

Around the green

Keeping in touch with news and comment from the regions



Scottish Region
Peter Boyd
Tel/Fax 0141 616 3440

North

First new member to be welcomed in 1998 is Ross Farmer, apprentice at Stonehaven GC. We hope he is the first of many to the Section. The first new appointment of 1998 that has come to my attention is Brian Anderson, who this month takes over at Murcar GC, in Aberdeen. Brian, originally from Scotland, has been working down in Wales for a number of years so we welcome him and wish him well in his new position.

Stewart McBain has the task of running the 200 Club in 1998. Souters of Stirling are this year's sponsors and we thank them for their assistance. The cards should be out soon so please help Stewart by returning your payment as soon as possible so that we can sell all the tickets by the Spring Outing in time for the first draws. Remember, this is the first year that we will receive no subs refund from Headquarters as this money now helps to pay for the Regional Administrator so we must start to be self sufficient and the 200 Club will be our major earner in that respect. If we want to keep the costs of outings etc down we must make the maximum possible from the 200 Club and besides you could win up to £100 in the process.

I have not had any ideas from anyone about the possible Section Conference we plan to hold at the end of the year. We need to start securing speakers soon if we are going ahead

with the project and this is your chance to tell us what you want to listen to or about. I await your ideas!!

Finally, anyone interested in the Section Four Ball Better Ball knockout competition that has not already entered please do so now as Steve Sullivan needs to decide if the numbers entered are good enough to run the tournament starting in the Spring. As mentioned before early rounds will be regional to cut down on travelling. Steve's number is 01738 643778.

Iain Macleod

West

Well done everybody who attended the AGM at Claremont Bowling Club on Thursday December 11. In all 40 people attended which is an excellent turnout, mainly the same regular faces with one or two new ones but thank you all for helping make the evening a success. The main area of controversy was wages, no different from any other industry you might say. We missed the usual points of order raised by Cecil, making the meeting run a tad shorter than usual. Elected onto the committee was Robert Hogarth, from Cathcart Castle. The committee consists of:- Chairman - J Stuart Taylor, Glasgow GC; Vice Chairman - Brian Hillan, Drumpellier GC; Secretary - Sandy Bulloch, Fereneze GC; Past Chairman - John Scott, Kirkhill GC; Committee - Scott Ballantyne, Cowglen GC, Drew McKechnie, Douglas Park GC, Ronnie Bunting, Kilmalcolm GC, (Education), Greg Burns, Lenzie GC, Robert Hogarth, Cathcart Castle GC, Derek Duthie, Aitkens and Kenny Hunter, Huxleys. May I express my thanks to John Scott for his chairmanship, he did an

excellent job under difficult circumstances. I look forward to having an interesting year and as new Chairman one of my first duties is to thank those concerned with the running and organising of the game's night.

First of all thanks to Claremont Bowling Club for allowing us the use of their excellent socialising facilities and to our barman on the evening, Graham. Thanks to John Scott once again for organising the Club venue, pies at half time and for clearing glasses, selling raffle tickets and just being that cheerful personality. Gary Burns has to be given thanks for running the games of which the eventual winner was Drew McKechnie, there's a surprise! The raffle was won by myself, Simon Murray and Gary Burns. Once again our gratitude to all concerned for their assistance.

The next event was the 11-a-side game of football, north of the river against the south. What an exhibition of how to play football. The south slaughtered us 10 goals to 2. In all some 19 people turned out so what happened to the others? Well done the south, maybe next time.

A few things to note - The Conveners match at East Kilbride for March and a football game against either the East or Central Section will be organised. Those who took part at Scotstown will be considered. The Scottish Education Conference will be held the first week in March.

Stuart Taylor

Central

There's not a great deal to report at this time what with the new year holidays and the BTME at Harrogate everyone appeared to be easing them-

selves towards the golfing season which lies ahead. With a bit of luck the Spring will be as kind to us as the Winter appears to have been up to now as up to the time of writing (January 3) we have yet to have any snow.

We extend a warm welcome to new members Stuart Raeburn, Tulliallan, Scott MacGregor, The Dukes Course, Thomas Meenagh, Coatbridge, Thomas Adamson, Dullatur, and Michael Goode, Carol Borthwick and Francis Gallagher all from Elmwood College. Hopefully we can keep up this fine start to '98 with new members so if you know of any greenkeepers who are not in the Association encourage them to join or invite them along to some of our events as your guest.

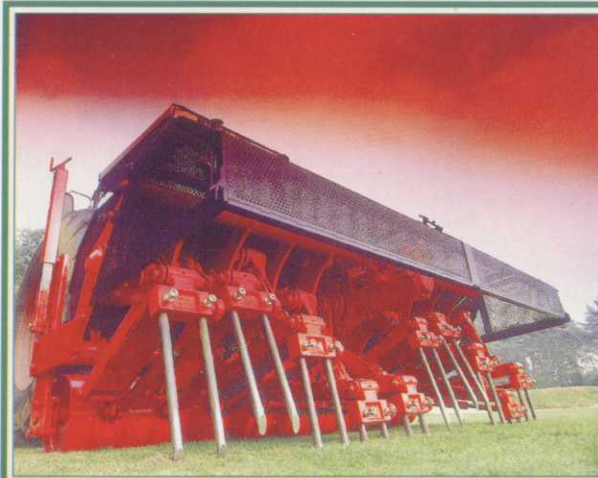
Entry forms for the Spring Tournament/Ritefeed Qualifier at Ladybank in April should be with you by now or arriving soon. If you want to be sure of competing in this event please return your forms well before the closing date. Also, the Autumn Tournament will be held by courtesy of Crieff GC in early October, the exact date has yet to be confirmed. You may think that notice of some of our events are being sent out rather early. The reason for this is that you will be informed of as many events as possible with the one mail shot in an effort to reduce Section running costs.

Well, that's it for this month, not a lot I know but hopefully there will be more next time!

John Crawford

East

Before we get started I would like to wish all our members, patrons and



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friends a very happy and prosperous new year and hope everyone has a good 1998. Now down to business - since I last wrote in the column we were the guests of Scottish Grass Machinery at their new premises in Inverkeithing. There was 30 people in attendance that day from a wide variety of clubs and everybody enjoyed themselves. The day went like this, we were picked up by bus (courtesy of SGM) at various points on route and were taken to Gleneagles where we had coffee and biscuits. We then had a very interesting talk from Jimmy Kidd, Gleneagles Golf Developments, about the work his company are on with at the moment and also have planned for the future. He also talked about Gleneagles' tie with SGM and Ransomes for complete range of machinery. We then had a tour round all maintenance sheds to see their range of equipment. I must say I have never seen so many Cushman trucks in my life. We then boarded the bus and headed to Inverkeithing to have a great buffet lunch at SGMs new premises and then a guided tour round their offices, stores, workshops and warehouses. We then had a very informative talk by David McInroy, the Managing Director and also a very interesting question and answer session. I would like to thank David McInroy, Roy Auld, Bill Smith, Duncan McNab, Steven McInroy, Gordon Rodger and anyone else I have missed! for a great day out and wish them all the best for the future at their new premises. As they say, the future looks good.

In December we had our annual dinner dance at the Kilspindie House Hotel, Aberlady, where 75 members and guests enjoyed a great night out and also early morning as all but a few stayed in the hotel that night which we totally booked up and also another hotel a minutes away in the village. In future we would like to see more greenkeepers at the dance as it is your night out. We had one or two call-offs at the last minute so that is why the numbers were down.

I would like to thank everyone that brought along a raffle prize and also the social committee for organising everything so well this year. The meal was excellent and so was the drink so I have been told! Next year let us see some new faces along as it is a great weekend out. There were one or two moans and groans on the night but

these will be ironed out by next year. We had a presentation on the night by Andrew Forrest to his parents who were celebrating their ruby wedding anniversary. Our Secretary, Steve Dixon said a few words on Andrew's behalf then they were presented with a basket of flowers and a bottle of champagne. We would like to wish them both all the best for the next 40 years.

PS - the East Section Patrons Award winners were Gordon Trotter, Glencorse, and Robert Thomson, Peebles. They were presented with certificates and books along with a trip with the Scottish party to Harrogate 98. Well done lads from the Section, you will enjoy your time in Harrogate. On your return I hope you will write an article about winning your award and your trip to Harrogate.

The Section committee are putting the final details to the fixture list for the coming season. We have an exciting range of events coming up this year so let's see all our members getting behind the Section and supporting all events this year and make 1998 an even better year for the Section than last year. This year if anyone has anything of interest they can give me a call on 0131 445 7165 (work) or 01620 842037 (home) or drop me a line at 74 Muirfield Drive, Gullane, East Lothian EH31 2HJ.

Also anyone from other Sections can also give me a call or drop me a line about anything that would be of interest to the members of BIGGA and the readers of Greenkeeper International so come on, let's hear from you.

So, that's it this month, more information next time and also a report on BTME 98 along with some photographs of people enjoying the highlights of Harrogate.

Chris Yeaman



Northern Region
Douglas Bell
Tel: 0151 431 0433

North Wales

A few things to mention this month. Firstly, Brian Anderson is leaving us to go back to his native land where he is taking the position of Course

Manager at Murcar GC, Aberdeen. Brian will be known to most of you as a past Chairman of our Section and since he moved to Abergele in May 1990 has been one of the prime "movers and shakers" in keeping our Section active and alive. I am sure that all who know him will wish him all the very best for the future, we have definitely lost one of our "characters" but I am sure we'll meet up at various BIGGA events. Once again, thanks Brian.

Some good news on the education front. Phil Davies, formerly of Mommersteeg, has been appointed Senior Training Officer within SDA Training Ltd, a subsidiary of the Welsh College of Horticulture. Phil's primary role will be for greenkeeper training and support of NVQ trainees but he will also be liaising directly with members as to the needs for specialist short courses. His experience as a Head Greenkeeper will provide the perfect link between golf club and training provider. Anyone requiring training assistance or advice can contact Phil at SDA on 01352 841055.

Still at the college the educational seminar on February 18 will include bill Hawthorn on Irrigation, Jon Allbutt on Health and Safety, Neil Baldwin on micro organisms, John Ver Hoven, from Mommersteeg, on breeding for the future and a representative from the R&A talking about research and development so remember to make that date available.

One last thing, I am writing this just after Christmas and the New Year and what a lovely Christmas. Four days without electricity - there's nowt like Spam for Christmas dinner and then I go back to work to see what looks like a nuclear holocaust! We used to have a lot of ash trees but after three days of chain sawing and still more to go now I can see why Brian has moved to a links course!

Dave Goodridge

North West

New Years day and the weather is fairly calm after the recent gales. I hope none of you have suffered too much with storm damage in the Liverpool area as we appear to have got off fairly lightly as far as structural damage but there are plenty of mature trees down. Up until now we have had very little frost and the fusarium is still rampant, as is the moss. Speaking to some of the local greenkeepers they

have given up spraying the fuzz, partly because of the losing battle but also because of the cost. It probably costs in the region of £800 each time to spray an 18-hole course and the budget must have taken a fair hammering this year. Anyway, we will soon have "Augusta" on the telly and then all the "armchair greenkeepers" will be giving you advice on how to improve your course.

Hopefully by now you will have received your fixture list for the year (I say this while holding my breath), but if you have not please contact me. The date for the Mere Seminar is Thursday March 19 and we have planned a roadshow by PSD Agronomy Ltd covering management and maintenance of golf courses and sports grounds. We hope this will attract members of the Association of Groundsmen so that a closer working relationship can be realised between everybody working in the fine turf industry.

I have been informed that Alan Worthington, who works at Prestbury GC, had a very nasty accident before Christmas when he was knocked off his motorcycle and received severe injuries to his legs. He underwent surgery to his legs which included bone and skin grafting and he will be attending hospital for many months to come for further treatment and is not expected to return to work for about four months. We all wish him a good recovery.

That seems to be about it for now but any enquiries please ring me on 0151 724 5412.

Bert Cross

Cleveland

Our annual quiz against the North East zone of the Institute of Groundsmanship was held at Mount Oswald GC, Durham and was sponsored by Turf Care of Leadgate. Directors, Terry Charlton and Barry Clennell, deserve our sincere thanks for organising and arranging this pleasant evening as do Pam Armstrong and Alister Forster. The meal was first class. The Shield, named after Dave Pearson (ex Durham IOG) was won by the groundsmen and it was a pleasure to see original members of Durham present.

Congratulations go to Craig Hardy and his wife who have just had a baby girl. Craig works at Ramside GC, Durham City.

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Comment From Walter Woods
St. Andrews Links Golf Course supervisor

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COURSES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

AD REF 130

On the construction and maintenance side, the drainage of wet areas is in full swing following a mild Autumn. The grass is still so green, is this a danger sign? Wearside GC have reconstructed 21 bunkers at their Sunderland course. Head Greenkeeper, Barry Walker, is also to install a bore hole for future irrigation use. Brancepeth Castle GC have extended the 1st and 14th tees and also made a new path round to the 15th tee and have planted over 1000 tree whips and standards.

Blackwell GC, Darlington have 2 adjoining tees and at one side a retaining stone wall and steps was built to support it which looks beautiful. They have also recently built a new green beyond a natural looking pond which now blends in very well.

Local drainage contractor, Cliff Addison from Yarm-on-Tees did all the mechanical work on the reconstruction work on two greens at Dinsdale GC. Drainage on the porous base root zone was all carried out before the greenstaff relaid the original turf.

Bruce Burnell

North East

On December 11 we had our first Christmas competition at South Moor GC followed by a dinner and then the AGM. The results were:- 1. George Wright, Crook, nett 64; 2. David Cuthbertson, Slaley Hall, 67; 3. Darren McGee, Crook, 67; 4. Alan Harrison, Garesfield, 67; 5. Tony McLure 69. Our thanks to the committee for the courtesy of their course and also to Tommy Fenwick, the Head Greenkeeper and his staff, for getting the course playable considering how much rain had fallen in the past couple of days. Tony Chambers, the President of the Section presented all of the 1997 trophies to the winners.

Brendan Brown, of Carbural, kindly sponsored the summer knock-out competition and he presented the winners with their trophies and prizes. Hopefully we shall have more couples entering this new competition.

The AGM was attended by only 23 people and quite frankly it was a pretty miserable turnout by the members considering we have over 100 members in the Section and it's still growing. Let's hope we have more next year. Three extra members were required to join the committee and those who volunteered their services were Alan Harrison, Ian Hutton and Russ Black. The committee would like to thank Terry Charlton, of Turf Care, and Tony Chambers, of Shorts, for the drinks given to all members who were there.

One final thank you to the stewards of South Moor GC for the barrel of beer donated to all the golfers - it was much appreciated.

Jimmy Richardson

Northern

In the December magazine insert, the date for the annual dinner dance had been incorrectly printed. The actual date for the 1998 dinner dance is the 14th March and not the 4th March as quoted. Please make sure you get your names and money in as soon as possible as places are running out rapidly.

Our 1997 Winter golf tournament

was held at Scarcroft GC. The weather was not brilliant but at least the rain held off apart from a few spots now and then.

May I thank Messrs Rigby Taylor for sponsoring the excellent prize table and to Mike Brear and Norman Schofield for joining us on the day on their behalf. Thanks Mike for presenting the prizes and taking the time to help me choose to them.

Thank you also to Telford Jarvis and the lads for preparing the course so well in a period when the elements are not at their most pleasant.

The results for the day were as follows: 1. S. Hardwick, 2. D. Collins, 3. A. Court, 4. A. Baxter, 5. G. Potter, 6. T. Arana, 7. S. Marston, 8. D. Lindley, 9. Robin Smith, 10. F. Hurd. Nearest Pin: Richard Smith

Following the golf we had an excellent Christmas dinner which everybody seemed to enjoy. Thank you to the caterers and the bar staff.

Our 1997 AGM followed the tournament, where 29 members attended the short meeting.

The elected committee for 1998 were: President, Mel Guy; Chairman, John Waite; Vice-Chairman, Dave Thackray Secretary/Treasurer Simon Heppenstall.

Members: Telford Jarvis, Richard Gamble, Dennis Cockburn, Phil Mitchell, Ian Thompson and Gary Potter

Pat Murphy congratulated the 1997 committee for producing such an excellent year end balance and hoped this would continue.

The Chairman, John Waite, thanked Alan Gamble for his 25 years service to greenkeeping and to the Northern Section Committee, after standing down from the committee.

Congratulations to Mick Hannan on his recent engagement. You certainly kept that one quiet, Mick.

On behalf of the Northern Section may I thank Pat Murphy for his year in office as our National Chairman. I think he may well be glad to settle back down at work and enjoy the 'odd' night in his own bed!

The President's Day Tournament for 1998 has been confirmed. The venue is to be West Bradford Golf Club on June 3. The tee has been booked from 1.30pm to 3pm.

Congratulations to Richard "Jaffa" Gamble - on eventually getting his wife pregnant again. I think all the offers from the lads to do the job for you Richard must have made you get your act together!

If anyone has any news from around the Section please contact me at I Cockley Meadows, Kirkheaton, Huddersfield, HD5 0IA. Tel: 01484 317813 or 0411 601420

Simon Heppenstall

East of England

Another year over which ended with a Texas Scramble at Kirton Holme followed by the AGM. All who played thoroughly enjoyed a new course cared for by David Welberry. The scramble was sponsored by Burdens Groundcare and thanks go to David Holmes, the main sponsor for bringing some machinery along for everybody to look at and demonstrate.

First in the team prize was Nigel Marshall, George Venables and

Graeme Macdonald who pipped Kevin Hodges, Peter Larter and David Holmes. Nearest the Pin was sponsored by Barenbrug Seeds, thanks to Ben Petitjean. Thanks to all the sponsors on the day as everybody who played received a prize.

The AGM followed on from a superb meal which had a poor turn out of members. The Chairman, David Walden, welcomed all and apologies were read and the previous minutes were passed. The Secretaries report covered the 1997/98 programme of events and the Secretary took the opportunity to thank all clubs for allowing us the courtesy of their courses and thanked all sponsors for the years excellent prizes. The Treasurer then explained the healthy financial report.

The election of officers onto the committee has tow new changes. George Venables and David Welberry were unanimously elected and all other posts were duly elected. Thanks go to Ian Morton and Phil Belton who have now stood down from the committee. Any other business covered a range of discussions that left the Secretary with plenty of ideas for 1998. The Section also agreed to purchase a computer with the help of regional funds. The fixture list of events will be posted to you as soon as possible.

Finally I close by wishing you successful greenkeeping and good golfing for the forthcoming year.

Graeme Macdonald



East Midlands

This year's Christmas Tournament hosted by Kilworth Springs GC attracted 28 members. Played in arctic conditions the competition had to be reduced to 9 holes as the course was becoming unplayable with all the snow! The winning scores were as follows:- Category 1 - 1. S. Goode, Scraftoft, 16 pts; 2. R. Barker, Kirby Muxloe, 16 pts; 3. A. Porter, Greatham Valley, 13 pts. Category 2 - 1. D. James, Scraftoft, 15 pts; 2. A. Bindley, Kirby Muxloe, 12 pts; 3. G. Robson, Lingdale, 11 pts. Trade and Associate Winner - G. Thurman, Charnwood Forest, 17 pts.

Our thanks go to Kilworth Springs GC for allowing us courtesy of their fine course and to the Steward and Stewardess for providing us with an excellent Christmas meal. Also I would like to thank Tony Burgoine and his staff for setting up a most challenging course. Finally our appreciation must be extended to our generous sponsors for the day, Rigby Taylor.

The day finished with a presentation of £750 to the Executive Director of BIGGA which will go towards the building fund at Headquarters.

This year's Better Ball Pairs Tournament will be held at Kedleston Park on Monday March 9. After the days golf an evening lecture will be presented. A free buffet is provided for anybody attending this day. If you have not received your entry form

please contact me and I will gladly forward you a copy.

Anthony Bindley

Mid Anglia

Our last golf event of the year took place in December at Chesfield Downs GC. The usual Texas Scramble format was used which attracted an entry of 23 teams of four comprising greenkeepers, professionals, trade members and guests. The course was playing very long on the day but some good team scores were posted, the results of which are as follows:- 1. C. Derham, D. Mason, R. Andrews, P. Bunn; 2. A. Grew, J. Clarke, E. Thompson, G. Bruce; 3. R. Howson, L. Rance, M. Dunleavy, C. Parnell. Nearest the Pin - Gary Snell, Welwyn Garden City GC; Longest Drive - Roland Perry, Harpenden GC.

Our thanks go to Chesfield Downs for the courtesy of the course and for looking after us so well on the day. The course was in excellent shape so thanks to Chris Brook and Eddie O'Hanlon for their efforts in making the day so enjoyable. Also thanks go to our main sponsors of the day, Avoncrop Amenity Products represented by Colin White and to all the other trade representatives who supported the Section event.

Midland

This report is probably the hardest to put together as we have not got much news to report on and the start of the new year always brings changes to the Section regarding the committee and future events. All of these events and the news on the AGM will be reported on in the following months.

As a committee we would hope to continue to give our members new venues for trips and competitions but we would also ask you to support your section and make these events worth the effort of organising.

We have had many new members join us last year and expect this trend to continue. With that I would like to introduce the first new members of 1998 - Alan Dickson, Derek Smith, Steven Tipper, Alan Shore, Timothy Earley, Shaun Pritchard and Richard Adlington.

Jonathan Wood

BB & O

Once again the main playing season is approaching fast, hopefully everybody has managed to complete their winter programme and are preparing

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Fraser Ross, Renfrew GC

their individual courses for the flood of golfers keen to blow the cobwebs of the clubs.

Looking back to last season the weather was kind to all of us with just enough rain to prevent the course turning into deserts. I hope this coming season is just as kind (is that too much to ask for?). At present we are putting together the fixture list for golf dates and venues and these will be posted as soon as possible.

On the education front remember that two local colleges are still running evening lectures:- Berkshire College - Golf Course Design on February 4 and Irrigation on March 4; Warren Farm - Irrigation and Conservation on February 25 and USGA Specification on March 25.

I know from experience it is difficult to go to all of the lectures but if you could try and make a couple of the above that would be great. A lot of the work that helps to make the Section run smoothly is carried out by the Committee and they tend to remain anonymous, well not any more below is a list of this years committee:- Chairman - R. Clark; Treasurer - R. Lucas; Golf Admin - A. Cooper & B. Wall; Handicaps - C. Vernon; Administration - T. French and R. Kates.

Finally I would like to make a plea to all members for some information to fill these articles. Anything that you would like to share with us maybe a humorous or embarrassing story please let me know.

Lindsay Anderson

Essex

Well, the first month of the year and Harrogate has passed and a report will appear in the March column.

Our first event of 1998 will have been held at Writtle College on February 3 with guest speaker, Frank Newberry giving us a taste of his expertise on supervisory management. Following on from the above, Frank will be our course tutor for our one day course to be held at Stockbrook Manor GC on March 10. The cost, including lunch etc will be £12. Places are limited to 12 on a first come first served basis. For further information please contact Martin Forrester on 01245 603131.

Our next evening lecture at Writtle College will be held on Tuesday March 17 at 7.30 pm in the main building, room L60 with Dr Alan Gange, of the Royal Holloway University of London, as our guest

speaker explaining micro-organisms and recent research.

We would like to thank Neil Peachy, Tuckwells and John Deere for producing the Essex Section fixture card for 1998 and for their sponsorship which helps to continue the success of the Section. If you have not yet received your fixture card please contact Martin Forrester on 01245 603131.

With our membership fast approaching 150 we would like to welcome the following new members and hope to meet them at one of our events in the near future:- Stuart Mackie, Five Lakes, Luke Robbins, Three Rivers, Eric Sherris, Canons Brook, Christopher Baldock, Romford, David Arter, Epping Forest, Tony Thrower, Burstead, and Wayne Chapman, Darren Dowsett and Michael Delue all from Stapleford Abbots.

I am always on the look out for information and news to write about so if you have any to pass on please contact me on 01702 522202.

Dave Wells



Sussex

The Turkey Trot was held at Littlehampton GC again this year. As usual we had a terrific day. David Woods and his team had the course in great condition and the clubhouse staff once again gave us a first class service. The committee have asked me to pass on our thanks to Littlehampton for continuing to hold this Christmas event. We were extremely lucky with the weather as it turned out to be a bright dry day. The competition was played as a Texas scramble in teams of four. The results are as follows:- 1. Ray Day, Colin Cathie, Richard Elderfield, Dustin Houghton, 60 pts; 2. George Barr, Stephen Blake, Bob Watters, Nigel Bailie, 59 pts; 3. Neil Cleverley, Carl Whyborne, Jon Budd, Eddie Docherty, 58 pts. Being part of the winning team was great fun, we laughed and joked through the whole round with all of us playing our part. Many thanks to our sponsors for the halfway bar and the prizes.

Well, that's all for now, I hope to have more news next month.

Colin Cathie

East Anglian

At last I hear you cry. Did I miss Crimble again and New Year? I'll have to stop eating the beef! Well, I hope you all enjoyed it.

Our last meeting was our AGM at Thorpness way back in December and what a day it was. It was a day that 3 desperados namely Virley, Kennedy and Lathrope (that's me) won the first prize in the Texas Scramble with a nett 51. Brian had to make do with a lemon, sorry mate. Other prizes were:- Longest Drive - Mr Witing, Nearest Drive - E. Hunter. Last year's shields were presented as follows:- Spring - Tim Russell, Summer - Alan Carter, Autumn - Ernie Hart, Winter - Tim Russell. The prizes were presented by Mr Duckworth, Vice Captain of Thorpness, and were donated by

CMW (main sponsor), Rushbrooks (Nearest the Pin), Kings (Longest Drive), Turfactant, Rhone Poulenc, Atterton and Ellis, SISIS, Headland, L F Engineering, Rigby Taylor, Colliers and Bob Chesham. There was also a presentation made to Ian Willett, our long suffering Secretary, for steering us through some very difficult times and now we are one of the strongest Sections in the Country. Our thanks also go to Ian and his men for presenting an excellent course (my team single putted 14 greens!).

After all that there was the AGM and the motley crew were re-elected on block. As AGMs go this was pretty quick at 20 minutes. One or two points were made namely trying to get more apprentice greenkeepers to come along. Last year we had two. I didn't think there were two in the whole country so the future is now secure! There was also the new/old face of John Carey among us. A long time ago when we had proper money and feet & inches John was the first Chairman of the East Anglian Section when we broke away from the South East Section back in BGGGA days and he had a lot to do with that breakaway. It is good to see him back.

At the end of the meeting £25 was collected from those not wearing BIGGA ties and this was presented to the McMillan Cancer Fund.

This year's venues are as follows - in March we are at Lakenheath. Please can you get your reply slips back quickly as we all have been checked for security reasons before we can enter the base! This promises to be a memorable day (and probably a nice one). The others are Stowmarket, The Norfolk and Sheringham. Looks like being a good season again.

We are also trying to sort out a match against the Essex men, probably on August 26 but watch this space. Our team came second in the Regional Final of the Hayter Challenge so well done lads.

Well, I think that's it except to say thanks again Thorpness, Hello Frank and see you on the first tee.

Mick Lathrope

Surrey

Many thanks to Walton Heath Artisans for allowing us to use their excellent clubhouse for our first quiz night in November. The turnout was not as large as hoped for but all who did come had an enjoyable evening. The winning team from Royal Mid Surrey was led by their Course Manager, Allan McDougall. Alan has promised to defend his victory in the next round, the date and venue to be announced.

The Surrey Turkey Trot was held at the Drift GC on December 12 and we thank Paul Weston and his team for a splendid game on a course they can be proud of. We also thank the Drift for their wonderful hospitality and delicious food. The results were:- 1. John Mathis, 40 pts; Nearest the Pin on 3rd - John Ross; Nearest the Pin on 9th - John Hobbs; Nearest the Pin on 16th - Dave Wyborn; Longest Drive - John Mathis.

All matches in the Huxley Bowl competition have been played and the final results are:- Winners - John Mathis and Robert Schofield;

Runners-up - Kevin Boxall and Gareth Roberts.

Brian Willmott

Kent

The Christmas AGM/Turkey Trot was called off due to snow and was rearranged the week after.

Despite it snowing as we started everybody got round and enjoyed the day. The course was in excellent condition considering the weather and thanks must go to Darenth Valley, Nigel Stapely and his staff. The food was, as usual, plentiful and I hope everyone had a good day.

Results: 1. L. Sayers, 43 pts; 2. P. Biscoe, 37 pts; 3. E. Elliott, 36 pts; 4. R. Purl, 36 pts; 5. H. Morgan, 35 pts; 6. D. Clements, 34 pts; 7. C. Moor, 34 pts; 8. E. Grant, 34 pts; 9. J. Fullager, 32 pts; 10. T. Hindmarsh, 32 pts.

Trade Prize. G. Sidders. King's Nearest the Pin. H. Morgan. Longest Drive. N. Gillham.

Sponsors on the day were Scotts and Avoncrop Amenity.

The Kent Section would like to thank all the companies who agreed to sponsor us last season. Without your support we wouldn't be able to survive.

The final of the Ritefeed Matchplay was played at Sundridge Park.

Results: 1. P. Biscoe and J. Edwards; 2. D. Clements and J. Cocker; 3. S. Ellis and J. Fullager; 4. T. Hindmarsh and R. Jackson.

We are currently looking at our venues for for this year. The fixture card will be sent out in March.

In May it is the Kent Section's turn to host the Regional Seminar. This will be held at Hadlow College on May 19. Please attend. You might learn something.

I have a request to all the people who moan that there is nothing in the magazine for Kent. Please send me a few lines or phone me with any news. I cannot report on nothing.

Our thanks must go to Ray Day and Sundridge Park for courtesy and to Ritefeed for their generous hospitality on the day.

Huw Morgan

South Coast

Our Christmas Turkey Trot, AGM and Christmas Dinner was once again held at Royal Winchester GC. The weather was great for the time of year with just a little nip in the air, in other words a nice December day. The course was as ever in its usual immaculate condition all thanks to Phil Hanks and his staff. Unfortunately I was not able attend the day however I am told that the Christmas Dinner was out of this world consisting of a carvery. Thank you to all of the catering staff for making the meal so delicious. We would also like to thank Mike Ring, of Rigby Taylor, and Nick Clarke, of New Forest Farm Machinery, for their generosity in sponsoring the days events. Last, but not least, we must thank the Captain, committee and members of Royal Winchester GC for once again allowing us the courtesy of the course and the clubhouse facilities. To this we are very much indebted.

The results of the Turkey Trot were very close. The first three were all on a countback on 39 points, the results being:- 1. Joe Newman; 2. Ian Noble;

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Duncan Peddie, Alloo GC

3. Ed McCabe; 4. Steve Kitry, 37 pts. Steve caused quite a bit of excitement out on the course. He managed to get a two on a par 4 hole so well done Steve.

After the Turkey Trot we held our AGM. This was attended by 66 members with the Turkey Trot having 57 members competing, the maximum the club could accommodate so well done to the extra nine members who attended the AGM. At the AGM we were graced with the presence of our new Regional Administrator, Paula Humphries. This was a good opportunity for a lot of the members to meet Paula for the first time.

The AGM went quite well, there were one or two changes to the committee. Our Chairman, Alan Mitchell stood down from Chairman and decided to leave the committee. This is a sad loss to the Section. Alan has done some stirring work on education and he has been mainly responsible in keeping our Section in the solvent position it is in. Thank you Alan for all the hard work you have put in, we wish you well in the future. As a lot of you know Alan is still continuing in the education of greenkeepers at all levels and is working closely with Sparsholt and the GTC.

Our newly elected Chairman is Tony Gadd. Tony has done an excellent job as our Tournament Organiser and fully deserves the honour of holding the position as our Chairman. We wish him all the best. Ed McCabe also stood down from the committee. Once again Ed is very committed to the education of greenkeepers. He has done a lot of work in organising our seminars and pushing for more members to achieve their D32s. Thank you Ed for all your effort. Two new members were elected to the committee - Phil Wentworth, from The Army GC, and Ian Noble, from West Moors GC. We wish them both well. It was proposed by Ken Lodge that Eric James and Bob Dennis should be made Honorary Vice Presidents of the Section. Eric was the Chairman of the Section back in the BGGGA days and had a big hand in the setting up of BIGGA in 1987. Eric is now retired from greenkeeping however a little bird tells me he is still keeping his hand in on a particular golf course. Bob was our Secretary for 9 years, he took over when we were struggling to find someone to fill the position. His contacts with Sparsholt College over the years have been priceless with seminars and committee meetings having been held at Sparsholt and liaising between BIGGA and the colleges regarding education. This is a small way of showing our gratitude for the work that Bob and Eric have done over the years.

The next event to take place is our Regional/Section seminar at Sparsholt on Thursday February 26. You should all have received the list of speakers for the day. For those of you who have returned your cheques and booking forms there is still time if you hurry. Contact:- Jeff Drake, 9 Villiers Walk, Newbury, Berkshire. Alternatively you can contact Ken Lodge on 01329 282362 or Tony Gadd on 01590 643746.

At this point I must inform you that Jeff Drake has moved to pastures new

as you can see by his address). Jeff has taken up the position of Deputy Head Greenkeeper at Newbury and Crookham GC. I am sure you will all join me in wishing him the best of luck in his new position. Until we get Jeff's new telephone number confirmed you may contact Tony or myself and we will try and point you in the right direction.

Our final winter lecture will be held at Crane Valley GC on Wednesday March 4. Did you sport the deliberate mistake on the programme? The speaker will be Gary Parker from ISS Aqua Turf Systems. This should be an interesting talk since so much depends on irrigation and its correct usage and it should create a good discussion platform. This will be followed by lunch and 9 holes of golf in the afternoon.

Another reminder for Westurf at Long Ashton GC on Wednesday April 29. This year we must be due for a nice sunny day. The last few years have been a bit on the damp side but to put the record straight I must say when Westurf first started the weather was glorious. My prophecy for Westurf 1998 - a fine sunny day with all attendance records smashed. Please don't prove me wrong. Bring along your Club Captains, Chairman of Greens, Club Owners etc. See you all on the day.

Ken Lodge



Devon and Cornwall

Our P J Flegg Christmas meeting was held at Okehampton GC, on Wednesday December 10, and was once again a sell out. The day started as always with our golfing members competing in a greensome format for the P J Flegg Trophy. Our non-golfing members were as usual treated to the guided course walk by head man Richard Wisdom. Both golfers and non-golfers were delighted to see the P J Flegg refreshment tent by the 6th green and inside Patrick and his staff treated members to snacks and drinks which set the Christmas atmosphere for the day.

After an excellent Christmas lunch our afternoon entertainer back by popular demand was Tank Sherman who entertained us for over an hour and he was superb. The day then continued with the mornings golf prizes for the P J Flegg Trophy being presented by Patrick Flegg to:- 1. C. Pine and S. Cresser, 33 pts; 2. S. Harris and P. Gross, 32 pts; 3. G. Tamblyn and D. Manley, 30 pts. The Presidents prize for nearest the hole on the 14th was presented by J. Palfrey to the winner, A. White. A special prize was donated by Laurence Davis, Deputy Head at Okehampton, for the best triers and was presented by Chairman S. Evans to M. Pike and E. Barber. Following our golf presentation we held two raffles, the first being for hampers kindly donated by Avoncrop and Peter Andrewartha and won by C. Rawlings and T. Gooch. The second raffle consisting of over 40 prizes concluded our day. The Section would like to thank Okehampton GC and all their

staff who made our day so special with a special mention to Richard Wisdom and his crew as they seem to improve the course each year.

A big thanks to the day's sponsor Patrick Flegg of P J Flegg and to our President John Palfrey who supplied the wine at lunch and also to all of you who donated prizes for the day.

Dates for your diary:- Avoncrop March meeting, Tuesday March 3 at Staddon Height GC; Rhone Poulenc and Supaturf April meeting, Wednesday March 1 at West Cornwall GC; Westurf Trade Show at Long Ashton GC, Bristol on Wednesday April 29.

Richard Whyman

South West

Despite the somewhat suspect weather forecast we enjoyed a Christmas competition in relatively dry but windy conditions around delightful Minchinhampton GC on December 10. This is a great venue for our winter tournaments as despite everywhere else being close or waterlogged, Minchinhampton remained puddle free and firm underfoot and a pleasure to play. I managed to team up with our new Chairman, Chris Sealey and we were given a lesson in how to play golf by Course Manager, Paul Wester and the Club President, Julian Gardiner. They managed to go round in a gross 72 as a foursome and not surprisingly took the top honours with 38 points. Second equal were J. Keenaghan & P. Greenway and M. Ford & D. Dobbie, 3rd were A. Parker & N. King and joint 4th were K. Green & M. Freeman and P. Baynton & D. Calvert. Thanks to the caterers Jim and Georgina, the Secretary Dave Calvert and of course Paul and his gallant band of men and indeed women for presenting the course in such fine condition. A special mention must be made for the trade who religiously support us at these events year in and year out. On this occasion it was Roffeys who very kindly supplied us with the wine on the table and the prizes. Other prizes were also given to us by Avoncrop, B S Mowers, Rigby Taylor, T H Whites and Vitax. Thanks to you all, it is very much appreciated.

Coming up we have an Abrasive Wheel course at Cannington on February 20. This is the re-arranged one from November. I will contact anyone that was previously booked but if anyone else would like to go on this essential course then give me a ring on 01380 828380. The Winter Tournament is to be held at Sham Castle GC on February 25. Please be there as we need all the support we can get.

Before signing off if anyone would like to put pen to paper or as is more often the case these days finger to computer and write something for the magazine then contact Robin Greaves, of Thornbury GC. I am sure there are many out there who have got stories to tell and things to say. Also if there is anything that you would like me to put in the Section report then just give me a ring. I always welcome a bit of help!

Marc Haring



North East

Seventy-seven year old Bob Walker BEM has now completed 50 years service with Cairndhu GC. Bob must be one of the oldest active professionals in the world of golf. At a dinner held in Bob's honour the Club marked the occasion by presenting him with a plaque. The dinner was attended by a number of local professionals including Peter Hanna-Fortwilliam, Colin Farr-Whitehead, Jim Robinson-Ballyearl and Bob's playing partner, Dai Stevenson, Royal Portrush. Five years ago he was awarded the BEM medal in recognition of his services to the Club. Jim Robinson also presented Bob with a special award, honorary membership of the PGA. Bob received the award for 50 years long service having joined in 1936. Bob started with Cairndhu GC in 1947 as the professional of Larne Town GC as it was known then based at Craighyhill. After about ten years the club moved to its present location and became known as Cairndhu GC. "It was only a nine hole course when I started initially. I only came here for a week or two, I was hoping to progress in the game but I fell in love with the place - it's so special" said Bob. Until a few years ago Bob was Jack of all trades. Besides the golf he was also the Head Greenkeeper and part-time barman. Now he just looks after the Pro-shop and gives lessons. "I still play the odd game, but don't take it too seriously now. I certainly don't feel like retiring at the moment. I intend carrying on for another year or two or three or four" he added laughing.

In his younger days Bob played on the professional circuit and played in the 1956 British Open at Hoylake. He recalls it was won that year by Peter Thomson. It is a great achievement for Bob Walker to accomplish 50 years service with one club. Cairndhu GC members young and old know what a great character Bob Walker is.

Finally, congratulations to Clem Beattie and his wife on the birth of their first child, a boy named Jamie, 7lbs, 6ozs.

Eammon Farrell

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