

Around the Green

Keeping in touch with news and comment from the regions

SCOTTISH REGION

Elliott Small
Tel: 01259 731445



North
It is good to start the report with news of some new members to the Section. Rejoining us are three of the Ballater staff, Derek Cowan, Andrew Brown and Richard Cooper. Andrew Wood, from Bon Accord, has joined and Helen Bates, of Fife Silica Sands, has joined as a Company Member. I hope this year we can hold on to all 1996 members and add to our total instead of, as in recent years, when we have lost as many as we have gained. Anyone out there thinking of not renewing please call me and we can talk about it and I will try to show you all the benefits of membership which should outweigh the minus points. The stronger we are, the better for greenkeepers and green-keeping all round.

Royal Aberdeen's Sam Morrison, the current Scottish Chairman, is happy to announce that he has finally "off loaded" his son, Wilson, Head Greenkeeper at Alford, when he married his fiancée, Suzi, in Jamaica on February 18. Congratulations to both and good luck to Suzi. Being married to a greenkeeper takes a special kind of person, or so my wife says!

BTME was bigger and better than ever. I have never seen the Exhibition so busy and the workshops and Conference were packed out. A big vote of thanks must go to the staff at Head Office for all the hard work that went on to make this week so successful. It is comforting to know that the Association is in such good hands. The entertainment at the banquet was first class although I don't think they were responsible for the sky diving display from the snooker room window on the Sunday! Once again there was a good turnout from the North and I can thoroughly recommend others to go next year. Another pleasing aspect was meeting up with so many ex-North members now working in other regions and hearing how they are doing. Congratulations to Gordon Moir on an excellent talk which was well received by all present, despite his broad Fraserburgh accent.

This month we have the Scottish Conference at the Isle of Skye Hotel, Perth, and I hope to see many Section members pre-

sent for what I am sure will be a very good day with some excellent speakers on show.

The Spring outing has been confirmed as Duff House Royal on Thursday, May 15. We look forward to visiting Duff House as the Head Greenkeeper and ex-Section Chairman, Willie Forsyth, will be retiring this year after 34 years at the club. On Sunday, July 13, the club is staging a testimonial open golf tournament to mark Willie's retirement and in recognition of his loyal service. So members in the area could enter that competition as well and swell the testimonial fund for Willie.

Iain Macleod

West of Scotland

Welcome to spring, or so they say when the end of the month comes, but no doubt the grass will have ground to a halt. Let's hope this spring is better than last with good temperatures inducing fresh growth for a nice early start to the season... wishful thinking, we've got as much chance of winning the lottery!

Well what's been happening and what is going to happen in the future? By now the fixture cards will have been issued so most of you can roughly see the agenda for the year.

Although I was not personally at the BTME the reports were all first rate. The annual excursion to the BTME of lowlanders and highlanders appear to have enjoyed the social events with some over-indulgence from certain quarters who will remain unnamed. The whole event sounds as if next year should be a must for those who have yet to experience the delights of Harrogate. Can I say on behalf of West Section members who attended thanks to Elliott Small for the arrangements - good organisation to put Scott and Drew together. I don't think anybody could have kept up to their pace! Congratulations to the Association for the professional running of the whole event.

As mentioned previously, a trial was arranged for gathering an eleven-a-side team together though only one enquiry was received by telephone. On the day some 19 people turned up and from them a team will play the Central Section. A report about the game will be in the next issue but its nice to report a few different faces have been selected. Thanks to all who participated,

later in the year another trial will be lettered to everybody.

Recently a conservation day was organised at the Gosta Offices in Fineston. Jonathan Smith gave a very interesting talk, not at all as one would have perceived. The industry is changing and hopefully the golfer as well with greater awareness of matters pertaining to the environment. Public opinion has now changed the whole way in which people view the countryside and the golfer and the greenkeeper can show through careful management how sport can work hand in hand with nature to the mutual benefit of both. We look forward to the site visits to Kirkhill and East Renfrewshire to see what can be achieved. Thanks to all involved with the organisation of the day.

A warm welcome to some new members - William Hunter, Hilton Park GC; David Ballantyne, Cardross GC; Kenneth Muphy, Cathcart Castle GC; Gordon Logan, Machrie GC, and finally Desmond McCulloch, Renfrewshire Mowers. The Section wishes you a good season and looks forward to seeing you at future events.

Finally, two events to mark in the diary - firstly a day trip to Loch Lomond, early entries will be a must as this is sure to be an interesting day. Secondly the greenkeepers/convenors match at Kirkhill, again a popular event and an enjoyable day. Both events should have been lettered so get in there quickly or you will be kicking yourself.

One last thing - please telephone me if you have an interesting piece of news on 0141 942 5554. Remember this is your section and your news column. So let's hear about what is going on!
Stuart Taylor

Central

Sadly I must begin this month's report with the news that one of our retired members, Jim Harrison, formally Head Greenkeeper at Muthill GC, died recently. Jim was a long standing member of the section and along with his pal and fellow member, Haig Gordon, attended most of our events, even after retiring. He will be sadly missed and our sincere condolences go to his family at this very trying time.

At the time of writing this report the date and venue for the Spring Tournament have yet to be confirmed but the probable date will be late April. I will send out details and

entry forms as soon as possible.

Congratulations from everyone in the Section go to Ian MacMillan, of Balbirnie Park GC. Ian is the first home-based Scot to achieve the Master Greenkeeper Certificate and was presented with his certificate and MGC blazer at the National Education Conference at Harrogate in January.

Another Section member in the news is Walter Woods. Walter was appointed a Guardian of the Association in January at the AGM. It is nice to see that despite all his years of hard work in the formation of BIGGA and his numerous other achievements he is still taking an active interest in our future. Thanks Walter!

While writing about the AGM and BTME it was pleasing to see a good number of Central Section members there and those that were there for the first time enjoyed themselves so much they are intending to mark it in their diaries for next year.

We extend a warm welcome to new members David Leishman and Gregor Pirret, both from Dullatur GC; David Gilon, from Tulliallan GC; Kevin McArthur, from Balbirnie Park GC, and Dirk Thelen, from Elmwood College. We now have eight new members so far this year so if we keep going at this rate we will achieve and maybe even pass our target of 250 without too much effort. Just imagine what we could achieve if we really put our minds to it! We are looking for all the sportsmen in the Section as we are planning to organise fishing on Loch Leven, kart racing at Kirkcaldy, ten pin bowling in Glenrothes/Falkirk and football in Stirling/Glasgow (we can pick all the exotic locations!) plus our golf tournaments at some of the finest courses in the country. So let's have a lot more support than we have been getting in the past. Details of all events should be reaching you shortly so if you give me a quick response we can start getting them organised. If there are events which you think we should be organising just let me know and we will try to oblige.

The Inter Club Tournament will be held again this year with a different format. Leagues will be formed with games played on a home and away basis and the tournament will be completed prior to the Spring Tournament in 1998.

Former Section Chairman, Sandy Brown, is leaving Crieff GC after many years as Head Greenkeeper there and emigrating to



THE UNIQUE VERTI-DRAIN:

Redexim

- Unique patent adjustable parallelogram forced heave
- Simple tine design
- Leaves playing surface in superb condition



THE CHOICE OF CHAMPIONSHIP CO

Australia. Sandy has family in Australia and I am sure it will not be too long before he and his wife have settled into their new life. At the moment I don't think Sandy is intending to continue in greenkeeping but I am sure he will make a success of whatever he decides to do – maybe he has won the lottery and won't be doing anything! Best wishes for the future go to Sandy and his wife from all their friends in Scotland.

In December of last year I asked all trophy holders to make arrangements to return them to me as they were required for engraving and valuation but I am still waiting to hear from some of you. Please make arrangements as soon as possible.

John Crawford

East

Welcome to this month's news. I hope as I am writing this that spring is not all that far away because we do not want a repeat of last year so everybody get those fingers and anything else crossed for a good start to this season. I hope everyone from the East Section enjoyed their trip to the BTME which was even better than last year which takes some beating! Congratulations go to everyone at HQ who organised it and anyone else who assisted in the show, it just keeps getting better. If you haven't been before try and make it in 1998 as it shouldn't be missed. The karaoke on the Wednesday night at the Majestic Hotel was absolutely fabulous. This was something that everyone that attended really enjoyed, or so I have been told. The Scottish lads were in good voice so roll on next year! Tom Brannan, of Souters of Stirling, said the word of the week at BTME 97 especially on Thursday should be "vintage"! I don't know why!

There is only one member on the move that I know of. Paul Hares is moving from Newbattle GC to Melville GC and Driving Range to be Assistant to the Head Greenkeeper Steven Halladay. Good luck Paul on your new appointment.

Events to be held in the Region during 1997 are as follows:- February 27 – West Section Games Night, Claremont Bowling Club; March 4 – Scottish Region Conference, Isle of Skye Hotel, Perth; April 12 – West Section Course Visit – Loch Lomond GC; April 1 – Region v Secretaries Match, Lundin Links; April 23 – West Section Spring Meeting, Eastwood GC; April 29 – East Section Spring Meeting – Winterfield GC; May 15 – North Section Spring Meeting, Duff House GC; July 17-20 – The Open, Royal Troon; August 4-6 – BIGGA National Tournament, Cooden Beach; September 4 – East Section W Woods Comp, Kingsknowe GC; September 17-18 – Hayter Challenge Tournament, Ganton GC; September 25 – North Section Autumn Meeting, Wordlyth GC; October 7 – West Section Autumn Meeting, Hilton Park; October 13-17 – BIGGA Management Courses, Scotland.

In February a Swanston GC select (with-out yours truly) played against Ratho Park GC at 5-a-side football. By the reports I have had it was a good game with Ratho running out victors on the night by 2 goals. A re-match will take place very soon. We (Swanston) have a game arranged against Heart of Midlothian FC groundstaff who are so far unbeaten so we shall have to play to top form to get a result against them. I wonder if Laudrup, Gascoigne or Rozenal are available that night! If any other team would like a game give me a call, we are waiting. By the time you read this you will have received a letter about a five-a-side tournament we are hoping to organise, so all clubs get a team together and enter into the Section 5-a-side competition. It will be played at the new Pitz Centre at Sighthill so come on, support your Section and have a good time into the bargain. I would like to thank Elliott and Edna Small on behalf of the Section for organising the Scottish BTME trip again this year. Once again everything was great, just one or two problems but these were sorted out so thanks once again to you both for doing such a great job for the region.

Finally, if you are attending a Section event this year take your camera with you as I am needing a few pictures from our members, not just of presentations but of people enjoying themselves along with anything of interest on your own course that we could put in the magazine.

Chris Yeaman

NORTH REGION

Bob Lupton
Tel: 01782 750539



Sheffield

On behalf of the Sheffield Section I would like to thank everyone at BIGGA for the excellent job that was done in the organisation and presentation of the BTME 1997 which I know was thoroughly enjoyed by a good number of our section members.

Ron Graham has recently been given retired membership of the Association. Enjoy your retirement Ron.

Our last winter lecture will be held on April 3 at Rotherham GC and will be given by Mr D. Godfrey and Mr M. Franklin from Boughton Loam Ltd at 2.30pm.

New members this month include:- Ben Paling – Sherwood Forest GC, Andrew Fisher – Rother Valley GC, David Cakley – Brough GC, Stewart Barlow – Austerfield GC, Jonathan Haywood – Waterton Park GC, Carl Wilson – Ashby Decoy GC and Steven Rydiard – Hallows GC. Ron Ullathorne

Cleveland

Firstly, I would like to welcome our new members, Cliff Addison and six members of his staff at Drainage and Construction Contractors of Yarm-on-Tees, Cleveland. They

recently constructed a golf course for farmer Fred Sturrock, of High Thorston Grange, Hartlepool, a new 18 hole course of which 9 holes are now in play. All the course drainage, greens, tees and bunker construction was carried out by Addisons, under the course architect, Jonathan Gaunt. Addisons have a large investment in equipment and machinery and can cope with any golf course project. They now have a new adaption for tracked JCB 360, a power tilt which is ideal for shaping tees, bunkers or mounds from a static position thus reducing the risk of soil compaction.

News from clubs in the area, at last Bedale GC are to get a new shed for their machinery. Head Greenkeeper, Ian Pemberton, informed me that they are also building a new bunker at the 12th and a new winter tee on the 1st. Middlesbrough Golf Club have made a culvert at the 7th hole and have landscaped and turfed 1500 square yards. They have also built a new 9th tee and removed sand from all the bunkers to reshape and refill them with new sand.

Chris Fiddell is improving following his motorcycle accident 12 months ago and he hopes to be returning to work at Billingham GC soon. We wish him well.

The Christmas Competition was held at Wynyard Hall GC near Billingham, Cleveland and was won by Tony Cheesborough, of Wearside Sunderland GC.

Our annual meeting was held on January 16, at Darlington GC. Bob Lawton stepped down as Golf Organiser and he was replaced by Paul Kellett. The annual reports were read and thanks go in particular to Gary Munro and Ian Holloran who work very hard for the Section and the North Region. Also George Malcolm was elected back onto the Committee and is to be our Northern Area Representative.

The Spring Tournament will be held at Bedale GC on Thursday, May 8, at 9.30am. It is also the Hayter Qualifier. If any local courses would like to be used for demonstrations eg chainsaw, tractor driving, brush cutting, sprayer training etc please contact Gary Munro. Please keep up-to-date with COSHH and also job risk assessments.

I am sorry to report that our old friend Bill Burt, retired from SISIS, is in poor health and is in hospital. Our sincere best wishes Bill for a speedy recovery.

Finally many thanks to all those who have helped our Section during the course of the last year. Bruce Burnell

North East

Two new courses have been chosen for the Spring and Autumn Competitions. We shall be at South Shields on April 17 and then at Boldon in September.

The Section has purchased two videos – Golf Green Reconstruction and Golf Course Ecology. Should anyone like to borrow one please contact me, the only charge will be for postage.

By now all members will have received a questionnaire from the Section. Could you please fill it in and return it to me at 19 Southside, Maften, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE20 0RL.

Finally I would like to welcome David Simpson, Course Manager at Tyneside GC, to the Section. Jimmy Richardson

Northern

Spring is nearly with us and I am sure everybody hopes that it won't be a poor one like last year. A bad spring and a dry summer don't really go together for good green-keeping conditions!

The BTME at Harrogate was again a splendid exhibition and one that BIGGA should be proud of organising. May I thank Ian Thompson, of Wetherby GC, and Telford Jarvis, of Scarcroft GC, for helping me on the Northern Region stand.

Not many people have booked for the golfing events this year. I hope everyone is aware that if they have not submitted their deposit at least one week before the event they will not be allowed to play, so be warned all you hangers on!

Here are this year's golfing events:- Hayter Qualifier – Wakefield GC, Wednesday April 23 at 10.30am; Presidents Day – South Leeds GC, Wednesday June 25 at 1pm; Roses Match – Halifax GC, Wednesday August 13 at 1pm; Invitation Day – Skipton GC, Wednesday September 3 at 1.00 pm; Autumn Tour – Bridlington Links GC, Wednesday October 8 at 10.30am; Winter Golf – Scarcroft GC, Wednesday December 10 at 10.30am. Numbers at most of the above venues are to be limited.

Any member with any news or information to put into the magazine please contact me on 01484 519829. Bits and pieces are always useful for the column.

Simon Heppenstall

North Wales

So far I have had only a relatively small response for the "Little and Large" show due to be held at the Welsh Horticultural College, on Thursday, March 27. I know it is early days yet but if you wish to know what Boughton Loam has to say on grasses, top dressings and rootzones please contact me on 0151 336 6675 in the evening to reserve your place.

I am pleased to be able to report that after a great deal of detective work, and an early morning raid on a home in the Abergele District, the Richard Campey Trophy has been found in perfect condition.

May I remind you that our Spring Competition will be on Wednesday, April 30, at Frodsham GC. We will be playing for the Hi-Speed Rose Bowl and the Richard Campey Trophy. Entry forms for Frodsham should be with you by the beginning of April. To ensure the viability of the Section we have had to make a small increase to the entry

ITS EFFECT IS SHATTERING

Charterhouse



Deep aeration on an intensively used golf course is vital if the grasses which we require are to survive.

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

Comment From Walter Woods
St. Andrews Links Golf Course supervisor

For your free guide to compaction relief send this coupon to Charterhouse Turf Machinery Ltd., FREEPOST, (GL2285), Haslemere, Surrey GU27 1DW.
Tel: 01428 661222 Fax: 01428 661218

Name: _____
Position: _____
Address: _____
Postcode: _____

COURSES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

GI.3.97

fees for subsequent competitions. The members' fee will be £13 and guests will be £18 which I am sure you will agree is still extremely good value when you consider the whole package of golf, excellent food and prizes.

Brian Anderson, our Past Chairman, has written the following message:- "To all members of the North Wales Section - I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your loyal and very much appreciated support over the last four years. I have enjoyed being Chairman and have had the opportunity to make many new friends. I would like to wish you all the very best for 1997 and thank you again for your support and to welcome and congratulate Pat Valentine as your new Section Chairman.

"Thank you to all the committee members past and present and to all the trade who have given us their whole hearted support without question, along with the golf clubs. It is because of this tremendous support that our Section is so financially viable and may you continue with your support for 1997 as we lose the membership money.

"So once again thanks to the following traders for all they have done for us:- Phil Davies, Mommersteeg International; Terry Adamson, GEM; Dave Morgan and Mike Whitehouse, Rigby Taylor; Paul Walker, Walker Engineering (Ransomes); John Osman, Osman Machinery (John Deere); Andy Jones, Major Owen (Toro); Andrew Cornes, Acorn Equipment; Julie Hargreave, Ki Chem; Paul Shaw, Course Care; Tony Cundell and Richard Campey, Campey Machinery; David Robinson, Strike (Top Hat); Nick Grey, Martin Bros.

"Also thank you to all the following golf clubs for their support:- Abergele & Pensarn GC, Bull Bay GC, Chirk GC, Chester GC, Nefyn GC, Pwllheli GC, Porthmadog GC, Llangollen GC and Prestatyn GC."

Finally a welcome to three new members, Stephen Jenkins, of Eaton GC; Robert Green, of Aberdovey GC, and Nick Bower who has transferred from the North West Section.

Trevor Johnston

North West

Once again another BTME is over. They seem to come around so quickly but at least this year we escaped the snow ploughs (remember BTME 1995!). As usual it was an excellent show and a great opportunity to meet old friends and new. Let's hope the show continues at Harrogate for many years to come.

I'm sure you will all join me in congratulating Jim McDonald, Head Greenkeeper at Royal Lytham GC, for being awarded the MBE for his services. Jim will be retiring in 1999 after many years in the profession and after being involved in preparing courses for the Open on no fewer than five occasions. I feel his award is a very fitting award for a lifetime of dedication to greenkeeping.

Around the Green



Well done Jim.

The "Mere Seminar" will be on March 18, at Mere G & CC, and by now you will all have received your fixture lists with events for the year plus application forms for the seminar. The seminar is based on problems we have all had during the last two years with drought conditions. The first speaker is Graeme Francis, from Toro Irrigation, who will be advising you on how to get the best from your irrigation system plus advise on the legalities of procuring your own bore hole. Derek Green will cover the construction of bunkers. Derek has already starred in the BIGGA video on bunker construction which appears to be an everlasting job and one which needs to be done properly as Derek will show you.

The afternoon will be covered by Guy Longshaw and Paul Hartley, from Symbio. They will introduce you to the biological approach to fine turf management and how to work with nature. This management claims to reduce thatch and resistance to disease. Please try to come along and bring your Chairman of Green and Secretary - we never stop learning!

On Wednesday April 16 the North West play North Wales, at Hill Valley GC, for the GEM Trophy and I require a team of 16. If you are available and feel you want to be part of the winning team contact me on 0151 724 5412. Bert Cross

MIDLAND REGION

Peter Larter
Tel: 01480 437507
East Midlands



I hope you all enjoyed this year's BTME at Harrogate, the show really does get bigger every year. Again we were all treated to a first class show, seminar programme and social evening and it was great to see more and more section members there. On the Sunday evening we provided our own entertainment by taking part in a football match which was unfortunately lost by the narrowest of margins 6-5. The team included Richard Barker, Dave Leatherland, Adie Porter, Gavin Robson, Dave Sankey and myself with the star player being Dave Leatherland the scorer of two of the team's goals. Unfortunately all of us woke the following morning feeling very stiff with Dave Leatherland nursing a swollen ankle. Hopefully we can perform better at next year's match.

The Section has purchased a scoreboard for all golf events so we will all have to try to get some respectable scores as they will be all on show from now on! Thanks go to Pete Forshaw and Brian Jenkinson, Centre Manager at Ramsdale Park, for their work in putting the board together.

Brooksby College has arranged two lecture evenings and all members are welcome to attend these lectures. They include a talk from David Bibble on "Dealing with Stress" on Thursday April 17 and on Thursday April 24 the weather is the subject of Dave Mut-ton's talk. Both talks begin at 7pm. For further details contact Paul Greene at the College.

Finally, I would like to wish a speedy recovery for Martin Smith, James Robson and Gary Thurman after recent operations and a get well soon to Chris James. We all hope it won't affect your golf for the next season.

Antony Bindley

BB & O

Warren Farm College launched its winter lecture programme back in January. This was an evening with Jack MacMillan. The evening proved to be a great success with over 70 people in attendance. The various subjects which Jack touched upon were relevant to every one of us and it was nice to know that we all share the same problems. The next lecture is planned for March 19 and this will be a talk by Martin Jones, of The Oxfordshire, on the presentation of a championship course. Thanks to Warren Farm for putting on these evenings, I'm sure they are going to be a great success.

As a new golfing season approaches my thoughts go back to last Spring. The weather was very unkind for those of us in the Midland Region with frosty conditions into May! I hope this Spring/Summer is kinder so that our courses can fully recover. As yet there are no firm dates for any of the golfing events since venues have to be secured. At present we are putting together the fixture card for the forthcoming season, these will be posted along with the entry forms for the Spring Tournament.

Last season finished on a high note with two very well attended golf days so I am optimistic about the coming season. If everybody sets out to play in at least one event they will be contributing greatly to the success of the Section.

Before I sign off I would like to thank Mark Chesman for his contribution at committee level over the past few seasons. Lindsay Anderson

Midland

For the members who attended the BTME I hope you had a good time and like me were suitably impressed with the whole exhibition. It is now the main highlight of the greenkeeping calendar and expands every year which is of great credit to BIGGA and

the support they receive from the various companies. The obvious attraction on the Miracle stand seemed to be a great success and the signed photographs will hang on many greenkeepers messroom walls for a long time.

As I mentioned in the last report I will now give you the dates for the forthcoming tournaments:- Thursday April 24 - Harbourn GC; Monday July 7 - Worcestershire G & CC; Thursday October 2 - North Worcestershire GC. The Christmas Tournament will be played at Druids Heath GC on Monday December 8 when the AGM will also be held.

The Spring Tournament will also be the qualifying round for the Hayter Challenge. It was discussed at our last committee meeting what we could do for the non-golfers as regards education so there will be a short letter which you should have received prior to this report telling you about the trips we have arranged to championship courses. I would be grateful if you would fill in the slip or give me a ring. It is very important to us as a committee that we can offer events to both non-golfers and golfers alike. If you personally have any ideas on this subject please give me a call.

On a very serious note I would like to offer the Section's condolences to the family and friends of Steven Pike who passed away early in January. Steven was Head Greenkeeper at Trentham Park GC.

At a time when most of us are gearing ourselves for the on-coming season there is one notable person who is looking forward to his retirement. Peter Richmond has given vast amounts of time to greenkeeping and to this Section, he has served as Treasurer for many years and has performed splendidly. He has been one of the most respected golf greenkeeping mechanics in the business. He will be a great loss to Walmley GC and to the greenkeeping industry. On behalf of the Midlands Section I would like to wish you all the best in your future retirement.

Finally I would like to welcome the following new members:- Steven Blakeman, Paul Tildesley, Joseph Wood, Wayne Oseman, Richard Cosby, Nigel Paskin, Paul Chillington, Michael Gresswell, Ian Ravenhall, J Mason, Robin Wilcox, Shane Wilton, Keith Hawith, Michael Wyatt, Barry Wood, John Ganley, Jon Reid, Tim Hendy and Steven Golder. Jon Wood

SOUTH WEST AND SOUTH WALES REGION

Gordon Child
Tel: 01803 844056

South West

As is tradition during the month of January many of the South West greenkeepers joined the coach to Harrogate for the BTME



BANKS AMENITY PRODUCTS
AD REF 168



BANKS AMENITY PRODUCTS

ANGEL COURT, DAIRY YARD, HIGH STREET,
MARKET HARBOROUGH
LEICESTERSHIRE LE16 7NL



Fendress Greentop™ soil-less top dressing now available
Telephone: 01858 464346/433003 Fax: 01858 434734

YOUR ASSURANCE OF QUALITY AND SERVICE FROM THE PEOPLE WHO CARE

FENDRESS™ TURF TOP DRESSING BRITAIN'S NO. 1 YOU CAN'T BEAT THE ORIGINAL

NOW AVAILABLE:

- Fendress Regular
- Fendress Superfine
- Economy Top Dressing - for Tees and Approaches
- Sand/Loam Top Dressing
- Rootzone Mixes
- Highest quality Screened East Anglian Fensoil
- Fine Screened Sedge Peat for Fairways
- Fine Screened Sandy Loam
- Kiln dried Sand and Washed Grit for Vertidrainage
- Lime-free Silica Sands
- Bunker Sands - White - Cream - Pink or Yellow, including Moneystone

and a very enjoyable time was had by all. Thanks are due to Gordon and Marion Child for their usual excellent organisation of this three day excursion which must be the bargain of the year. Being one of the more itinerant greenkeepers I especially enjoy the opportunity of meeting old friends and catching up on what has been happening in our own very close knit community while some of the more athletic greenkeepers took the chance of enjoying the Harrogate night life! This included among other things the karaoke in which I am glad to say the South West area didn't let the side down and gave an uplifting rendition of "Puff the Magic Dragon" but the less said about that the better! The show itself and the speakers just keep on improving year in and year out and the whole event was topped by the banquet which all agreed was brilliant. The food, the precision like service of the Majestic Hotel staff and then the hilarious Bobby Davro made it a night to remember. I am sure that once again we will have a full coach for next year. Before finishing may I on behalf of the South West Region give our congratulations to Gordon Child on being elected Vice Chairman of the Association for this year.

Marc Haring

Devon and Cornwall

It is with great regret that I have to inform members of the death of Steve Pike. Steve was at Tiverton GC before moving on to Trentham Park GC, Stoke-on-Trent. Our thoughts are with Stephen's family at this time of need.

The Section's first meeting of the year was sponsored by Barenbrug Seeds and held at Fingle Glen GC, on Wednesday, January 15. The day started with golfing members playing a Stableford competition over 9 holes. Our non-golfing members were treated to an excellent workshop on irrigation maintenance and equipment which was presented by Ocmis Irrigation with some of the golfing members joining in the last part of the workshop before lunch.

After lunch members were invited to enter the Barenbrug grass identification competition. The lucky winner drawn from the hat by John Bradley, of Barenbrug, was Tony Gooch who walked away with Barenbrug's goodies.

John Bradley then presented the golfing prizes to the winners of the 9 hole Barenbrug golf competition:- 1. Tony Gooch, 20 pts; 2. Brian Ridgeway, 20 pts.

To conclude a superb day Ocmis Irrigation presented an afternoon seminar on irrigation design and installation. This provided members with some good healthy debating points.

The Section would like to thank Roger Davey and Keith Ford, of Ocmis, for their excellent educational presentation. Our thanks must go to the day's sponsor Barenbrug for without it this meeting would not have taken place and our thanks also go to Bill Pile and his crew who kept the rain off (this must be a first) and for having the course in excellent condition. Finally, thank you to Fingle Glen and all their staff who made our day run so smoothly.

January was also the month when members from all over the Section join the Region's annual trip to the BTME in Harrogate. This year was no exception as the Region's trip was fully booked, a fitting tribute to Gordon and Marion Child on their last BTME trip as organisers. On behalf of all the Sections within the Region I would like to thank you both for all your efforts.

The long journey home gave me the chance to remember the first BTME and seminar programme which was held many years ago. That year the seminar programme was held in the Royal Baths across from the Exhibition Centre and the BTME covered just one and a half halls of the Exhibition Centre. Now we have four halls

fully booked. Congratulations must go the Board of Management and all the staff at Aldwark for the continued success and growth of BTME week.

Our last meeting of the winter programme will be held at Honiton GC, on Thursday, March 20. The day will start as always with golfing members competing for the Supaturf Trophy (Head Greenkeepers) and the Rhone Poulenc Trophy (Assistants). This will also be the Section's qualifier for the Hayter Regional Final and as always golfing members will have a guided tour of the course and sheds.

Westurf is now just around the corner and hopefully the weather will improve before then with this being Gordon and Marion's last Westurf in charge. What better way to thank them for all their efforts over the last ten years than all of you turning up to make the day unforgettable.

Remember the date – April 30 at Long Ashton GC, Bristol.
Richard Whyman

South Coast

On January 15 we had an afternoon trip to Roffeys at Bournemouth. David Roffey showed us around the complex and we were shown all the various materials which go to make up our top dressings, root zone mixes and horticultural composts. We then moved on to the sterilising plant and were shown how the various materials are mixed and finally the bagging of the various dressings. The afternoon finished with tea and biscuits and a general chat about the various products. I would like to thank Roffeys for allowing us to look over their premises and in particular David for giving us the guided tour. It was a shame that only 10 people turned up.

Our Spring Tournament this year will be held at Broadstone GC, on Monday, April 28. This will consist of a full days golf and it will also be the qualifier for the 1997 Hayter Tournament. The Regional Final will be held at Burnham and Berrow GC, on June 11. All those wishing to play should forward their names, address and their current handicap and a cheque for £16 to:- Mark Webb, 12 Lime Road, Arelsford, Hants, SO24 9LD. The closing date for entries is April 18. Would all the winners of last years tournament please ensure they are returned on or before the day of the tournament.

Another reminder for Westurf 97 to be held at Long Ashton GC, on April 30. We would like to see as many of you there as possible. This will be Gordon and Marion's last Westurf, all the more reason for a large attendance. Let's give them our support and thanks for what they have done for Westurf over the years. I am told there are some new stands and a free prize draw, if it's quite a substantial prize then who knows, you could be jetting off to the Bahamas, Bermuda or even sunny Blackpool!

Once again the BTME was a resounding success. All records were broken yet again and I found that on quite a lot of the stands I could not get to talk to the representatives as they were so busy which has got to be good news. The seminars were of a very high calibre and the sound was very good. The only criticism was that it was difficult to see the screen. However I am sure that the organisers have this in hand for next year. Congratulations must go to all those who had a hand in the organisation of the BTME. I say this every year – "It was the best yet!" At the AGM Gordon Child was made a Life Member of the Association and I am sure Gordon will make an excellent Chairman in 1998. There can be no-one more deserving of this honour.

It was nice to see that there was a good representation from the South Coast at the BTME. Thirteen members travelled on the Regional "Bargain of the Year" coach! The journey went quite smoothly with no major hiccups! The driver of the coach from

Southampton to Bristol did get a little confused around Bristol. I must admit I did get a bit worried when I found we were going back out of Bristol the way we came in! Still we made the connection at Gordano which was the main thing. Several members also made their own way to the BTME and during the course of the four days I did bump in to most of them.

Lastly I would like to say thank you to Gordon and Marion for organising the trip and also for all the hard work they have done over the years. Gordon and Marion are going to be a hard act to follow.
Ken Lodge

South Wales

Our latest evening lecture was presented by Mark De Ath, the National Amenity Manager for Headland Agrochemicals. Entitled "Chemicals for the Management of Turf" Mark's presentation covered many topics but was primarily based on the management of soil and the effects on its pH (percentage hydrogen). Fifteen hardy soles braved the typical winter conditions to attend an excellent lecture packed with valuable information. Our thanks to both Headland Agrochemicals and Mark for what was a thoroughly worthwhile evening.

I won't dwell for too long on the subject of the BTME for I'm sure that it will be covered in much greater detail within the pages of this magazine but I must say that another successful BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition has passed us by, bigger, better, more exhibitors and more visitors than ever before – what can one say!

The show goes from strength to strength as does the regional trip. Well done again to Marion and Gordon Child for their excellent organisation of the trip and many thanks!

If any member would like to borrow a book from the BIGGA library, forms can be obtained from myself or BIGGA Headquarters.

Ian Walker has recently been appointed the new Head Greenkeeper at Carmarthen GC. Ian, a Scot with a handicap of 9, joined from the Stonehaven GC in Aberdeen. We wish him well and look forward to seeing him at forthcoming Section events.
Peter Lacey

SOUTH EAST REGION

Derek Farrington

Tel: 01903 260956

Surrey

A proposal was put forward at the December AGM that the golf meetings should have an educational element attached to them. Not all golf venues are suitable for educational purposes but the spring meeting at Dukes Dean GC, on May 12, would appear to be ideal. The spring meeting was chosen because it is also the Hayter qualifier and we usually have a good turn out.

Following 27 holes of golf Jack MacMillan has kindly agreed to attend for the evening meal and talk to us on his chosen subject so please come along and support this event.

On another subject entirely I hear that the Drift GC has been taken over by the largest golf company in the world, Club Corporation of America. The Drift is now a member along with 240 clubs throughout the world with associations in the Philippines, China, Indonesia, Mexico, Canada, Germany, Ireland, India and now England which the Drift are very excited about since they are the first English club to be acquired by CCA. Good luck to the Club and the staff, especially to Paul and his team who I understand are very happy with the new management.
Mike Kirkham

Essex

The new Essex Section got underway with a meeting at the White Horse Pub, Chelms-

ford when 45 greenkeepers and trade members aired their views and formed a committee as follows:- President – David Wells; Chairman – Carl Crocher; Secretary – Andy Sheehan; Treasurer – Richard Pride; Handicap Secretary – Mick Fance; Scribe – David Wells; Education – Martin Forrester; Committee Member – Reg Hooper.

Golf days have been arranged on April 22 at Chigwell GC (Hayter Qualifier), June 16 at Five Lakes G & CC, August 9, at The Warren GC and October 2 at Stock Brook Manor GC. The AGM will be held at Orsett GC in December.

Evening lectures will be held at Writtle College in the main building, room L60 at 7.30 pm. Please make a note of the following dates in your diary – March 18, May 14 and September 25. Details of each meeting will be announced later. Liquid refreshments will be available in the students bar after 8pm.

A meeting was held at Writtle College, on February 3, when members were invited to sit on an advisory panel to the College to discuss educational and training provision. These meetings will be held on a regular basis.

Urgent – more assessors (D32/33) are required for our area for the success of future greenkeeping. Contact Martin on 01245 603131 if you are interested. You should have received your questionnaire by now. It is important from all our points of view you spend a few minutes to fill it in so the committee know what members want. As a bonus your form will be entered into a free draw which will be drawn at our meeting on March 18. If you haven't received your questionnaire yet please contact Martin on the above number.

We wish Alan Sharpe and Doug Smith good luck in their new jobs and congratulate Andy Turbine and Adrian Kersey on their promotions at Ernest Doe. Finally our best wishes for the future are sent to Richard Pride who was recently married.

If you have any news for the Essex section phone me on 01702 522202.

David Wells

Sussex

Harrogate is over for another year. It may only last five days but the memories will last a lot longer. The Conference, Seminars and Exhibition were terrific and so well organised. To gather so many greenkeepers from Europe and beyond just shows it's getting BIGGA and better every year!

Congratulations to Dave Ansell on his presentation on Downland Conservation. It not only took a lot of hard work to prepare but also a lot of guts to get up and present it so well. But that's not all – the highlight of his week came on Wednesday night when a stunned audience watched Dave giving his all at karaoke night singing "Give me all your lovin'"! Great stuff Dave, but don't give up the day job!

Now news of a forthcoming event. An inter-county golf challenge is to be held at Princes Golf Club, Sandwich, on 27 March. This event is the idea of Chris Allen. He approached Bill Howie, at Princes, for permission to play there and has also arranged sponsorship from John Deere and Sisis. Teams will be made up of eleven players from each county with the best 10 Stableford cards to count from each team. Derek Farrington, our Regional Representative, is coordinating between the counties involved in this event.

The Sussex team for this year will be selected by George Barr but it is the intention of the committee to make either the summer or autumn competition into a qualifier for next year's challenge.

To finish can I remind members that articles have to be in one month before the magazine is printed so I need any items you want included in plenty of time so that I can mention them in my write up.
Colin Cathie

