started with "The Role of the Agronomist" and the scientific approach to the management of grass. He stressed the point that the agronomist is there to advise where there is a problem, not to query the greenkeeper's skills. John Hacker followed with "Golf Construction in the Middle East". This was an excellent talk with plenty of slides showing the problems of building a nine hole golf course in the desert of Saudi Arabia. David Stansfield spoke on "Traditional Golf Links Construction" once again with plenty of interesting slides of the various stages of construction work, showing the difficulty of germinations of seed through the movement of the sand.

After an excellent lunch Mike Harbridge spoke on the "Construction of Sports Stadia". Once again the talk was highlighted with slides showing the construction of football pitches and how synthetic materials are inserted in the award and are hardly visible. Jay Dobson covered "Management of Diseases in Turf". A subject close to all our hearts and one which haunts us all. A couple of interesting points were made, how physical damage to turf can also appear to be disease and pH disorders likewise. The day was rounded off with Gary Owen's talk on "Materials testing and Site Monitoring". I would like to thank all the speakers for a very interesting and educational day. Also Mere G&CC for their hospitality and use of their excellent facilities, Sisis, Acora Equipment, Rigby Taylor, Rufford Soil Technology and Cheshire Turf Machinery for their support. The National Chairman Gordon Child and the N/W President John Walker for taking time out to attend the seminar and all those who attended making the many hours worthwhile.

April, not much happening this month other than rain, rain, rain. According to the Met Office, this month has been the wettest April for many years and I am sure that many of you have had problems due to the conditions. I feel sorry for the boys in the Midlands who suffered with severe flooding, but at least it kept the courses closed for a decent length of time.

April 2 was a good day weather wise, but not a good day for the N/W Section golf wise. The annual golf tournament between the N/W and N Wales sections was played at Prestbury GC. The course as always was in excellent condition, thanks to Anthony Davies and his staff, and the day was completed with an excellent meal. However, the result was an outstanding win for the North West Section, finishing with 94.5 to 110.6. The only winners for the N/W section were Bert Cross and Mike Bottomley who played out of their socks to win 3 & 2. Once again the N/W section struggled for a team and we finished with 14 instead of 16. Well played N Wales. I would like to thank Prestbury for allowing us courtesy of the course and also for the use of their excellent facilities, also GEM Professional for sponsoring the day for the eighth time.

The next tournament will be the Summer Meeting, played at Haydock Park GC on Thursday, June 25, lunch will be between 12.30 pm and 1 pm. The first tee is reserved from 1.30 pm and starting times will be allocated on the day. The evening meal will be served around 7.30 pm followed by the prize presentation.

Applications including a cheque for £13 to be made payable to the N/W President and the N/W Secretary, 225 Utting Avenue, Walton, Liverpool, L4 9RR. Tel: 0151 284 4416. No applications to be accepted after Friday, June 19.

Simon Hogg on his appointment as Course Manager of Crow Wood Golf Club. We wish him well and look forward to seeing him at future events. Robert Hogarth, from Daval, said a few words of thanks. Many hours hard work went into organising the seminar and members have requested more education, so please try to support your committee in future by attending any other Section events you attend.

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Around the green

East of England

The first competition of the year was almost cancelled due to lack of numbers, but with days to go enough members replied to warrant a competition.

All who attended played a course of the highest standard, manicured down to the last detail. Thanks goes to David Salisbury and his staff who produced a testing course (hope you enjoyed the whisky Dave). The Burghley Park Course withstood quite a downpour, but John Scnney, Sleaford GC, came through the rain for first place. Second went to Graeme Macdonald, Newark GC, and third to Barry Anderson, Toft GC. Nearest the pins were won by Les Purdy and John Scnney. First prize for the trade member went to Peter Fell, Atkens. Everybody who played went home with a prize. This can only go to show that we have the best sponsors in the area. A big thanks to Alisdair Brown, of Peterborough Garden Machinery, and Ben Petitjean, of Barenbrug Seed, our main sponsors of the day, for the superb prizes. The prize table was actually embarrassing. It's probably the best turn out of prizes since I took over the secretary's job. 

Other trade sponsors were: Greenpide; Atkens; Riddy Taylor; Colliers; Fieldcare; Scotts; Tower Chemicals; Jacobsen; Rigby and Roy Harrison.

Thanks once again for courtesy to Howard Mulligan, Secretary, and the catering staff for a lovely meal. All of which made a great day out at Burghley Park GC.

Any news then please telphone Graeme Macdonald on 01636 626564.

G A Macdonald

ITS EFFECT IS SHATTERING

Charterhouse

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We purchased our first Verti-Drain back in 1983 and very quickly bought a second. Both these machines have been working on a continuous basis providing excellent results and utilising only a minimum of spare parts.

Comment From Walter Wood St. Andrews Links Golf Course supervisor

OURSES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

Dolby and his staff for the excellent condition of the course - perhaps we may get the chance to return there in the near future. Also thanks to the stewards and wardess for providing us with the superb meals. Doug Bell was also in attendance giving an insight in his role as the Northern Regional Administrator. I hope you enjoyed your day. Leading scores for the competition are as follows: Best Gross R. Black 71, Westerhope GC. Best Nett S. Quince 73-6-67 nett tee-chekk. Assistants' Best Nett D. Curthbertson, Slaey Hall. 1. R. Bell, Slaey Hall, 87-17-70; 2. J. Storey, Alnwick, 77-6-72; 4. J. Richardson, Haxham, 78-6-72; 5. N. Parker, Whickham, 72-1-73

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The first competition of the year was almost cancelled due to lack of numbers, but with days to go enough members replied to warrant a competition.

All who attended played a course of the highest standard, manicured down to the last detail. Thanks goes to David Salisbury and his staff who produced a testing course (hope you enjoyed the whisky Dave). The Burghley Park Course withstood quite a downpour, but John Scnney, Sleaford GC, came through the rain for first place. Second went to Graeme Macdonald, Newark GC, and third to Barry Anderson, Toft GC. Nearest the pins were won by Les Purdy and John Scnney. First prize for the trade member went to Peter Fell, Atkens. Everybody who played went home with a prize. This can only go to show that we have the best sponsors in the area. A big thanks to Alisdair Brown, of Peterborough Garden Machinery, and Ben Petitjean, of Barenbrug Seed, our main sponsors of the day, for the superb prizes. The prize table was actually embarrassing. It's probably the best turn out of prizes since I took over the secretary's job. 

Other trade sponsors were: Greenpide; Atkens; Riddy Taylor; Colliers; Fieldcare; Scotts; Tower Chemicals; Jacobsen; Purdys and Roy Harrison.

Thanks once again for courtesy to Howard Mulligan, Secretary, and the catering staff for a lovely meal. All of which made a great day out at Burghley Park GC.

Any news then please telphone Graeme Macdonald on 01636 626564.

G A Macdonald
East Midlands

This year’s annual Trade v Greenkeepers golf match will take place at Morley Hayes GC on Tuesday, June 16. We require ten players for each side. Anybody interested can give me a ring

East Midlands v East of England golf match will take place at Oundle GC on Thursday, August 20. Tee off 3.45 pm. The day will finish by 5.30 pm. On the same subject, the annual East Midlands v East of England match can give a ring and I will send them an entry form. After last year’s tied match we will need to field a stronger side to enable us to retain the Trophy.

Mid Anglia

Back in March a Section visit to Brocket Hall GC took place to walk around the proposed layout for the new course. A very informative afternoon ensued and thanks to all those members who took time out to attend. Thanks also to Course Manager, John Wells, for providing the relevant facts. If it turns out as good as the existing course I’m sure we’ll all look forward to playing it in future.

Our first golf event of the year took place in late April at a fairly new course, Lammerwood. Fifty three members attended in what was our Spring Tournament. Lammerwood is one of the best courses we have had for a Spring event and the change in format in the afternoon to a Greensome Foursome event made for an enjoyable day’s golf. Bearing in mind the five or so inches of rain we had prior to the event, the course was obviously very wet in places but the greens were in fine condition and our thanks go to Sandy Anderson and all his staff for their efforts. Our thanks go to Lammerwood for allowing us to stage the event and their hospitality throughout was excellent.

Rigby Taylor was the main sponsors, along with Willnot Pertwee who ran the “Kingpin” competition. Our thanks go to Mark Stiggew and James Grimston who took time out of their respective companies on the day and to all the other trade members for their continued support. The results from the morning round were as follows:

1. Mark Ellis, Mentmore GC, 37 pts.
2. Chris Brook, Chesfield Downs, 36 pts.
3. David Wright, Brocket Hall, 35 pts.

On a final note I would like to introduce you to some more new members: Jamie Askew, Joseph Woolley, Graeme Bagnall and Michael Webster.

Jonathan Wood

B, B & O

The first golf event of the season was held at Reading GC back in April. This was well attended with 36 competitors battling the elements as usual. The course it has to be said that we never have much luck with the weather, especially the Spring tournament. I hate playing in the rain but I felt I could cope with my guaranteed waterproofs to keep me dry. How wrong can you be? Despite getting wet through along with everybody else it was an enjoyable day. My two partners, Steve & Liam deserve a special mention for their competitive spirit, at least in that you can only get better! Jim Sutherland and his team have to be congratulated on the condition of the course it was a credit to the Gotham Club. For making us welcome on the day, the evening meal was provided. It was the first. A big thank you to Pattinsons (Phil Sharp) for sponsoring the day and providing the many prizes it really is much appreciated by all especially the lucky winners.


Thank you to Walter Wilders for covering the cost of posting all the invites for the golf day. Finally I would like to thank Richard Haynes for all his support and help at many of the events over the past few seasons, even if he didn’t play he would always come along to help out with the cards etc. Good luck from the Section in your new job.

Lindsay T Anderson

London

On Tuesday, April 21 we held the London Section Spring Tournament. Although three weeks into a very wet and difficult April, the course was in excellent condition. Course Manager, Derek Mason and his staff are to be congratulated on providing all the competitors with a first class venue. Results are as follows:


The Guest Prize was won by our Regional Administrator, Derek Farrington, and the longest drive was won by Daryle Jones.

The King Pin Prize for Nearest the Pin is this year sponsored by Willnot Pertwee, who has been a long-standing sponsor. The prizes were awarded by Mark Pyrah. 1. Richard Andrews, 2. Craig Handside, 3. Richard Elderdige.

Mark announced that there was to be a roll-over for the trade prize because on this occasion he did not have a tape measure long enough.

Thanks again to the General Manager, the Catering Staff and Derek Mason at Highgate GC for providing the venue for a most enjoyable day.

While still in North London, news of another sporting achievement. Highgate’s Deputy Head Greenkeeper, Russell Ling turned out regularly as first team goalkeeper for Potters Bar Town FC in the Spartan South Midlands League. Russell has been the Town’s goalk for two and a half years with a side with which he is the 1996/7 Season. This year the team reached the Quarter Finals of the FA Vase but despite Russell’s heroic efforts, which won him “Man of the Match” they lost by two goals to Stoke on Trent.

The Season’s Honours haven’t eluded him though because the “Town” have won the South Midlands Challenge Trophy and the South Midlands League Cup for 1996/7.

Two new appointments in the Section. A warm welcome to Matt Smith who joined Ardley Golf Club in February as Assistant to Neil Whitaker and congratulations to Jeff Donovan, formally of Bridgegdon GC, on securing the position of Head Greenkeeper at Bonnor GC.

Paul Cairns, Covid 19 Manager at Bushey Gs&CC, has had an extremely busy 18 months with a remodelling of the course taking place. The 9 Hole Course has had 18 new tees constructed by Contractor, John Glenlyon, the lakes were seeded in November 1997 and should be in play by June or July this year. The land drainage on the Course has been enhanced by new swales being dug by the existing drainage team. Steve Tingley’s firm, Premier Sports Turf Services, were brought in to construct trolley paths and build bridges for accessibility. Finally the 18th green was faced off. SPS Irrigation carried out a complete revamp of the irrigation on the greens and the green was laid over the Easter weekend. Paul’s pride and joy is the renovated lake which will be stocked with fish, and there is to be a bandstand on the opposite side of the lake to the grassed picnic area with a view to holding open days in the future. The main Clubhouse is being refurbished completely with new Bar, Restaurant and Grill Bar together with an 800-member Health Club. The Club has purchased the site for a new home, and to maintain the Course and Paul is looking forward to the new Greenkeeper’s shed in the future.

In February, Barry Neville, Head Greenkeeper at Hertford GC, which is currently under management, had a bit of extra disruption at the 9th. Eastern Electricity which has a Sub Station next to the Club had contractors laying a new power cable from the 9th tee to the Sub Station which runs through the 9th fairway. The cable had to be laid in ducts and the trench
required was 340 metres long by 600mm wide. The chain trencher used was powered by a 260hp diesel engine and weighed 28 tons, so the trench excavation was completed in one and a half hours! The laying of the cable and initial backfill took a further week to complete. Once the Electricity Board moved out, Barry enlisted the aid of S & G Limited to construct a new medal tee, reconstruct a fairway and it all looks as good as new. It was our privilege to play at RAF Lakenheath GC, on April 8. It is not every day you get a private air display by F15 Fighter Planes, Screaming Eagles, their nickname. They gave one or two of us the Screaming Abadabbs but very impressive, unlike the golf.

Saxy two of us turned up for a very memorable day. All were greeted by Tim Russell who, along with Ian, worked tirelessly to make sure all went well as it did. I actually played with Greg McHugh, the Greenkeeper (no it’s not a spelling mistake) and his caddie, Art. The combination of American and Cockney expletives got quite colourful at times especially when he thought I was Australian! Our football was going along nicely, sun was shining, birds (not eagles) were singing, then someone pulled us up for slow play (I didn’t know it was a race). Anyway he was told politely to go away and whistle Dixie. No pleasing some.

Well, what a wet April, three and a half inches down my way so far. The venue for our first Golf Day and Spring Tournament had to be changed owing to the weather and Burnham GC being unplayable. Step in Martin at Stapleford Abbotts with the offer to go back late summer next time. The course was in first rate condition thanks to Greg and his team. He wants us to go back late summer next time when the greens are like grease lightning (can’t wait) especially if the pins are in the same place. The eagles won’t be only ones Screaming.

We’ve all heard about American hospitality but when was the last time someone brought drinks to you on the course, ice cold at that on a buggy? When did you last see a but on the course with two huge vending machines in? And when did you last visit a golf club with an armed guard at the gate and F15’s making sure no one nick the flag? That’s what I call security, Greg give me five man.

Essex

Crystal Clear WSP™ is a non-toxic concentrated microbial based lake clarifier. Crystal Clear WSP™ will biodegrade nutrients, organic matter and hydrocarbons reducing surface scum, algae blooms and silt build up, improving water clarity and quality. Each gram of Crystal Clear WSP™ contains 4 billion CFUs (Conolly Forming Units) of a proprietary blend of 17 bacillus bacterial strains. Crystal Clear WSP™ will not only control algae, water clarity, methane and sulphide odours, but will also reduce silt levels by up to 30cm per year.

Lake Colourant WSP™ is both inexpensive and also the easiest way to create natural looking blue water. Available in no-mess water soluble packets, Lake Colourant WSP™ involves no pre-measuring, simply add the pack to the water feature for rapid colouring. Lake Colourant WSP™ is ideal for use in lakes, ponds, water hazards and large fountains. Lake Colourant reduces the amount of sunlight penetrating the water consequently reducing photosynthesis and thus acting as a non-toxic, natural suppressant of aquatic weeds. Lake Colourant WSP™ is available in cases of 6 WSP’s. Each will treat 1500m².

Lake Colourant WSP™ is available in no-mess water soluble packets for easy application. It is non-toxic and is completely harmless to human, animal and aquatic life. And fully compatible with all aquatic colorants.

For initial application each WSP will treat 250m² of water, with a maintenance rate of 1 WSP per 1500m² every 2-4 weeks.

Crystal Clear is also now available in a 10kg pail for economical treatment of large areas.

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Their courses for a two to three hour visit by other greenkeepers with a number limit of 15-20, preferably during the summer. Members interested in an open forum numbered 28 and for this a winter meeting was recommended. The next section regarding golf competitions proved that any expenses enjoyed by most but that many would like to see more team events eg. Texas Scrambles. The consensus of opinion was that the number of competitions per day was about right but to include a four club competition and possibly an individual knockout on the Husley Bowl principle. Friendly was the description of the atmosphere on competition days and an evening barbecue was preferred. A set meal was second choice.

More information was wanted in 'Around the Green' and this you humble admirers are often heard among other highly intelligent views will be gratefully received. Quiz nights also proved very popular with those who replied and so one will be arranged in November. Well that’s what 38 of you think, I wonder if the remaining 42 agree with them?

The Spring Meeting was held on Friday, May 8 at the superbly presented Farnham Sands GC. We thank Peter McCollum and his staff for excellent afternoon golf and his club for the delicious evening meal. The results were as follows: Cat 1: 1. J Mathis, 2. R Christie, 3. R Glazer. Cat 2: 1. C Webb, 2. A Holthouse, 3. P Mitchell. Cat 3: 1. S Johnson, 2. T Stiles, 3. L Sturt. Our thanks to rigby Taylor for sponsoring the Medal competition and congratulations to Dave Wall for having the lowest nett score in the trade section. The overall competition was won by Steve Johnson nett 66. 2nd was John Mathis nett 69 and 3rd not least Ron Christie nett 71.

Brian Willmott.

South Wales
Weston has again come and gone, thankfully this year we had some reasonable weather, which in turn, led to good attendances especially from our side of the bridge. Nice to see so many familiar faces. Congratulations to Paula for organising such a good show. Also thanks to the trade for supporting it. Congratulations also to Rob Feater from Cregennau GC, on his recent marriage. All the best!

The Cardiff Cup at Southerndown looks like being hotly contested this year with 35 entrants already. And, finally a good luck in the future to Fred Symchic, from Cardiff GC, who has recently left to pursue another career.

Chris Solman

South Coast
On April 7 we had our annual match against the Secretaries. This was held at Highcliffe Castle GC. The Secretaries won 3.5 to 2.5. Trevor tells me that the weather was good, the course was good, the food was good and the company was good. You can’t ask for anything more than that! Thanks must go to the Captain and Committee for allowing us the use of their course. Also thanks to the Greenkeeping and Catering Staff who looked after everybody so well. Last, but not least, thank you to Course Care in particular John Wood and Paul Dyver who sponsored the day’s events.

Our Spring Tournament was held at Knighton Heath GC on April 22. It was contested by 47 players. The results were as follows:


Near Est Pin prize which raised £40 for the club’s charity went to Bob Gorwill. Westport took first place at Long Ashton, on April 29, and despite a forecast of floods, against the odds, the winner who organised the day’s events was Fred Deamon. He was well assisted by a good team but overall he was the man who organised the day’s events. Local knowledge seems to have a lot to do with the top prizes. Best gross and best nett to Bernard Embreyer. Well done Berny. Our thanks to the Captain, Committee and Members of Knighton Heath for allowing us the courtesy of the course for the day. Congratulations to the catering staff who produced an excellent meal. At the evening meal we were honoured by the presence of the Club President, who also presented the prizes.

I am sure you all saw the results of the 1987 South West Greenkeepers’ Tournament. The format for this tournament will be a Fourball Better Ball 18 Hole

So you think you’re the best?