

Around the Green

Keeping in touch with news and comment from the regions

SOUTH WEST

With the departure of the summer season and the onset of autumn, so thoughts turn to renovation, and by the time you read this many greenkeepers will be well into essential autumn course maintenance programmes if quality surfaces are to be obtained next year.

The latter part of the year also enables another important factor – education – to be considered, both with the start of educational courses at recognised colleges throughout the country and also at section level with the organisation of days of instruction leading to certification in PA1, PA2, first aid and chainsaw use. Various members have already contacted me regarding these courses which are in the process of being arranged. If, however, you feel that these apply to you, please contact me to register.

Continuing the education theme, the annual regional seminar will be held at Cannington College on November 30. This has been well supported in recent years so an early return of the application form is suggested. Among the speakers will be Mike Smith, soil scientist at Myerscough College, and David Golding from the GTC. He will be explaining the NVQ system.

The fixture list for 1995 is now being finalised and will be with you early next year with some interesting venues promised. This month's events include matches against South Wales at St Pierre on October 5 and the South Coast at Marlborough on October 25.

The section's annual meeting will be held at Knowle GC on November 10. It will follow a morning round of golf, lunch and a short afternoon lecture. Any proposals for discussion at the AGM should reach me in writing by the end of this month.

This year's Summer Tournament was held at my course, Filton. My greenstaff and I had the pleasure – if that's what it can be called – of preparing the course for a field of 42.

The day passed with only two small hiccups: the theft of the pin from the 11th green by children from the local estate, and our chairman attempting to kneecap our regional board officer. This happened as John York drove from the 6th tee. His ball struck the general play tee marker in front of him and shot at right angles in the direction of the 7th green where Robin Greaves was preparing to putt out. On spotting the approaching danger, Robin took evasive action by leaping into the air only to be hit on the ankle, lose his balance and be unceremoniously dumped on his backside on the green. Fortunately the funny side was seen by all and little damage was done!

After some good scoring, an enjoyable day was rounded off with an excellent meal and hospitality laid on by steward and stewardess Martin and Julia Rose. Our thanks are also given to Filton GC for extending us courtesy of the course, to the trade for their generosity in donating prizes and to Filton's greenstaff for their efforts.

Results: Best head greenkeeper – Robin Greaves nett 67; best assistant – Andy Liddle nett 70; main competition – 1, Paul Godwin nett 70; 2, Nick Wilson nett 72; 3, Jonathan Leigh nett 72; 4, Ian Hazell nett 72; 5, Peter Baynton nett 72; 6, Marc Haring nett 73.

Finally, belated congratulations to Huw Parry from Bristol and Clifton GC on his appointment as lecturer in greenkeeping at Cannington College. We wish him every success.

KEVIN GREEN

AYRSHIRE

By the time you read this report we will be well into the autumn programme, yet it seems like only yesterday everyone was battling to get some growth in the severe spring of this year. Hopefully our work this back end will be welcomed by something better in '95.

The section is hoping to run some winter events this year, with possibly two evenings – or even afternoons – given over to guest speakers. The annual games event will again be held, but this time a little earlier to avoid clashing with the festive season. Hopefully this initiative will encourage more membership participation leading even to some new faces helping to run the section. Please respond quickly when the details of each event are sent out.

It was good to see many old faces at the Open, it's turning into a great meeting place. New faces joining the support team from our section belonged to Lee and Roland Blackburn and Ian Barr.

Recent movements include Vince Reid going from Castle Douglas to take over Colvend GC and Dean Whan going from Kirkcubright GC to take on his first head greenkeeper's job at

EVENTS DIARY

The South East Region Greenkeeping Conference will take place on Wednesday October 26 at Oaklands College. Speakers include John Hacker, Dennis Mottram, Guy Longshaw, John Millen and Derek Green. Attendance attracts three Master Greenkeeper credits.

November 9-10: Scotsturf, Ingleson, Edinburgh

December 1: Scottish Region North Section one-day conference at Craibstone Estate, Bucksburn, Aberdeen

January 23-24, 1995: National Education Conference, Harrogate

January 25-27: BTME '95, Harrogate International Centre

Castle Douglas GC. Steve McWhan is the new apprentice at Dumfries and County GC. Dumfries and Galloway, part of our section, is seeing a bit of a boom in course construction with new courses at Kipford, The Craigieknowes Club, Brighthouse Bay GC, The Solway Links and also Colvend extending to 18 holes from nine.

DUNCAN GRAY

(Duncan, who wrote an article for us recently on the new course at Loch Lomond, is not a course manager. He is the contract manager for Mitchell and Struthers (Contracts) Ltd which runs five golf courses and five bowling greens for Kyle and Carrick District Council along with other grounds maintenance.)

EAST MIDLANDS

Our section was well represented at the National Tournament at Dartmouth Golf and Country Club and Paul Sewell won the longest drive on day two, and nearest the pin on day three with the last tee shot of the tournament. The section's honours though went to Richard Barker and Roger Willars for their entertaining frames of snooker against Ray Reardon. Unfortunately their combined frame scores did not match any of Ray's breaks.

This year's match against the Midlands will take place at The Warwickshire GC on October 12 courtesy of Rigby Taylor.

Congratulations go to Steven Heap of Rothley Park GC for passing his Scotvec 2 exam and also to Mark Cumpston on his appointment as deputy head greenkeeper at Westwood GC.

Finally, would any member who does not wish his or her phone number to be circulated to fellow members please inform me as soon as possible.

ANTONY BINDLEY

KENT

This will probably be my last contribution to Around the Green for the Kent Section. I also intend to resign my position on the committee. Due to pressure of work I can no longer devote the necessary time to the section. As some of you may already be aware I am now installed as course superintendent for American Golf UK at Cray Valley and Ruxley Park golf courses. The 54-hole site has its fair share of problems and putting these right is taking all my time.

Coupled to this I have had a fairly long stint as Kent scribe, almost as long as I have been on the committee, some eight years. In this time we have all seen our Association and section grow and there must be some more of you out there now ready to continue with this progress.

Well, on the summer golfing front, no Kent winners at the wind and rain swept National Tournament, although the Kent team managed to finish with "mid table" respectability.

I recently heard from Mark Smith at St Augustine's GC. Perhaps a cautionary reminder to all of us of the dangers of using the commonplace equipment that we all come across in our day to day duties. It appears that even properly kitted out in the correct safety equipment, a small object managed to pass the protective face shield he was wearing while using a brushcutter, and lodge in his eye. This resulted in some serious long-term damage, Mark being away from work for a good few months and not being able to drive. Full recovery has taken some time and the sight in the affected eye may never be the same as it was prior to the accident. Mark would like to pass on his thanks to the members at St Augustine's who rallied round to help pay for his travelling expenses to London for treatment from an eye specialist.

On a lighter note, although one that could have turned out rather more serious, Neal Carter and his lads at Birchwood Park seem to be specialising in digging up unexploded bombs. After

some major manhandling, poking and prodding the amateur opinion of his staff was that they may have dug up a bomb and after calling the police and disposal experts it was necessary to explode the device on a secluded corner of the course. On returning to the maintenance sheds one of the experts noticed that a small metal object stored in the corner was in fact an unexploded incendiary bomb, again requiring some attention. It appeared that the only attention that Neal's staff had been giving to it was to occasionally kick it around the shed. It was a good job it had not been used for indoor cricket practice.

But I can claim a bigger find. The lump of metal that I dug out of my first fairway at Barnehurst, after it wrecked half the tines on a Verti-drain has subsequently been identified as the remains of a VI flying bomb. The expert from the historical department of Bexley Borough did ask if I wished to continue to dig for the rest of the device and along the stick of bomb craters in the 8th fairway, but I declined. Some future greenkeeper can have the pleasure of that experience.

So I now bid you farewell. I am sure when time permits I will be able to send the odd sharp letter into the magazine. I will say no more than I am presently having greens rebuilt on my Ruxley course and 100% *Poa annua* turf did not feature in my specification when choosing to re-turf these greens. I understand it does in some!

PAUL COPSEY

SOUTH COAST

Our summer tournament at Southwick Park Golf Club went well and a profit was made towards section funds. Prizes were donated by Parker Hart and Roffey Bros and we would like to thank them for once again supporting our events. Also our thanks go to the management of Southwick Park for the use of the course and to David Hinks and his team for its condition. Bob Cully and Mark Webb once again did a fine job of the organisation, they're getting the hang of it now!

The results from the tournament were: 1st with 43 points Martin Harper and Chris Lawrence, 2nd also with 43 points Eddie Fox and Eddie Vickers and 3rd with 41 points Darren Miller and Mark Eggbeer.

The section and region autumn and winter events are getting underway now with the workshop on Health and Safety at Cannington College on Wednesday October 12. Also at Cannington College is the regional seminar on Tuesday November 23. Nearer home we have the first of our section winter lectures at Alresford Golf Club on Wednesday November 2 starting at 7pm. Bob Young will be along from Sparsholt College to cast some light on the new NVQ qualifications and the changed role of the head greenkeeper in staff training. Because of the many changes coming in with regards to education in the industry our winter programme is weighted towards this.

Because of the difficulty often of obtaining news from around the section I would like to set up a few local reporters who could feed back relevant information and make this item more newsy. Anyone who may be interested in doing this can write to me at 45 Constable Close, Sholing, Southampton, SO19 1EN, or phone 0264 334269/0585 400529/0703 438808 (evening). In particular I would like to hear from anyone in Dorset, the Isle of Wight or the Channel Islands.

ALAN MITCHELL

NORTH WEST

This year's Roses match was played at Mottram Hall in the heart of Cheshire. This is a very impressive De Vere hotel and golf complex, and golf co-ordinator Natalie Cymbalista and course manager Barry Gregson made us most welcome.

The course was in great condition despite having recent problems with the greens, which Barry tells me were caused by algae in the watering system. (I seem to remember Derek Ganning telling us at the Mere seminar about a similar problem at The Belfry.) Anyway, the course played well and the NW won 5-3. That must be a pint that Mick Hannam owes me.

One memorable incident was when Sir Bobby Charlton, playing in front of Paul Pearce, came under fire from one of Paul's wayward shots. Fortunately it missed but perhaps it would be advisable for Sir Bobby to wear a suit of armour when playing in front of greenkeepers instead of his waterproofs.

Many thanks to Jonathan Hinch and H Pattison for once again sponsoring this tournament which has been run for the last 15 years, and we hope will run for many years to come.

The NW section AGM will be held at West Derby GC, Yew Tree Lane, West Derby, Liverpool on October 25 commencing

7pm with a lecture.

Any news or queries, call me on 051 7245412.

BERT CROSS

NORTHERN SECTION

Unfortunately we were not successful in retaining the trophy during the annual Roses match, played away at Mottram Hall this year. The team that represented our section were: T Jarvis, L Kirkbright, G Potter, G Oxley, D Collins, A Baxter, R Johnson, M Cordingley, R Smith, M Hannan, D Cockburn, P Marshall, A Gerrard, R Spencer, C Geddes

Congratulations to you Bert Cross and your Lancashire team, but I am confident that the Northern Section shall win the trophy back next year. I must also thank Peter Marshall and Patissons for their continued sponsorship of this event. I do hope this continues for the coming years.

Our Invitation Day took place at Harrogate Golf Club. The results were as follows: 1, M Hannan - B Robinson 62; 2, A Gerrard - B Gerrard 62; 3, A Baxter - A Taylor 63; VPs - 1, M Guy - D. Sidebottom 65; 2, N Schofield - D McPherson 68; 3, A Dyson - R Donaldson 71; nearest the pin - Joe White; putting competition - Joe Nelli (Ransomes); highest score - K Millington - H Storey.

Congratulations to all the winners. Firstly, thanks to Harrogate Golf Club for allowing us the use of their beautiful course and clubhouse. Thank you to club president Mr Mayo and club captain Mr Robinson for giving us a warm welcome and presenting the prizes to the lucky winners. Thanks must also go to Tony Baxby, the course manager and his team for preparing a beautiful course for us. Thank you to John Price and his colleague Tony Dodson who represented our main sponsors on the day, Yorkshire Mowers. The prize table was splendid and appreciated by everyone - especially the winners. Thank you for your sponsorship and I hope this will continue in the future. Other prizes donated on the day came from Liam Galway (I had been calling him Brady all day) of The Greenkeeping Supply Company, Norman Schofield of Rigby Taylor, Allan Dyson of Gem, H. Storey/Keith Millington of Mitchells, Mike Brear of Trident, Gerald Brady of Rhone-Poulenc, and Norman Sheddton of Aitken's Sportsturf Ltd. Also thank you Norman for doing the scorecards once again. Our main sponsors on the day Yorkshire Mowers also had on demonstration various machines. A lot of interest was shown in the new electric greens cutter. I spoke to Mark Carter of Ransomes who was demonstrating the E-Plex. Mark said the main features is the fact that it has no oil, diesel/petrol, hydraulic oil or noise, therefore maintenance cost are extremely low.

I have been informed that Ian Thompson of Wetherby Golf Club won 1st prize in Farmura's Blazon promotion, the prize being a Hardi spray machine. A runner up prize went to another of our members, Kevin Colefax, head greenkeeper at West Bradford Golf Club.

I welcome to our section the following new members: Kenneth Ward, Forest Park Golf Club and Martin Shaw, Bradley Park Golf Club.

If any member has been offered or hears of anyone trying to sell a Case International 385 tractor with a Chilton MX450 front loader and a McConnell Ditch Ring mounted on the rear, please contact me as mine has been stolen. Tel: 0274 568128. PAT MURPHY

LONDON

Our summer golf tournament was held at Dyrham Park Golf and Country Club. The day was a great success and I would like to thank Don Wilson and his staff for preparing the course. The conditions were perfect although the wind did cause one or two problems for most of us. The winner with 36 points was Terry Colvill and the runners up were Ian Semple with 35 points and Barry Moggridge with 34 points. The longest drive was hit by Ian Semple and the nearest the pin prize was won by Darren Davis. The winner of the putting competition was our chairman, Doug Smith. The guest prize was won by the captain of Dyrham Park, Brian Cohen.

I would like to thank Dyrham Park for the excellent hospitality and help that was on offer throughout the day. A special thank-you to the trade for supporting us and for providing the funds for an excellent prize table.

Our next golf event is the turkey trot on Thursday November 10 at Sandy Lodge GC. Details will be sent out nearer the day. The winter education workshops are being compiled and details will be available towards the end of the month. This month we host the south east region greenkeeping conference at Oaklands College on Wednesday October 26.

TONY DUNSTAN

NORTH SCOTLAND

For the second year running the Ross-Sutherland Champion of Champions is a greenkeeper. This time Tain's Jocky Urquhart came out on top in the final played over the testing Carnegie course at Skibo. The course owner Peter De Savary was present for the prize giving and made a special award of a gold headed Carnegie putter, one of two so far that have been presented, the other went to Greg Norman who visited the course recently.

Several local greenkeepers were in the healthy crowd to watch the final and see for themselves what a superb course

this is. Jocky had just returned from Muirfield where he had been playing in the Pringle Champion of Champions, but was not quite so successful there! Incidentally the lady champion at Muirfield was one Emma Dugglesby who once worked at BIGGA head office.

At a recent Scottish executive meeting, two things of note came out. Firstly, this year's Patrons Award will be given to two members from each section, with a prize of £200 per person to be used for educational purposes. This can be put towards a course or a trip to Harrogate '95. We thank the Scottish companies that make this award possible by joining the patron scheme each year. Secondly the region will be organising a package trip to Harrogate again in January. A bus will take people down on the Tuesday evening and return after the exhibition closes on the Friday. The deal will include accommodation, so anyone interested should be ready for the forms coming and return them promptly.

Copies of the proposed review to take the Association into the future are in my care and available to any member who contacts me.

Finally, a belated good wish message to Allan Grant who retired earlier this year from his job at Fraserburgh GC. We will still see him at outings but in the meantime we wish him all the best for a stress-free retirement.

IAIN MACLEOD

SURREY

There were more than 50 entries for the latest McMillan Tankard at Sunningdale Golf Club. Thanks to Jack McMillan for presenting the prizes and to Geoff Cotton for donating an additional prize of which our Surrey Section were most grateful. Results are as follows: 1, J Roberts 37 on countback; 2, G Kyle 37; 3, G Roberts 36.

Members interested in attending next year's BTME at Harrogate should contact David Andrews on 081 6513252 as a coach and accommodation need to be booked.

Tickets for our Surrey Section dinner-dance at Reigate Manor Hotel on November 11 are still available. Anybody interested please contact your committee members. Tickets are priced at £18. Three course meal plus disco inclusive.

The first winter lecture has been set for November 9, 7-7.30pm at Kingswood Golf and Country Club. The lecture by Bill Oliver of Hardi Sprayers will be held in the Warren Room.

Forthcoming events include the Autumn Tournament, this year held at Burhill Golf Club on October 20 and also this year's Turkey Trot at Kingswood Golf & Country Club on December 8.

Members of the Surrey Section who do not have handicaps and wish to enter competitions can submit cards to our handicap secretary, Tony Lafrate c/o Reigate Heath Golf Club, Flanchford Road, Reigate, Surrey.

Please also ensure that competition entry forms are returned to Derek Walder on time as late entries will not be included.

Any information of interest to other members that you may like to be included within this article please contact me on 0737 832015.

DAVID GIBBS

EAST SCOTLAND

The summer sun shone on the day of the annual Willie Woods Memorial Trophy day, held at Murrayfield Golf Club. A field of 16 teams started to do battle at 1pm. By the time the last competitors arrived at the 18th it was plain to see that the scores were going to be on the low side. This tournament was started in 1988 to bring together the greenkeepers and members of their home clubs committees and it is only a pity that many greenkeepers do not ask a partner to come along to one of the highlights of the year.

The match was sponsored by Huxley Grass Machinery and we thank them for their excellent support and prizes. In third place with a nett score of 63 were S Dixon and C Stewart of Newbattle GC. In second place with a 62 were A Holmes and J Stevens of Seahouses GC. And the winners with a 59 were W Blair and D Hastings Kingsknowe GC. The winners are always asked to host the following year's tournament, and I look forward to having you all at Kingsknowe in 1995.

Yes, the golf was very good, but the scores could not have been obtained without the course being in excellent condition. This was prepared to the highest standard by Jimmy Neilson and his staff. This year we have all suffered from the very dry summer but the playing conditions at Murrayfield made a great deal of the surrounding courses look like deserts. We thank Jimmy and his staff for a first class day and hopefully it won't be long until we return to a course not played by the Association since 1984.

As I have said in the past, if you haven't reserved your dance tickets do it now or miss out on the highlight of the year.

Checking through the fixture card, you will see the events still to come; don't forget the skittles night and all lectures arranged for these dates. It would also be nice to see as many of our new members, or for that matter some more of our older members, attending.

I made a mistake in my last report when I said that the AGM would be a golfing event. It will be a lecture although golf will be available. The lecture arranged for October 27 is a visit to Stewart and Co turf farm and compost works. Hopefully numbers will

be high so that it is worth Stewart and Co putting this on for us. WILLIE BLAIR

BUCKS, BERKS & OXON

My apologies to you all for the lack of reports lately but I've been spending many midnight hours slaving over the 'Towards 2000' document.

A big thank-you from the section to the golf clubs that have supported us this year:

Mill Ride for the Spring Tournament won by Paul Reeve of Sonning GC; Ellesborough GC for the Summer Tournament won by Ken Flint, the secretary of the club (cries of 'Fix' all round). In particular we would like to thank the clubs' committees, Gordon Irvine and his staff at Mill Ride and David Childs and his staff at Ellesborough.

Two Rigby-Taylor fourball results in: D Goodchild and I Rose beat R Woodwood and C Mitchell; and Critchley and Bond beat D Childs and G Butler.

RAY CLARK

CENTRAL SCOTLAND

Another section member, James, (The Viking) Duncan, has joined the trek south of the border. He is leaving Aberdour GC, where he has been since leaving school, to become first assistant at Boughton GC, Faversham, Kent. James has been an avid Raith Rovers supporter through thin and even thinner and there is a strong rumour (started by someone with the initials MC) that he has moved because the 'pars' beat the Rovers recently. Best wishes and every success for the future! Keep in touch.

Twelve teams entered the five-a-side tournament, with a good mixture of greenkeepers and trade members. Results will appear next month.

A lecture by Jonathan Franks and Robert Twaddle from British Seed Houses will be held at Aberdour GC on the afternoon of Tuesday November 8 (not 2nd as previously published). Details should have reached everyone by now.

Tickets for the annual dinner-dance are on sale now, priced £15 each, they are available from section committee members and me. So, if you don't want to be disappointed, reserve yours as soon as possible.

The section AGM will be held at Aberdour on Tuesday November 29, prior to which there will be a talk on aeration practices by Quentin Allardice, contracts manager at STS.

JOHN CRAWFORD

DEVON AND CORNWALL

Unfortunately I couldn't attend the National Tournament which was held in our section at Dartmouth Golf and Country Club. All members who played in the tournament were full of praise. Our congratulations to Terry Farkins and his staff who presented the course in excellent condition.

The section's AGM will be held at Lanhydrock GC, Bodmin, on Wednesday November 23. As usual the morning's foursome competition will be for the Toro Trophy with prizes kindly donated by Devon Garden Machinery and Lely. Non-playing members will have a guided tour of the course during the morning with head greenkeeper Martin Morgan as your host. The AGM will follow lunch. Our region's seminar will be held on Wednesday November 30 at Cannington College. If you haven't booked your place yet, contact Gordon Child on 0803 844056. RICHARD WHYMAN

EAST MIDLANDS

This month we welcome Lee Hughes of Chilwell manor GC to our section. Congratulations go again this month to Richard Barker and Dave Leatherland on finishing second in an am-am tournament at Dave's home course, Kedleston Park, with a score of 13 under par.

This year's winners of the section's pairs K/O tournament are D Leatherland and P Tatlow of Kedleston Park. They beat C James and D James 3&2 at Breadsall Priory GC.

Finally a reminder to all members that this year's AGM will take place at Ullesthorpe Golf and Country Club on November 16 at 4.30pm.

ANTONY BINDLEY

SHEFFIELD

The Sheffield section AGM will be held at Rotherham GC on Thursday November 3 after our winter league event.

IAN COLLETT

NORTHERN REGION

The sun shone again for the righteous at this year's Hayter Challenge Final at Pannal Golf Club. I am delighted to report a spectacular win for the Northern Regional Team which consisted of Tony Mears, Ian Hutton, Gary Potter, Alan Baxter, John Waite, David Spurdin, Chris Powley, Chris Fiddell and John Jones. Our thanks must go to our generous sponsors Hayter and Pannal's new head greenkeeper, Kevin Wroe, for presenting the course so well for the competition.

Very well done to all the Northern team and, as we were discussing at the banquet, the cheques will be in the post.

Please make a note of my new address: 5 Lynam Way, Madeley, Nr Crewe, Cheshire CW3 9HX. Tel: 0782 750539. BOB LUPTON