The new Toro GrandStand™ stand on mower from Hayter offers a cross between the Mid Size walk behinds and the ride on zero turn mowers. Available with a 122cm Turbo Force side discharge deck and powered by a 19hp Kawasaki V Twin engine, the GrandStand™ is fast, highly manoeuvrable and compact, offering improved visibility and greater productivity. The exceptional visibility of the GrandStand protects the operator, the mower and the property as the operator is better able to steer clear of obstacles, move under overhanging branches and identify changes in terrain. The GrandStand™ also provides excellent operator comfort with a suspension platform reducing fatigue and increasing productivity. The suspension is self compensating for operators of different sizes. All controls are within easy reach to prevent constant stretching and straining. The flip up platform converts the stand-on to a walk behind for maximum versatility.

www.hayter.co.uk

STIHL has introduced two new cordless hedge trimmers to the market. The STIHL HSA 65 and HSA 85 hedge trimmers may be cordless but they deliver the same standards of performance and build as STIHL’s petrol driven models. Powered by a 36 V lithium ion battery pack, the new hedge trimmers’ quality, high speed blades ensure a swift and clean cut and the trimmers’ relative low noise will make them particularly popular for use in public and noise sensitive environments.

Petrol powered machines provide mobility, but they can not be described as low noise. Electric hedge trimmers are quieter, but the power cable restricts their versatility and reach.

www.stihl.co.uk

Rigby Taylor’s new fungicide Eland has chemical properties which allows it to bind tightly to the waxy cuticle when applied to the leaf’s upper surface. Its local systemic properties allow the active ingredient pyraclostrobin to move through the leaf and control the disease on its lower surface. This provides dual protection as it protects both sides of the leaf regardless of which side it is applied.

Eland is very fast acting and is effective within minutes of being applied and rainfast within an hour of application. The product also offers a unique benefit in that treatments stimulate an increase in the plants capacity to convert nitrate to nitrite in the leaf resulting in the treated turf exhibiting an enhanced healthy green colour is formulated as a water dispersible granule and supplied in 250 gram bottles, enough to treat 2,000 square metres.

www.rigbytaylor.com
Etesia’s new Attila SKF 85cm brushcutter has a totally different ‘look’ to previous machines in the Attila range. Designed for clearing the thickest of brambles, bracken, saplings and dense undergrowth, this latest ride-on cuts its way through virtually everything in its path, reducing overgrown vegetation to mulch.

A 15hp Kawasaki engine provides plenty of power in tough conditions. Variable speed is up to 10km/h in forward and 7.5km/h in reverse with an overall maximum output of 8500m²/h. Hydrostatic transmission gives instant drive control, so speed can be adjusted by hand or foot controls according to site conditions and, when necessary, allow the cutting unit time to process large volumes of material, thus reducing the risk of blockages.

Etesia has also incorporated cruise control – a feature which has not been used on previous models. Ergonomic design includes adjustable suspension seat with good all-round visibility. All controls are positioned within easy reach of the driver. Soft-grip steering wheel with guiding knob puts the user in total control.

www.Etesia.co.uk

INNOVATIVE JCB TELEHANDLER OFFERS NEW SOLUTION FOR HORTICULTURE

THE SMALLEST Loadall telescopic handler model ever produced by JCB is the result of a design innovation which has reduced the machine height to less than two metres.

The machine is 1.8m high, 2.97m long and weighs less than 3.5 tonnes. Delivering powerful performance despite these compact dimensions, the Miniscopic will bring the benefits of JCB’s Loadall range to previously inaccessible applications.

To achieve the lowest possible working height, JCB has an off-set, single-spine chassis with the machine’s cab then occupying the resulting space.

www.jcb.com

www.kawpowr.com
ATV PRODUCTS RELEASED

Broadwood International, manufacturer and distributor of Wessex products, has launched 12 new products specifically designed for the ATV market.

The new Wessex products include a five-strong line-up of trailers, incorporating a dedicated livestock trailer, a road-legal trailer for transporting ATV’s, high- and low-sided trailers, and a tipping trailer that has a high tipping profile – so no shovelling out the last part of the load. Another useful feature, particularly when one bears in mind the rough terrain these products are used on, is that all the Wessex ATV trailers are fitted with bolt-on stub axles, minimising the cost of having to repair a bent axle.

Email: sales@broadwoodintl.co.uk

RANSOMES JACOBSEN LAUNCH NEW FINE CUT ROTARY MOWER

Ransomes Jacobsen has launched the Jacobsen AR-522 fine cut rotary mower. Specifically designed for maintaining greens and tees surrounds and intermediate areas of rough, the five-deck rotary features the new Jacobsen TrimTek™ cutting decks.

Design of the new deck features a downdraft blade that keeps the clippings suspended longer for exceptional mulching results. Three-tiered discharge openings distribute clippings more evenly for a superior after-cut appearance. The volume of each individual deck has been increased by 26% allowing the AR-522 to cut in the most severe conditions.

It also boasts excellent traction capability and features superb horsepower per width of cut.

The chassis and operating platform are the same as the Jacobsen LF fairway mowers, so commonality of parts reduces the need to stock multiple spares. The control system ensures that the machine starts at the correct glow plug temperature, prevents driving with the parking brake engaged and shuts of the decks should the mower overheat.

Email: sales@broadwoodintl.co.uk
Fancy improving your IT skills?

BIGGA members can access an official Microsoft® Office 2003 Training Library that includes programs such as Excel, Word, PowerPoint and Outlook.

BIGGA are able to offer these practical and effective online courses at a discounted cost of £15 (+ VAT) (usually £20 + VAT) to BIGGA Members thanks to support from the Learning and Development Fund. For further information contact the Learning and Development Department on 01347 833800 option 3.

Microsoft Office 2007 training is also available on request.
Scottish Region

Central

The Section held a very enjoyable outing at Crieff GC on Sept 17. The course was presented in excellent condition by Charlie MacDonald and his staff and for once this year the weather was kind to us, it was just unfortunate that the turnout was poor with only 17 greenkeepers in a total of 34 attendees.

Principal prize winners were, Best Scratch David Simpson, Crieff. Best Nett, Paul Murphy, Downfield. Best Nett, Class 1, Sandy Reid, Carnoustie,. Best Nett, Class 2, Gordon McKe, St Andrews. Best Nett, Spring and Autumn combined, G. McKie, St Andrews. For the full list of prizewinners, check out the website www.biggacentralsection.org.uk

The golfing season is over for another year so I hope the weather is kind to us all as we spend the next few months, repairing the damage done this year and preparing for next season. It always amazes me when golfers think that this is our quiet time when it is anything but.

At St Andrews the winter is always our busiest time with all the renovations and winter projects or improvements going on, even more so this winter as we complete final preparations for The Open next July.

Gordon Moir

Ayrshire

Glorious sunshine and blue skies greeted the 36 participants at our Autumn Outing held at Powfoot GC, on Thursday October 1. There were some excellent scores returned over the well presented and scenic course! Our thanks to Course Manager and Club Champion, Neil Hamilton, and his team for the superb condition of the course. Likewise to Club Captain, Dr. Liam Kiernan, and the Committee for allowing us the day and to the catering staff who looked after us well and provided some excellent fare!

On behalf of the Ayrshire Section I would also like to express our appreciation to the Patrons and trade reps for their continued support through difficult financial times.

Scottish National Chairman, John Geddes made the journey down from the North of Scotland to attend the event. John helped with the prize-giving and ably assisted Iain Barr with the scorecards, which was a caper in itself. Think we’ll need a 10 minute briefing and maths lesson before some are let loose at the next outing.

On to the results for the day then;


Special mention to Stephen Higgins for getting his name on the illustrious Harry Diamond Jug for the second time with scores of 42 & 37 points respectively. Well done Stephen!

We had a great day down at Powfoot thanks in part to a good turnout from guys travelling over two hours each way in a lot of cases! So just a quick note of appreciation -Thanks!

Friday, September 11 saw 11 brave souls set sail for the Emerald Isle where we were confronted by a well practiced and unfairly sober team of County Down golfers. The weather was perfect and the course at Royal Belfast, in immaculate condition, as we battled to keep possession of the Shield. Unfortunately it wasn’t to be as we lost by a half point, 3pts - 2 1/2.

County Down Captain, Jamie McCune, reclaimed the spoils and thanked the Club and Course Manager for the use of the course and facilities.

As usual the match was played in good spirit and we all enjoyed meeting up once again.

Thanks to all the lads who made it such a great day and especially Terry Crawford for the arrangements for the weekend’s golf and pub crawl (stagger?).

Our sincere thanks to Terry, and Clandeboye Golf Club, for allowing us to play the Ava Course on the Saturday and to enjoy the fine facilities. The food and drink were excellent and friendliness of the staff much appreciated.

Willie McMeiken, Turnberry, and Garry Ross, Royal Troon, have been chosen as the Patron’s Award winners for this year and will receive a copy of Jim Arthur’s book as well as the EDUCATIONAL! trip to Harr-rogate.

It was decided at the last Scottish board meeting to suspend the annual Patrons’ Award Lunch for the time being, which is usually held in December. This action was taken in light of the current economic climate, with the hope being to direct contributions toward educational opportunities.

That’s all for now folks!

Any news to denis.t@hotmail.co.uk or 07939 104701

Cheers!

Denis Tweddle
We were very privileged to play the golf course, that has graced many big tournaments and royals over the years.

A total of 32 members attended, but with the weather closing in and the rain and dull day, only the hardy ventured out into the unknown....... All did make it back, as the lights of the “Grand” Royal Burgess club house was like a beacon for the lost souls who braved the day.

We were lucky our group was playing behind our Secretary, Stuart Ferguson, who showed the way for us as he donned a brightly coloured jacket, which guided us home.

All the Winners from The Autumn Outing

Scratch: Dean Muir, Muirfield, 72 gross.
1st Class: Tom Murray, Ratho Park, 73 nett. 2. Bill Lyon, Muirfield 75 nett. 2nd Class: Jamie Donnet Murrayfield 87 nett; 2. John Geddes, Ellon, 88 nett. 3rd Class: George Oliver, Murrayfield, 78 nett; 2. Gary Mckenna, Baberton, 83 nett; Veterans. Alister Holmes, Seahouses, 76 nett; Patrons’: Hugh Fraser, Huxley Golf, 69 nett; Patrons’. Veterans. Alister Holmes, Seahouses, 76 nett; Patrons’: Hugh Fraser, Huxley Golf, 69 nett; Patrons’: Hugh Fraser, Huxley Golf, 69 nett; Patrons’.

The autumn tournament took place on October 1, at Eaton Golf Club, with a happy field of players taking advantage of really well running greens and a beautiful course in exceptional weather.

The results are as follows: 1. Johnny Evans, Carden Park, 36 pts; 2. Iwan Jones, Eaton GC, 35 pts (home advantage there I think); 3. Paul Gator, of our next host course, Caldy GC, with a happy field of players taking advantage of really well running greens and a beautiful course in exceptional weather.

The results are as follows: 1. Johnny Evans, Carden Park, 36 pts; 2. Iwan Jones, Eaton GC, 35 pts; 3. Robert Parry, of our next host course, Caldy GC, with 34 pts; 4. Steven Roberts, of Flint GC with 32 pts. Best guests were 1. Alex Kegg, 39 pts (away from our Section); 2. Paul Gator, of our next host course, Caldy GC, with 34 pts; 3. Robert Parry, of Flint GC with 32 pts. Best guests were 1. Alex Kegg, 39 pts; 2. Iwan Jones, Eaton GC, 35 pts (home advantage there I think); 3. Paul Gator, of our next host course, Caldy GC, with 34 pts; 4. Steven Roberts, of Flint GC with 32 pts. Best guests were 1. Alex Kegg, 39 pts; 2. Iwan Jones, Eaton GC, 35 pts; 3. Robert Parry, 34 pts. Trade prize went to Section Chairman, and everyone’s friend, Terry Adamson. Nearest the Pin prizes went to Johnny Evans on the 11th green and Deinid Gilgud please excuse me if I've got the name wrong I was writing this down over a very crackly phone line) on the 17th green.

We need to thank Gavin Clarke and his team for providing with such a magnificently kept course and the clubhouse staff for their warm welcome and the scrumptious food. As a thank you the Section donated £50 to the Captain’s Charity.

Northern Wales

November already where does the time go! Best wishes go to any course that’s holding a firework display we looked into the legal side of it and you need to start writing the hundreds of pages of risk assessments in May to get them done in time.

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We need to thank Gavin Clarke and his team for providing with such a magnificently kept course and the clubhouse staff for their warm welcome and the scrumptious food. As a thank you the Section donated £50 to the Captain’s Charity. As previously mentioned the Christmas tournament is taking place at Caldy Golf Club on November 2,6 the format is a four person team with a shotgun start at 10.30. This competition is always well attended so get your entry slips in early.

In local news Peter Maybury, of Vale of Llangollen Golf Club, and his wife, Caroline, celebrate their 20th wedding anniversary on the 18th of this month and I would like to thank her for the 20 mostly happy years we’ve spent together. That’s about it so, All the best until next month.

Hello again everyone, We have finally reached the end of the season and will now be well into our winter programmes. I hope that everyone had a very successful season and despite the difficult economic times still provided excellent golf.

Our last competition was held at Sherwood Forest GC. I am sure everyone who attended would agree what a fantastic day we had. I would like to thank Kim and his staff for providing a wonderful course for us to play, it was a real pleasure. Thanks also to Glenn Sawyer, from Golf and Turf Machinery, for sponsoring the day and providing a fantastic prize table once again. The only disappointing thing to come from the day was the poor attendance of greenkeepers. I have heard a few things from reps on this matter and you do not have to attend lectures to be entitled to play golf. Please support your Section.

The results are as follows: 1. Simon Dye, 39pts, Hcp 5; 2. K. Aston, 38pts, Hcp 13; 3. R. Jones, 34pts, Hcp +1; Trade P. Fell, 35pts, Hcp 13.

The National Championship was held in early October and our Section had three representatives. Thank you to S. Dye, A. Unwin and R. Jones for representing the Section. Congratulations to Richard who finished the list.
second. Well done, Richard.

One of our members has decided to put greening to one side for a while and is going on the trip of a lifetime. James Whelan, from Rotherham GC, is going travelling to Borneo for three months. Good luck, James and have a fantastic time.

Finally, our Christmas golf will be held at Rotherham GC on November 30. I hope to see many of you there. It will also be the AGM on the day as well. Hope you all have a good month and I will speak you in December.

James Stevens

Midland Region

Midland

Well I hope that by the time you read these notes that the majority of the downside of my favourite season has been cleaned up, the leaves. With that in mind please consider this month’s calendar sponsor Abbey Mowers for your machinery requirements; www.abbeymowers.co.uk <http://www.abbeymowers.co.uk/.

Also I would like to mention that Bob Plsibury/Mr Toro has eventually(65+) decided to retire. Bob worked at Abbey Mowers for the last 11 years and thoroughly enjoyed promoting his many babies, as he had done so for 40 years. A leaving party was held for Bob at a local pub and Pete Mansfield, of Toro Lely, made a surprise visit and presented him with a selection of cut crystal. Mike Shaw also made a presentation and thanked him for his years of excellent service. From both the folks at Abbey Mowers and the Midland Section we wish you a long and fruitful retirement. Be careful on that Velocette, we don’t want you falling off again Dick!

Over many a year we have been blessed with the superb courses that have been gracious enough to afford our tournaments. Yet again our Comp Sec has delivered beyond the call of duty. Such being on 4th December our Christmas event at Woburn, no less, entry being the princely sum of £30! You had better be quick to get your entrees into Gary if you have not already done so. I would give my right arm to play there. Unfortunately my left hand may well be recovering from the knife. It’s better than having claws though.

And now for the long awaited result of the Scots Doubles event. The finalists were Richard Beacham & Gary Turner pitted against Ed Stant & Paul Woodham, the final winners being Paul & Ed after a contest that does not reflect the score of 66/4. The course was of course superb, and a special thank to Nia Frost for taking the time to represent Scots while on maternity leave. Good luck with that Nia. Also thanks to Nigel Tyler and Rhys Thomas for driving the contestants (well one could not expect Nia to travel so far when pregnant. There is still chivalry in our modern world). Our thanks to Scots for their continued support of this long running event. So the question is who will be victorious next year? p.s. and surprisingly it was very windy on the day, really! What’s this I hear, Gary, tweeting like a birdie, must be in love. Believe it or not, the boys at Harbourne will testify. Been there, done it. Wind swept Mac. Sean McDaed

East Midlands

Hi All

The final of the inaugural Headland Pairs comp was played at The Grove in Hertfordshire during September; this was won by my partner – Paul Frith and I, one up against Glyn Buckby and Simon Banks. A fantastic day was had by all and here’s hoping to an even better competition next year.

By the time you read this the Autumn comp and AGM will have taken place on October 15 at Matlock GC, let’s hope this unseasonally good weather continues a bit longer!

Hot off the press – yesterday the annual East Mids vs Midlands match was played – sponsored by Rigby Taylor; at Trentham Park GC. The East Mids won by a score of 9 – 6. I think that makes it five years in a row the East Mids have been victorious – better luck next year guys! The day was played in great spirits – as always by both sides and thanks has to go to Trentham Park and their Course Manager, Gary Cunningham, for the superb condition of the course.

Places in our Autumn Education day are filling up fast although at the time of writing there are still some available. The speakers during the day are Greg Evans, Paul Lowe, Frank Newberry and Andy Cole, of the STRI. For anyone interested please get in touch with myself ASAP on the e-mail below.

You should have all had a letter for the Christmas tournament by now to be played at Woburn Park on December 8; we look forward to seeing you all there.

As always I can be contacted at biggeasteamidislands@hotmail.com with any news or information.

Thanks for now.

Andy de Wet

Mid-Anglia

Earlier this year the Section ran several educational courses for the benefit of our members. Eight guys achieved their certificates in Cross Cutting and Maintenance of Trees. Four chaps completed the Felling of Small Trees course and a further eight people qualified as First Aiders after their four day course. Funding is available again this year and next although no courses have been arranged thus far. If you are interested in First Aid, Spraying, Tree Maintenance or anything else that would be of use to you or your staff then please contact Gerald Bruce at Berkhamsden Golf Club.

Don’t forget to get your entries in for the Turkey Trot at John O’Gaunt Golf Club on December 7 where we will be playing the Carthagina Course. Please let Richard Saunders know as soon as possible as to whether you will be playing because it is always a very popular event and Richard would not like to have to disappoint you.

We are already looking for venues for next year and I will let you have the details as soon as venues/dates are confirmed.

Next month I hope to bring you the report from Mid-Herts GC, The National Tournament and a summary of our AGM. In the meantime, if you have any news, suggestions or thoughts please e-mail me at the address below.

Craig Spooner
craig.spooner@limagrain.co.uk

South West and South Wales Region

South Wales

Hi Everyone! Hope you are all well.

Well! What a difference a month makes! Following all that rain we then had the driest September for 12 years! All this gave Turf Managers the chance to do some well needed autumn renovation. So I’m sure your Sisis Auto Turfman had plenty of use and liberal amounts of Fisons Greenkeeper 2 was applied. Though I’m sure things may have changed since I was a Greenkeeper!

First the result of the match between the Greenkeepers and Secretaries, which was held at Neath GC. The course was presented in superb condition which was a credit to HGK (and Section Secretary) Steve Chappell and his staff. In a closely fought contest The Greenkeepers emerged victorious, winning 4 - 2 to retain the CWC Shield. The victorious team were: Andy Roach (Capt), Darryl Jones (Vice), RhysNorville, Stuart Ross, Emyr Nickels, Gary Humphries, Gareth Knight, Colin Thomas, Clive Moran, James Cuell, Steve Chappell.

Thanks go out to: Alan Abel, Complete Weed Control, for his continued support of this annual match and for his hospitality at the bar and for providing wine with the meal and the whiskey for the N-T-P and L/Drive. Thanks to Neath Golf Club for the use of the facilities; Thanks to Wesley and Judith for providing really good three course meal enjoyed by all; Thanks to the GCMA for their company during the day and their continued efforts in...
Around The Green

the matches against us. Green-keepering team at Neath: John Amos, Jason Davies, Meurig Lewis, Kerry (best mechanic in the Rhondda) Lewis.

Nearest the pin winners: Simon Buddville (Sec’s); Bruce Nickalas (Sec’s); John Sulley (Sec’s); James Cuell (G/Keepers); Longest Drive: James Cueil (G/Keepers)

So well done the our lads and commiserations to the Secretaries. My advice to the Secs is to get some practice in! Not during work hours though!

RT Matchplay news now, and, at the time of writing I have been informed that Paul Handy and Rhys Norville recently beat the seemingly invincible duo of Gary Humphries and Rhys McDonagh to reach the final at 10B. Upon hearing this news 10B police, the local Indian restaurants and hotels breathed a sigh of relief. The local pubs however saw a potential bumper night fly out the window! The other semi final between Mark Wilshire/ Mark Anderton v Daryl Bray/ Leigh Davies has yet to be played but could see an all Newport GC final. It could turn nasty!

Talking about Newport GC, a big well done to Rhys Norville, who recently won The Toro Student Greenkeeper Of The Year Award. This is a great achievement and it’s the first time that anyone from the Section has won this award. He’s a talented golfer too! It’s not fair! Well done, Rhys! I’m sure this award will stand you in good stead for the future.

Still on the subject of awards, if you remember, I mentioned that Dan Duffy, Head Groundsman at The Liberty Stadium, had recently won Champion-ship Groundsmen of the Year award, as awarded by the FA. Well, He topped that by being voted IOG Groundsmen Of The Year, at Saltex, in September. So, you guys are well for Dan and thoroughly deserved. Shame about the teams that play there! Only joking!

On the trade front I would like to congratulate Peter Lacey, for joining Farmura Environmental and taking over from Gerald (The Great) Orme as their Technical Manager for South Wales.

So Peter, or can we now call you ‘Porthcawl Pete’? I think I can speak ferrosol when I say ‘all the best’ in your new job. I’m sure you will be a revolution!

Finally, if for some strange reason you were at the recent Scarlets v Munster game at Parc Y Scarlets, then no you weren’t seeing things. It really was me cutting the pitch with a pedestrian rotary mower at the end of the game, closely (well not too closely) followed by three RT Reps. We all started at the same time but I think Peter and his mates must have been enjoying too many pastries at their numerous sales meetings recently and I ended up opening a commanding, if slightly squiffy lead! I was absolutely cream crackered at the end though. The things we do for a free seat!

That’s all for now. A report on the Autumn Golf Meeting and AGM at Southerndown GC will appear in next month’s Around The Green.

Anything that you would like mentioned in this column, you know, weddings, funerals, bar mitzvahs, hilarious mishaps then please contact me on: celticser@aol.com 07831 168645 Ceri Richards

South Coast

Welcome to the November Around the Green, your committee have decided to spice things up a little in the form of each committee member taking a turn at guest writing this column over the coming months starting with yours truly. So go easy on us, as we are all new to this journalism lark.

At the last committee meeting it was decided due to the continual drop in numbers for our golf outings that we will return to the old system of mailing out an application form to each individual member, rather than the e-mails which seems to have been a bit hit & miss. There is a considerable cost to this but it was felt if we can increase numbers at the outings then it would be money well spent.

On the application form we are asking for monies to be paid in advance of the event this is to help the committee with confirmed numbers and reducing the need to handle lots of cash on the day (remember it’s the tournament convenors’ day out as well). We hope you will assist us with this.

We are considering setting up a system for payment through Internet banking as well as cheques. Your thoughts on whether this would be of use to you would be appreciated.

Autumn Outing. On Thursday, October 1, the Section held our autumn outing at Shanklin & Sandown GC, on the Isle of Wight. All who attended had a fantastic day and many thanks must go to Course Manager, Paul Knight, and his staff for the excellent condition of the course and also to the Captain and Council for allowing us the courtesy of the course.

Our thanks also to our spon-sors of the day Avoncrop Ame-nity and Rigby Taylor these days would be so much harder to organise without your continued support, and a special thanks to Dave Rogers for looking after all of our ferry crossing.

Again our numbers were very low and as this day was free as previously advertised the com-mittee really are stumped as to how we can get the numbers up, so if you have any ideas please let us know.


Nearest the Pin. Joe Cooper.
Longest Drive. Ian Noble.

Your AGM was held on the same day, there were no changes to the committee and the main topics discussed are the ones mentioned already in these notes.

Here at Remedy Oak we have just completed our hollow-coring, overseeding and top-dressing programme, I, am grateful that August and September have been so much better weather wise I would have hated to go into Autumn with the conditions we saw in July.

Saying that, I cannot remember a season with so much pests and disease around we have had the lot with dollar spot being a huge problem on lawns, and I know from speaking to other guys some off you have suffered from anthracnose on greens. Bad enough in winter or early spring but attacks during the summer is pretty tough going.

Typical that we get all these attacks in a year when we are all trying to trim costs and now we are having to use more chemicals than normal to tackle the problem. I don’t know what the answer is but somehow our industry needs to find a way of narrowing the gap in costs between the chemicals we use and their equivalent within agriculture.

Things on the education front are quiet at the moment but I do know Sparsholt College recently held an awards evening for the latest group of Greenkeepers to qualify to NVQ Level II, so congratu-lations to all of you.

If any one has queries or prob-lems you think the Section can help you with or should know about give me a ring or e-mail on the details below and we will try and help.

Next month’s guest columnist is Phil “Joe” Cooper, from Milton Abbey School, so if you have anything of interest or thoughts on what I have talked about in these notes please give me a ring on – 07879 424737 or e-mail hogiethelahun@aol.com. And I will pass it on to “Agadoo”.

Happy Greenkeeping Robert Hogarth Remedy Oak

South West

Sadly - getting quite close to my last report now – in fact this is it! Unfortunately, not too much going on just now, and not much feedback from elsewhere, but hey - you know me - before I bow out, I’ll take a few moments to reminisce on events since 2004 when I started writing this column.

My report from Feb ’05, at Weston Super Mare, leapt off the page. I can’t think of Weston Super Mare without the old Adge Cutler song springing to mind. However, this day was so cold with a bitter wind and snow flurries that Adge’s Wurli-zer would’ve frozen solid, and even the seagulls were sitting in a gloomy huddle outside the travel agents in the middle of town. I closed that report by wishing Richard Whyman, then incom-ing BIGGA Chairman, all the best for his year in office. Kinda déjà-vu there then!

And later that year, there was no escape from the pressures of...
work – I’d sneakied into the local pub on the way home and some one bellowed “Oi. I want a word with you” – (Bob the Barman) sounding unusually belligerent. “I want to make a complaint – I was playing round the Common yesterday, and your blokes were there shovelling cow pats off their mobile – I got into that nasty little quarry on the 10th and had four or five shots trying to get out (not much of a golfer, Bob the barman) when one of your blokes handed me this horrible old shovel with cow muck dripping off it and said – “Ere, ‘ave a go with this” and then split his sides laughing.” “Sorry Bob,” I must say – “I don’t feel quite so much out of the question.”

A really sad story cropped up in summer 2006 - Four players came into the clubhouse bar at one of our local clubs after an evening game. One of them was bragging loudly about encountering an adder on one of the fairways and actually chopping its head off with his sand iron. Apparently there was a little old guy listening at the other end of the bar, and he asked how long this particular snake had been. “Well over two foot-six, grandad” came the smug reply, “or at least it was until it met me - har har” “Do you realise,” continued the elderly gent, “that if adder really was two foot six inches long, it was well over 80 years old, and you’ve just killed it with a golf club for no good reason at all”. There was complete silence - the bravado just melted away, and the golfer was apparently inconsolable.

In 2007 there was a nasty explosion at one of the chemical works at Avonmouth (30miles to the south). The police rang at lunchtime to inform us that a near-certain death, decided to risk it and play golf, decided to risk it and play between near-certain death, and yet due to illness, these are the only three greenkeepers currently available to work on it. They are my heroes, and definitely win this year’s prize for Course Presentation. Thanks very much guys we really appreciated it. The competition results were as follows - 1. Matt Worster, Minchinhampton, 42pts; 2. Simon Kew, Shirehampton, 40pts; 3. Darren Moxham, Saltford, 39pts. The AGM itself was held in early October. Course Manager Darren Moxham, Lucy Sellick and Matt Devlin were the undoubted stars of the day – the course was in fantastic condition with scarcely a blade of grass out of place, and we’d put on the greens the day before!

I also had a nasty experience on the course. Standing by our lake in a quiet moment I noticed a snow-white swan soaring through the air to make a magnificent landing on the water. I was just thinking “wow” - when it was a miracle range (unfortunately not a nice purr-purr ringtone, but an annoying beedle-beedle-beep). This enraged the swan, which emerged from the lake, wings beating and hissing menacingly towards me. I’m now in full retreat, and for some reason, still trying to take the call. When I finally got the phone through to my mobile, I realized there was an even bigger menace on the line – Angela - from Alpha (name changed) Paints. I could just make out disjointed phrases like “order six cases before Xmas” and “15% discount”. “I’m terribly sorry” I blurted, “but I’m out on the course, and I’m having a little difficulty with a swan”. “Oh dear” muttered Angela – obviously miffed that I’d deflected her sales patter – “a swan – what is it?” “Well”, I panted – “it’s a stonking great white thing with a wing at each corner, and at the moment it’s running across the grass towards me”. “My God” said Angela, (now sounding quite concerned) – “You want to watch out for that – they’re strong enough to break your arm”. “I couldn’t care less about my arm” I bellowed”, it’s certain other parts of my anatomy I’m more worried about” – and then she hung up. Women!

Okay – enough. The Section held its 2009 Autumn Tournament and Annual General Meeting at Saltford Golf Club in early October. Course Manager Darren Moxham, Lucy Sellick and Matt Devlin were the undoubted stars of the day – the course was in fantastic condition with scarcely a blade of grass out of place, and we’d put on the greens the day before!

At Headquarters, she joins the Sales Department. Her arrival is very timely with work on Harrogate Week starting to pick up pace. The exhibition is filling up nicely and as with everything it could be a lot better, but I do feel that in the present climate it could also have been a lot worse.

Learning and Development is a major part of what BIGGA is about and watch out elsewhere in this edition of Greenkeeper International for details of the show seminars. A quick reminder that full information on these, and all aspects of Harrogate Week including exhibitors, can be found on www.harrogateweek.org.uk which can also be accessed through a link on the home page of the BIGGA website.

Many of you will be aware that the Association has been approached by Pitchcare with a view to working together on the development of a new trade show that would embrace all of sports turf and sports facility maintenance and management. Based on surveys that they have carried out, they believe that this is what the industry would support and their suggestion is that we consider a change of venue from Harrogate - their preferred option being the NEC, in Birmingham.

This proposal was considered by the BIGGA Board at its meeting in October and, for the avoidance of any continued speculation, I wish it to be made clear that at this moment in time the Board do not wish to pursue the matter any further. The Association is committed to building on the existing success of Harrogate and while the current two show position (Harrogate and SALTEX) may not be ideal for some companies, it never-the-less provides a workable compromise.

While on the subject of rumours I would also like to clarify the position between BIGGA and the IoG. Merger talks may have broken down at the end of 2007 but the two organisations are not at odds with each other. BIGGA’s move earlier this year to allow sports turf groundsmen to join as Full Members was not an act of confrontation merely a natural extension of its business following the recognition of the synergy between greenkeeper and groundsmen. I am in communication with Geoff Webb, CEO of the IoG, and we are looking at what, if any, common issues can be addressed by working together. This is no different to the approach that I am taking with other CEO’s.

Within the sports industry there is a great deal of Best Practice that can be shared and it’s long overdue that we all sat down and helped each other!

There is a meeting of Section Secretaries planned to take place at the end of November at Headquarters and this is an opportunity for members to have their views brought to the attention of the Staff. Market research and feedback is important and over the coming weeks we will be sending out surveys to certain groups of the membership. Please take time to respond and thereby help us to improve the value of being a member.

John Pemberton
Chief Executive
outdoors on the veranda overlooking the 18th green. 24 members and trade attended, and Adam Matthews and Jamie Acton joined the Section Committee as Secretary & Assistant Regional Rep respectively. A warm welcome was extended to them both. It was agreed to reinstate the Greenkeeper Amateur Tournament for next year, and Chairman, Chris Sealey, closed the meeting by thanking the Section Patronage Partners for their continuing support in difficult times, and reminded members of the importance of being as active as possible within the Association.

As mentioned above – Adam Matthews is taking over from me as Section Sec. Adam is a wonderful guy who will do really well. Please do give him your support by making the transition as easy as possible. I’m still on the Section Committee, and I intend to assist Adam in ensuring that education is available to all Section members. In this regard - I’m speaking at a Safety Seminar at Wiltshire County Hall on November 19. The day is in response to a number of accidents on golf courses in recent months. Invites will be circulated shortly – do please make an effort to attend, Jon Allibut is the main speaker and always worthy of taking time out. This opportunity, along with the likes of the recent Manual Handling and Chainsaw Courses, which BIGGA is pleased to part-sponsor, are so important to help us all in our daily lives.

Finally – thanks for reading my column over the last five years – I’ve really enjoyed writing it, but am probably going to have to change my style somewhat in the Chairman’s column. Please read that also – BIGGA appreciates your support – it is after all your Association.

On a parting note - should you happen to have read elsewhere that Associations are yesterday’s news and on their way out, then let me reassure you – "YOU AIN’T SEEN NOTHING YET". Watch this space!

Paul Worster

Surrey

No icebergs, so I’m back from cruising the Baltic, complete with parrot and large Jolly Roger. Only two bad sea days and the rest dry and sunny. The cruise was excellent, the ship, the food and the excursions to foreign cities all first class. If that ship had been hit by an iceberg, the country would have saved millions from its pension bill as the OAPs on board were encouraged to help us all in our daily lives.

I have just been informed that the Surrey Bowl was won by Ron Christie and Roger Tyde- man, beating Dave Worsfold and Martyn McEnroy, at Foxhills GC. Thanks to Roger for running the competition and I am sure there was nothing dubious about the fact that he also helped to win it. The annual Cresta Cup competition was held at Wimbeldon Park GC, on September 17. Many thanks to Wimbledon Park GC and Dave Langheim, for the course was in excellent condition, including the very quick greens. Mark Harvey came first, followed by Tony Bremer and in third place, Chris Lomas. Nearest the Pin. Sean Sturrock, Longest Drive. Chris Lomas.

Sadly Paul Skinner, 32 years as First Assistant at Malden GC died in August. Alex Armitage said Paul was just 60 years old and had been at the club for 44 years. Condolences from Surrey Section to his family.

Paul Hutton celebrates 25 years service at Hankley Common GC and Gareth Rob- ertson took excellent place at Wimborne Park GC. For what due to his amassed experience, he need now only rake bunkers on odd days and to keep even days for strimming.

The South East Regional Section is at Reigate Hill GC on Thursday, November 12. Will any latecomers contact Clive Osgood, the South East Region administrator, on 07841 948410.

The Captain of HMS Braemar, the ship that carried me to the Baltic, would give us a daily report, which always ended with the reassuring phrase ‘all is well’ and so like him I end this month’s report - All is Well.

Brian Willmott

Kent

Autumn. A time to reflect on the season’s highs and lows, your successes and failures and how you managed to maintain your courses in another year of extreme weather. There is a lot to be gained from reflection on how we all manage our courses differently in increasingly difficult conditions. And I don’t just mean the extreme dry weather this year playing a major part in the course condition, less attractive than normal, the recession means that golfers are more demanding and will not pay a green fee unless they can justify its value.

Travelling to neighbouring courses and discussing strategies with like-minded individuals at our golf days has proved to be very influential in dictating my approach to course set up and we have had a good year as a result. Reflective analysis now means that you can be well prepared for future years.

Nobody knows everything, but between us we probably have most of it covered. Although the basic principles of greenkeeping are the same wherever you go, we all have different strategies and priorities in how we achieve an end result. I have never yet met a fellow professional who was not happy to discuss his methods in achieving what he had produced as sharing knowledge is a easy way to improving everybody’s courses. At our golf days, the best greenkeepers and tradesmen in the county are all gathered regularly for a light-hearted event, but I often hear people asking each other about particular problems they are experiencing and what others have done to overcome them. Answers are readily given and management practices tweaked at the earliest opportunity in order to utilise the new –found knowledge.

Sometimes we all have to justify going to our Section events to ourselves (during busy periods), or to our employers who regard our golf days as just that. Personally, I believe that I would be failing in my job if I did not utilise all such opportunities to network with some of the best professionals in the county and steal as much of their knowledge as possible in order to ensure the future of my course. I’m told that in the five years that I have been involved with running the Kent Section that over 90 different greenkeepers and related tradesmen have joined us at various events, as well as a story to tell. Make the most of what’s on offer, especially if it’s free and so readily available.

Redlibbits Golf Club provided just such an opportunity recently and Ken Morris’s dramatic improvements to the course in such a short space of time were inspirational to all. Combining A/B greenkeepers and turf and woodland management practices has quickly resulted in a very attractive course and an environmentally sound area. A family of Moor hens had nested in a newly created habitat on the side of the lake in front of the first tee. Unfortunately, David Ray’s errant opening drive reduced their population to the tune of one, but we won’t mention that.

Superior local knowledge was paramount to the days golfing successes as the ever-entertaining Kev Morris, very undiplomatically, won the day with 42 points. Second was Darren Burton, from North Foreland, on 40 and third was Kev’s very able assistant at Redlibbits, Mark Roach with 39 points. Longest Drive was won, as usual, by Darren Burton and Nearest the Pin, by Tom Mutch. In just a couple of weeks now, November 26 to be exact, is our final get together of the year for the Turkey Trot at Birchwood Park. This will also include our AGM at some point of the evening so please come along if you have issues to raise or let us know by letter if there is a constitutional issue you would like us to address. This is always a great day with a lot of fun elements and prizes as well as all of the opportunities discussed above.

We also have a full and very exciting fixture list for next year which shall be distributed on the night. If any of you wish to host an event in coming years please let us know. We have had some great days over the years at courses which I didn’t know existed until we went there. This county has so much to offer to terms of its venues and custodians of the land and