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NEW PRODUCTS

The latest products on the market reviewed

CONVENTIONALLY STEERED

Two conventionally-steered ride-on mowers with zero-turn capabilities have joined the Massey Ferguson product line-up for 2009. One is a mid-deck machine, the other a front-deck model, making it the first out-front rotary mower within Massey Ferguson’s grounds care range.

The MF 50-23 IZ ride-on mid mower has independently driven rear wheels and a unique steerable front axle operated by a conventional steering wheel.

Drive to the two rear wheels is controlled by advanced SynchroTM technology (patents pending) that synchronises movement of the steering wheel to control the speed and rotational direction of the rear wheels. The result is zero-turn agility from a conventionally-steered mower, enabling 360 degree turns to be made within the overall length of the machine.

For users who prefer an out-front mowing deck, the new MF 50-22 FMZ ride-on front mower combines the exceptional manoeuvrability of a zero-turn machine with the high visibility provided by having the cutter deck mounted ahead of the operator.

www.masseyferguson.com

UNDERLAY

Recticel UK has launched its new shockpad for golf.

Re-bounce® Golf has been specifically developed in cooperation with professionals in order to provide the best possible solution for an artificial golf green. The product offers a significant decrease in ball rebound providing similar characteristics of a turf green. This is achieved by using a recipe of different foam types in its manufacture.

01536 402345
www.recticel.co.uk

CLUB SCRUB

Made of vacuum formed plastic, the new Club Scrub contains hygiene brushes which clean all around a golf club when inserted.

The Club Scrub sits on the ground and is filled with 6.5 litres of water and a touch of fairy liquid to help give the clubs a sparkle. On the ground the Club Scrub weighs 6.5 kilograms and could be screwed to a sunken wooden post or a concrete pad. To wash a club you simply push the club head into the opening at the top and push up and down a couple of times and withdraw the club.

www.jameskeyserproducts.co.uk
NEW MODELS

A new addition has just been unveiled to the UK market by Lamberhurst Engineering, the UK distributor of Ferrari tractors - the New Vega EP series.

The new models have been created with high performance engines and greatly reduced emissions, gearboxes that are suitable for a range of uses and an increase in reliability and functionality.

08456 121 141
www.lameng.com

LONGER LIFE

A major fencing company, AVS Fencing Supplies Ltd, is launching a range of timber fence posts that have been through a brand new treatment process for longer life.

All too often gardeners and landscapers are horrified to discover that fence posts have rotted and failed after only a few short years in service.

Using carefully selected pine (redwood) posts which have been kiln dried (to around 28% moisture content) these are treated with a special ACQ treatment process to give the fence posts virtually total protection from fungal decay and insect damage.

The new AVS posts have a lifespan of at least 15 years and AVS Fencing are supporting this with a new guarantee.

0 www.avsfencing.co.uk/retail

NEW CHART-TOPPING PERENNIAL RYEGRASS

New into Limagrain UK’s MM range of grass seed mixtures for winter sports pitches this year are two new high scoring perennial rye grass cultivars: Madrid and Milan.

Madrid is the top perennial ryegrass in STRI’s Turfgrass Seed 2009 table for Sports Uses with a mean score of 8.4. It also has the best scores for: live ground cover, visual merit, recovery and shoot density. It also has excellent disease resistance to red thread.

Milan follows closely behind with a mean score of 7.9 putting it third place on the STRI list, with joint highest score with Madrid, for recovery, and very good disease resistance (score of 6.4).

01522 861300

BUG SHIRT

Midge Guard is the official UK Distributor of the recently launched Original Bugshirt®. Made from a light-weight but extremely densely woven fabric, the loose fitting design and specialised materials used in the construction of the Bug Shirt, protects the wearer from biting insects and from being bitten.

Designed and made in Canada (where mosquitoes and biting flies are a national menace), the Original Bug Shirt is designed to protect against biting insects such as; mosquitoes, midges, black flies, no-see-ums, deer flies, horse flies and ticks so common to Northern Europe, the Americas, Tropics and most of the rest of the world.

0 www.midgeguard.co.uk
0844 5617059
The BIGGA/GCMA Safety Management System, sponsored by Ransomes Jacobsen, has been developed to:

- Make golf clubs safer
- Introduce best practice
- Standardise Health & Safety throughout golf
- Reduce costs for golf clubs

Why do you need a Safety Management System?

**Because:**

- It incorporates all your legal requirements to comply with Health & Safety Legislation
- Clubs have responsibilities
- There are penalties for not complying – up to £20,000 fine and/or course closure
- Golf clubs are hazardous places to work

The Safety Management System contains help and guidance to enable golf clubs to:

- Set a Health & Safety Policy
- List hazards and assess risks
- Plan for the future
- Introduce audit and review procedures

The Safety Management System is accessed through the Members area of the BIGGA website (www.bigga.org.uk) and the GCMA website (www.gcma.org.uk)
The section held a very enjoyable Spring Outing at Scotscraig Golf Club on April 30 and wishes to thank Scotscraig for allowing us to be their guests for the day and congratulate Course Manager, George Pendrich, for having the course in such fine condition. A total of 48 players competed including four retired greenkeepers from Sweden who happened to be in the area for the week and came along as guests. The principal prize winners were: Scratch, Archie Dunn, Auchterarder GC, 74pts; Best handicap, Iain Sinclair, St Andrews GC, 75-8=67. Catenary 1 hcp winner, Gordon Moir, St Andrews, 77-4=73 and category 2 hcp winner, Gordon McKie, St Andrews, 89-16=73. Messrs Sinclair and McKie won the best two combined scores from the same club and Quentin Allardice, from TIS Scotland, won the trade prize. The full results can be found on our website www.biggacentralsection.org.uk.

Finally, a special thanks to Siobhan Allardice for helping get the players off the 1st tee and for collecting the cards at the finish. The Section has a couple of educational events planned for the autumn where we really require the support of the members. First up is a half day disciplinary training course for Course Managers, Head Greenkeepers or Deputies and this will take place at Elmwood, on October 26, prior to the AGM. It will take you through the process of investigating an incident and determining if disciplinary action is required and how to follow the correct procedure. The trainers, Pitchblue Int, offer practical, easy to follow and essential advice, vital skills to those managing staff. Then in November we plan to stage a two-day ecology management course run by Bob Taylor and other staff from the Ecology Unit of the STRI. This will be on exactly the same lines as the courses they run at Bingley every year which would cost an attendee something in the region of £700 to attend by the time they pay course fees, travel and accommodation. If we can get 20 to 25 people to commit, we would hope to run it for a cost of around £150. Graeme Taylor, Course Manager of the Jubilee course was an attendee last year and found it to be one of the best training courses he had been on with a lot of practical examples which he has been able to transfer onto his golf course. More details of both courses will appear on the website shortly.

We were very fortunate to have good weather on the east coast and the golf course was in great condition. A special thank you must go to Mark Pagan, Head Greenkeeper, and his staff for the way the course was presented for us on the day.

Looking down through the prize list, the Eyemouth boys did a good job on the cleaning up of the prizes. My question is when do they get time to practise their golf, or are they just natural born sportsmen.

I was fortunate with the draw in playing with the local greenkeeper, Dougie, who clubbed me for most of the round. Managing to win the sweep money from the Rigby Taylor boy’s Big Gary and Jim - cheers guys I am sure you both will put in for expenses for that day.

Nice to see Graham Wood and his wife, Helen, at the meal, presentation of prizes and raffle, thanks Stuart for bringing both along. Our grand raffle! I think just about everybody went home with something. A big thank you to the trade who kindly donate the prizes for our raffle on the day.

We hope to see more faces at our Summer Outing - The Willie Woods Trophy - where members can invite a guest along as a partner - the venue for this is Kingsknowe GC.

Our tireless Secretary, Stuart Ferguson, will keep you all posted with this event.

All the winners: Spring Meeting at Eyemouth GC; Scratch Winner, 78pts, Benn McLeod, Guiliane GC. 1st Class Winner 80-7-73; Tom Murray, Ratho Park GC; Run up 85-5-78; Mark Pagan, Eyemouth GC; 2nd Class Winner, 83-9-78; Douglas Greenshields, Eyemouth GC; R/ up 88-13-75; Ian Watson, Guiliane GC; 3rd Class Winner (92-19-73), Bob Wortley, Eyemouth GC; Veteran Winner, 79-5-74; Alistair Holmes, Seahouses GC; Patrons’ Winner 83-13-72; Stewart Clayton, Greensman
Hi there, hope you are all well and that your respective courses are busy. Most of you will be gearing up to your clubs championships. Remember, nothing less than perfect will do for the members, you know what they’re like!

I have just sat down in front of the computer to write and I can still feel the wind whistling through my hair and ears. How windy was that! Just standing up to hit the ball was proving difficult for most of us. That seemed to be the most common excuse on the day. I think that you’ll all agree that the course was in great condition and that Neil Sadler and his squad presented it perfectly. We couldn’t blame that so what other excuses were made. One of the guys I was playing with took six shots to get out of one of the bunkers, mentioning no names, Stuart Robertson, from Craigiehill GC, in Perth. Despite the windy conditions it was a fine day and we all made it round dry. Maybe it was the fine smell coming from the back of the 3rd tee, who knows? We had a good turn out of 53 guys so thank you for that.


A big thank you to everyone that turned up. It was good to see everyone and also to see some new faces, long may it continue. The next outing we have for the North Section is at Altyre GC on September 17. You should of all received your forms in the envelope that Dale sent out at the beginning of April. In the meantime there is the little matter of the Scottish at Cathkin Braes in June. Anyone wishing to play in that should contact Peter Boyd on: 07776242120.

This year the greenkeepers have managed to put two teams into the local trades competition at Hazlehead GC, in Aberdeen. The second team of pairs made up of Derek Green, Royal Aberdeen, and Robert Hardie, Craibstone, with Dicky Pirie, Newmachar, and Ryan Stott, Craibstone, making up the other pair.

Unfortunately the first pairing got beaten by 1 hole and the second pair got thumped by 10 holes. Out of the last 11 holes they lost 9 of them. Hard luck lads we can always rely on the first team or can we. We’ll have to find out next month.

Two young lads on the move are Ryan Stott and Scott Davidson. Ryan has made the move from Newmachar across to join Robert at Craibstone. Good Luck Ryan. Scott has joined Royal Aberdeen after a somewhat world tour from America to Australia to the council bowling greens of Aberdeen. He started by working on the Ohio State Uni programme and in that internship worked at Sea Island Golf in Georgia.

He then spent six months working in Australia and the highlight for him was working at the Australian Masters. He then came back to sunny Aberdeen (why?) and worked for the council on their bowling greens until a greenkeeper position became available that suited. Good luck Scott.

That’s all for this month people, hopefully if we can get half the amount of info for future articles then we’ll be winning. Thanks for your time.

Ben Brookes
Muirac Links
07813889374

Northern Region

Northern East

On April 22, we held our Spring Competition at Whitley Bay GC. I believe that’s our first visit, or maybe we have been there for another competition a while ago because the last time I was there the trees were not that big and there was hardly any gorse.

Anyway, everyone seemed to enjoy themselves, although there were one or two regulars who couldn’t make it due to work commitments, but at least the weather was good for the course and the meal.

Thanks to Head Greenkeeper, Graham Smith, and the committee for giving us courtesy of their course.

Thanks also to the following sponsors: T.S.L. represented by Terry Charlton and Alan Morton; Greenlay of Cramlington; Simon Holmes of Lloyds of Throckley; Aitkens, Shorts of Whitburn and thanks also to John Moutrie for catering.

Results: Best Gross - Jordan Gibson, The Northumberland GC, 75pts; Best Nett - Kevin Dinsdale, The Northumberland GC, 71pts; Alan Ingles, Newcastle Utd GC, 72pts; Peter Anderson, Newcastle Utd GC, 72pts; James Storey, Alnemouth GC, 73pts.

One other thing that needs mentioning - people who have won the top prizes in previous years have not returned the silverware, please could they get them back to me somehow - maybe through a rep, I’m sure they wouldn’t mind collecting them. For this competition I was two trophies short, the people responsible will be getting a letter shortly.

As you are aware a new championship course is being built at Close House, work had started at the end of April and the course is being designed by Turner Macpherson Golf Design. It is to be created in the style of English Golf course architect, Harry Colt, who was responsible for the likes of Wentworth, Royal Portrush and Sunningdale to name but a few. Measuring at 6841 yards from the championship tees, the new course will consist of 11 par 4’s, four par 3’s, three par 5’s and a par 7.

The course is expected to open in spring 2011 and aptly named The Colt. Visitors will get to appreciate the many historic features of the site including the stone walls, ancient monuments, the woodlands and the ice lake and I can tell you that it’s well worth a visit.

Jimmy Richardson

Northern

As I sit writing this month’s report, while simultaneously reviewing the results of the recent Spring Tournament at Pannal, I can’t believe my eyes. Alan Baxter in Division 2, and Ken Christie won Nearest the Pin! I’m wondering now if these results are a wind up!

The Spring Tournament took place on April 29 at Pannal, with a very good turn out of 40 members playing the fantastic course. The results on the day were: 1.1. Rob Bradley; 1.2. Rob Turner; 1.3. Stuart Mason; 2.1. Alastair Holroyde; 2.2. Alan ‘I should be in Division 1’ Baxter; 2.3. Frank Stewart; 3.1. Andy Scaman; 3.2. Dennis “President” Cockburn; 3.3. Mike Bussey; Trade - 1. Tito Arana; 2. Adrian Holroyde. Nearest the Pin - 10th Ken “Tiger” Christie and 17th Stuart Mason.

A huge thank you to both Bayer and Sherriff Amenity for their sponsorship of the day, and a massive thank you also to all the staff at Pannal for producing a fantastic course and looking after us in the clubhouse.

The next event on the golfing calendar is President’s Day, which is to be held at Branshaw Golf Club on July 1. As with Pannal, I will require names and payment at least one week before the event.

This year’s match against the Sheffield Section is to take place on July 21, at Abbeydale Golf Club. This is a free day out which is kindly sponsored by Rigby Taylor, if you wish to be in the 12 man team which beats
Sheffield

Hello everyone, sorry for not getting any news in the magazine last month, there wasn’t any to report and by the time we had our spring golf tournament, it was too late.

I am sure everyone enjoyed the warmish weather in April and hopefully everyone got their spring maintenance carried out ready for the on-slaught of grass cutting, and busy fixtures.

The spring golf tournament was held on Tuesday, April 7, at Blackwell Grange Golf Club, Darlington. It was a fantastic day, with reasonable weather and one of the best-attended golf days in recent years.

There was just over 30 people taking part and for only £14 a round of golf and a meal, you can’t grumble for that. The day was very kindly sponsored by Toro and Kubota, in conjunction with Lloyd Limited of Bishop Auckland. Thanks Alistair and Simon for your continued support.

The course was in great condition and it was clear to see that Terry and his staff had worked hard in preparing the course for us so thank you Terry. Thankfully the weather was ok, and we managed to complete all 18 holes this time around, unlike last year when the weather was foul.

A big thank you must also go to Blackwell Grange for allowing us courtesy of the course and the use of their facilities. Also, thank you to the catering staff for a great meal.

The results are as follows:

- Overall winner on the Day: Dave Cuthbertson
- 1st C. Cuthbertson 36pts; R. Hood 32pts; M. McCrirrick 32pts; 2. S. Russel 35pts; O. Shepard 34pts; R. Pybus 34pts (decided on back 9); 3. Terry (Hasselow) Harrison S. Price. K. Scarce; Nearest the Pin – D. Simpson; Longest drive – M. McCrirrick. The trade prize was won by Spuggy, from Sunderland.

Happily sought after Antand Dec Trophy was fiercely battled out between two notorious rivals over 18 gruelling holes, finally the winner was declared and the victorious Jamie Applegarth spared no time in celebrating his victory over Alister Whitty.

Thanks also to the following companies for providing prizes: Tact, Sheriff Amenity, Turfcare, Rigby Taylor, Scotts, Border Sports and Boxer Chemicals. Sorry if I have missed anyone.

We were also kindly joined by Peter Larter, from BIGGA, who made the journey up from Lincolnshire to share a few words with members and enjoy a round of golf.

Finally, a bit of news. Richie Hood is looking forward to his new appointment as Course Manager at Sharpley Springs Golf Club. Richie has been Head Greenkeeper at Mount Oswald for many years and we wish him all the best for the future at his new course.

The autumn tournament is taking place at Durham City Golf Club, on Wednesday, October 7. Details will follow but if there is as much interest in the autumn tournament as the spring one then you will need to get your name down quick.

A seminar is being held at Redcar Golf Club on Thursday, July 9, and it will be on the subject of “Sustainability”.

The event is being run in conjunction with the R&A and the GTC. It is a hot topic at the moment and I am sure it will be a very interesting day.

There are very limited places so if you are interested please contact Ian Pemberton on: 07791695768.

Finally, thanks to David Snowdon for holding the talk on the ‘Use and Abuse of Wetting Agents’ back in February.

The evening went very well and was very informative.

Any news, please contact: Kevin Scarce 07921817837 kevscarce@aol.com

The spring tournament took place at Rhyl Golf Club on May 20, a full run down of results and the day will be posted in next month’s column.

Anyone sending in their CPD claims must do so by the end of this month for them to count for this year’s certificate.

The annual North Wales/North West match takes place at Bolton Golf Club, on June 10, best of sporting luck to both teams (but come on North Wales!).

In local news Pat McAtee, of Nefyn Golf Club, celebrated 25 years on the greensstaff recently and in appreciation of his hard work and loyalty the club presented him with a Tag Heuer watch. Very nice!

Also at Porthmadog Golf Club, Gareth (Bronco) Williams celebrated 25 years in greenkeeping but as far as I know he wasn’t given a flashy watch, but I may be wrong! If any of you are celebrating a special anniversary or your club has a centennial coming up let us know and we’ll share it with the rest of the Section as good news is made to be shared.

All the best until next month Pete Maybury petemay666@aol.com 07756001187
Johnny Evans johnny.evans@tesco.net

Midland Region

Midland

Well here I am again desperately trying to think of something to write about for our notes. Yes, our notes! Come on now, some information of who and what is happening in your area would make our notes far easier to compose and of greater interest. You don’t have to even speak to me, just email me: sean.mcdade@homecall.co.uk. I shan’t hold my breath.

And now for the news, our spring event was held at Wychwood Golf Club, our gratitude to the club for their very fine and welcoming hospitality. What a fantastic test of golf in such beautiful surroundings, and...
such high standards of playing quality and presentation. A huge thank you to Jonathon Falmer (Golf Director) for arranging the day. Also a “respect” to Ashley Oaks, Head Greenkeeper, and his obviously excellent team for preparing the course to such a high standard, superb guys.


The Premier Division title must go to our ever-suffering greens: Graham Gleed & New Holland - they were the savours of our spring event as they stepped in at the eleventh hour to sponsor the event.

Also, thanks very much to Whitemoss/Mike Whitehouse and Andy Law for providing us with our ever-perused new score boards. Sustenance and refreshments around the course, coupled with the ever enjoyable banter was kindly delivered by those two lovably rogues Kevin and Rob of Turner Grounds care.

Our thanks to Nigel Tyler/ Sherriff Amenity for sponsoring Longest Drive & Nearest the Pin. And finally thanks to our ever-suffering Mr. Starter, Mr. President, alias Sir John Hammond.

Our next event is to be held at one of my old haunts, Harborne Golf Club on Wednesday, July 8. I can assure you it is a lovely track, so get your entries in to Gary as soon as possible. The demand, I’m sure will be great. Jim, best be getting that whip out mate.

And finally, a monumental thank you to this month’s calendar page sponsor; Turner Grounds care: www.turnergroundscare.co.uk

Please consider them for your machinery requirements by calling one of the boys: Kev Pugh, David Shepherd or Rob page (please don’t throw your dollop out of the pram Rob).

Well that’s all folks

Sean McCadde

Section Notes
Please email your notes to melissa@bigga.co.uk by the 5th of the month

East of England

Hello all. Summer is well and truly here and brings with it the usual headaches we all have grown to expect. April was a strange month with 13mm of rain in total and temperatures ranging from 0 to 20 degrees. At least all these fluctuations have slowed down the usual spring flush of growth, the rough is only growing at half an inch per day, instead of one! The dry spell hasn’t helped fantastic quick recovery from mid-April greens renovation work, but everything is slowly coming along thanks to the help of “artificial rain”!

“The hottest driest summer on record beckons” I hear you all say. I leave you with this thought, in 2007 we had 5mm of rain in April, followed by 331mm in June, don’t get too excited just yet! Our first Section golf day of the year was held on April 22 at Toft Golf Club. A good turnout enjoyed good weather and an excellently presented course. The winning greenkeeper on the day was Rob Bemmert with 38 points and the winning trade member was Gary Cooper, also with 38 points. Longest Drive was won by Rob Bemmert and Nearest the Pin was won by Tim Harris. Congratulations to all.

Many thanks go to all at Toft Golf Club for making us feel so welcome and providing excellent facilities throughout the day. Thanks also go to Gavin Merison and Colliers for sponsoring the day.

Our June golf day is at Kenwick Park Golf Club on Thurs, June 25. Tee off is 1:30 but arrive early for coffee and bacon rolls. Full details will be sent to you soon.

Many thanks Steve Beverley, Immingham Golf Club steevimmingham@aol.com www.castofenglandbigga.com

Berks/Bucks & Oxon

Golf! A full house! As the best of the BBQ took on a pure delight in the heart of the Cotswolds and a fantastic venue to start the season at Burford GC, which was host to the Spring National Qualifier Competition on April 30. Burford GC, designed by J.H. Turner, the then professional at Frilford Heath GC, opened for play in May of 1936 and since then has many a fascinating tale of history to date.

The course found instant success but with the outbreak of the Second World War saw part of the course ploughed up for cereal production to aid the war effort and was eventually restored in 1949. The farmer who had cultivated and reaped the harvest during that time presented the club with Harvest Cup, which is competed for annually, and I can assure you all that contravene action has certainly ended at Burford.

This beautiful course masked by trees that lined the fairways with astute bunkering around some of the greens offered us a challenging start to the golfing season, on perfectly manicured surfaces that provided us with a stiff challenge which was reflected in our scorecards.

The results were as follows: winner of The Claret Jug in 1. Ross Cook, Blue Mountain GC; 2. Shaw Engling, Blue Mountain GC; 3. David Jones, Tadmarten Heath GC; 4. Nick Carrissi, Hennerton GC; 5. Barry Holt, Burford GC, 6. Mike Johnson, Henley GC, and Steve Austen, winning on countback with 106 on his card for the Longest Walk.

Barry Holt has qualified for the National Championship with a gross score of 75 - well done Barry!

Richard Fortmuller took the trade prize with a fantastic one under gross to show us all how it could be done even with the Pink Lady balls which he borrowed from Adam King.

To our main sponsor of the day, Tim Webb, from Tacit, and all the other trade which included Greensman, ETT, Sport Equipment, Terralift, Gem, Rigby Taylor and Jon Beck for organising the halfway hut with his usual flair.

A big thank you to Burford GC for the courtesy of the course and Jonathan and Jose from the catering department for their gastronomic delights, which were well received, and to Course Manager, Barry Holt, and his staff for ensuring the course was as ever prepared and manicured to a first class standard.

Managing Secretary, Robin Thompson, for arranging courtesy and co-ordinating the day, which proved to be a great success.

Our next event is the summer tournament on June 18 at Oak land Park GC, where you will have the chance to meet John Pemberton, Chief Executive of BIGGA, who will be making his way down from head office in Yorkshire to attend the day, please make a date in your calendar for this event and check: bbogreenkeepers.co.uk for all the latest updates.

The Annual Rigby Taylor Match play knockout will now be well underway and the organiser, Gareth Acteson, will always be on hand to see that things run smoothly with results of the early rounds to be published in next month’s report. Gareth can be contacted on: 07734 856 924.

Adam King, the Section Secretary, has worked hard to ensure that events run smoothly and are organised to a high standard, so please show your appreciation by sending in your cheques on time for the next golf day, news, as ever, has slowly been dribbling in from far and wide over the three counties and if any member has any views they would like to share, or would like more information about the section and forthcoming events, please contact Adam King at: bbogreenkeepers.co.uk

Mark Day
markday@tacitgolf.co.uk

Mid-Anglia

As I write this report it is well and truly springtime and personally, I can’t think of anywhere else I would rather be at this time of year. The cold, wet, dark days of winter are long gone, there has already been some nice weather, the evenings are staying lighter and the golf courses are literally bursting into life. And there is always the anticipation that, this year, summer is going to be glorious.

It always amazes me how so many golfers have such short memories about what conditions in spring can be like and
I hope sincerely that not too many of you have had the usual annual discussions/moans about uneven growth and the dreaded “Augusta” factor. By the time you have read this it will no doubt have been long forgotten, until spring next year.

Our spring competition and annual qualifier for the National Championship was held at Hatfield London Club and spring had most definitely sprung there too. The weather was absolutely fantastic for the healthy contingent of Mid-Anglian golfers and the presentation of the golf course positively surpassed the weather. Congratulations to Craig Gist Drive went to Rob Catlin, dedicated team for presenting us with a truly superb course.

The day was generously sponsored by Darren Mugford of Rigby Taylor who was side lined through injury, hang those boots up mate! It was also Dar- ren’s first day back to work after taking some paternal leave for the birth of the second of his two children, James. Many congratulations to you and your family.

Onto the results, in first place with 39 pts was Steve “Gringo” Mason, of Stocks GC; Gerald Bruce, from Berkhamsted GC, was second with 36 pts and in third on 35 pts was Olle Brown- ing, also from Stocks GC. Long- est Drive went to Rob Catlin, from Pareto, and Nearest the Pin went to Woburn GC’s Pete Rutti. Yours truly won the trade prize, even a blind dog stumbles across a bone every now and then.

Very many thanks to Hatfield London Club for hosting us, not only was the golf course excel- lent, but the hospitality and generosity afforded to us was equally admirable. The sauna and Japanese baths are not to be missed.

Thanks also to the usual trade suspects for supporting the day, it is very much appreciated.

The next meeting is yet to be confirmed but is likely to be at Knebworth GC in July/ August. Mid-Herts GC host us in the autumn on October 7 and we go to John O’Gaunt GC in December for the Turley Trot. If you or your staff are interested in participating in any courses or training programs, please contact Gerald @ Berkhamsted GC to enquire further. There is quite often funding available and if not already catered for, special training/courses can be arranged. Craig Spooner
craig.spooner@limagrain.co.uk

South East Region

Surrey

Sunday May 3. I am once again using my conservatory as an office in which to write this month’s communiqué and the rain, although not expected according to the weather forecast, is pounding on the polycarbonate roof, interrupting my train of thought and will, if I’m not careful, turn my usual words of wisdom into rubbish.

So what’s new? I hear you ask after reading my previous attempts at satire and humour. Well, I’ll tell you what’s new and you all will appreciate the predicament in which I now find myself. I have been appointed, by her indoors, to investigate, choose and book this year’s holiday. May I have brought this on myself, by not in the past, fully appreciating the difficulties involved in choosing a holiday and by my making the smallest of complaints about the resort, the food, the room and the weather, I am now well and truly in it up to my neck. Initially I accepted the responsibility with open arms expecting some bright and new ideas to flood to my assistance. I have kept reading weekly travel articles in the Saturday papers hoping to find that holiday of a lifetime but nothing has stirred my Joins until Mexico. So it’s not difficult, with all the latest about swine flu, to understand why its back, this coming week, to the good old Isle of Wight. Full details will follow next month.

Did you know that the Mini is 50 years old on May 8 2009. The first production model came off the line at Cowley, Oxfordshire in 1959 and had the registration number A621 AOK. I was seve- nteen when I had my first car, a Mini, reg no 9814 PF. It was light blue and rocketed with its 850cc engine from 0 to 60mph eventually. Happy birthday Mini and any greenkeeper who has the same birthday will win a surprise birthday present if they text me with the details.

It’s now 5.45pm and time to close this month’s copy but please remember that I only have pity for those who have managed to finish this article and only respect for those who didn’t start it.

Brian Willmott
07879474038

Kent

Hi Guys. I haven’t got any news for you this month unfor- tunately so this is going to be very brief!

By now, with summer in full swing and hoards of golfers adorning our pristine fairways, we have all, hopefully, put all thoughts of the long, wet winter behind us. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of the economic climate and I know some courses are struggling for revenue. I hope you are all able to ride out the storm soon and be back stronger as a result.

As a slight diversification from the norm, at Birchwood we have instigated an environmental plan to try and encourage some more indigenous species to breed and flourish in specially created habitats. Not only does this benefit the golfers as they get to see more of a natural envi- ronment, it also raises the profile of the course within the community. Being environmentally friendly (and having evidence to back up any such claim) is essential, especially at this time of year when we are perceived to be the devil incarnate as we lavish copious amounts of water onto our courses. Anything we can do to promote our roles as professional custodians of the land being prudent with the natural resources could prove to be an invaluable tool when times get tough. After all, less than 10 percent of the population plays golf so the non-golfing majority has a right to know that a golf course will be a good neighbour.

Anyway, as I said earlier I haven’t got any news for you this month but I look forward to seeing you all in a couple of weeks at Lullingstone Park. Results to follow next month.

Thanks to Tacit and Turfcare Solutions for recently coming on board as sponsors for our section. Please call me with any info you want included in this column.

Enjoy the summer while it lasts!
Best of British
Rob Holland
07843 410755
kentgreenkeepers.co.uk

Essex

The Committee wishes to inform the Section that Don Clark has decided to stand down from the position of Chair- man. His hard work was very much appreciated and we wish to thank him for all he did for the Section, over his years as Chair- man. The position will be up for nomination at the next AGM in December. We have decided that as a committee we will continue over the next months up until the AGM, when all officers will be up for re-election.

Hot news in Essex at the moment is, that there has been a spate of break-ins at local clubs. The equipment being taken seems on the whole to be small hand machinery, but loosing half a dozen or so of these can cost you £3-5,000. Clubs that have been hit include, The Essex, Gosfield Lake, Maldon and Three Rivers. Maldon Golf Club having been hit twice in one month, Police investigations continue.

The Essex Spring Trophy Golf Day was held at Colne Valley Golf Club, on Wednesday, May 13. We would like to thank Tom Smith and his Mother for the great day that they put on for us. Although we could have done without Gods watering system, coming on over the whole course for most of the time we were out playing. The most annoying thing is that only a mile or so, south of us, they had none at all. C’est la vie.

Thanks to Tom and his green- keeping staff for presenting the course in such a fine state, (the greens were very deceptive) and to the catering staff for the fine spread that was put on after the golf. The Vice Captain, Mr Tony
BIgga national championship
Trophy plus entrance to the
club 34 points. 1.1 Tom smith,
50

I'm told.
and played a mean round of golf
also joined us out on the course
Beadle, presented the prizes, for
around the green
Products, Bailey's of norfolk
Ltd, Blade amenity Ltd, cMW
last year: avoncrop amenity
are on the website. They join
lier Turf care, ernest Doe, gM
equipment company Ltd, col-
Mats uK - grasshopper Hor-
since then. Trade Prize, Joe cooper,
"s turf care, you will also be sending them both
they are on the website and we
so look out for the entry forms,
neat quote went to Tom Smith.
17th.
Your next golf day is Tuesday,
June 23, at Burnham-on-
Crouch Golf Club, and is nearly
due. This is the summer trophy,


We have some new sponsors
in our section for 2009: Golf
Mats UK - Grasshopper Hor-
icultural - Limagrain UK and
ey farm Systems, full details
are on our website. They join
the following sponsors from last
year: Avoncrop Amenity
Products, Bailey's of nOrkFolK
Ltd, Banks Amenity Products
Ltd, Blade Amenity Ltd, CMW
Equipment Company Ltd, Col-
lier Turf Care, ernest doe, GM
amenity, Headland Amenity
Products, LiquiTecTM Fieldfare
amenity, Prime Irrigation Ltd,
Right Turf Care, P. Tucker Ltd,
Vitax and Writtle College.
We would like to welcome the
new sponsors and old ones alike
to our Section and thank them
for their support.
We have all the up to date news
on our website, keep watching
the site. It's a great way of finding
out what's happening around
the section.
The new picture gallery shows
what a great day we had at Colne
Valley and we will continue
to keep the gallery's updated
throughout the year.
Any information for inclusion
on this page or on our website
should be sent to me at essex-
bigga@talktalk.net or on 07764-
862 337. Also look us up. www.
essexbigga.co.uk
Arnold Phipps-Jones
Press Officer

South West & Wales

1.1 Joe cooper, Milton abbey
gc, 65pts; 1.2 alan Magee,
Remedy Oak gc, 64pts; 1.3
Kevan Glass, Brokenhurst gc,
61pts. 2.1 Chris bitten, Stone-
ham gc, 61pts; Paul cooper,
Parkstone gc, 60pts; Steve Christo-
pher, Barton on sea gc, 56pts;
Overall winner of chalky
White Trophy, Joe cooper,
65pts; Nearest the Pin, Chris
Bitten, Longest Drive, Chris
Bitten. Thanks to the sponsors
Avoncrop & Parkstone gc for
allowing you all to play.
Well hello to you all at what is
now a very busy time for all of
us! We at Andover Golf Club is
playing catch up after holidays
and bank holidays. How many
of you were caught with disease
in your greens this winter? I for
one can't remember it so bad
but we are now recovering.
I must remind you all about
the The Isle of Wight meeting on
October 1, it will be sponsored
by our Section - therefore the
golf and food will be free, all you
have to do is get there, by ferry
or fly!
Until next month
Chris sturges