



Peter Boyd  
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SCOTTISH REGION

Central

A very successful AGM was held on October 30 at Gleneagles Hotel when Golf Course and Estates Manager Jimmy Kidd gave an excellent presentation on Gleneagles bid for the Ryder Cup, we are indebted to Gleneagles for extending us the courtesy of their facilities and to Jimmy for giving us an insight into a very complex and expensive document which his staff had to prepare and present in their bid to bring the tournament to Scotland. Well done to everyone at Gleneagles!

Twenty-five members were in attendance at the AGM and it was heartening to see a few new faces present, a number of fresh ideas were put forward for the committee to consider for the coming months. So watch this space!

Your committee for the coming year is Stuart Cruickshank, Chairman; Derek Scott, Vice Chairman; Andy O'Hara, Past Chairman, J. Crawford, Secretary/Treasurer; with A. Dunn and I. MacMillan, Patrons' representative, K. Brunton, Trade representatives P. Langdon and J. Finlayson. Following the meeting everyone made their way to Auchterarder Golf Club where we enjoyed a superb buffet lunch provided by Jim Finlayson, to whom we extend a big thank you.

Before I forget, very belated congratulations go to Ally Philp from everyone in the Section on being elected to the office of Captain at Comrie Golf Club in Perthshire, where he is also Head Greenkeeper. It must make it easier when the Captain is on the greenkeeper's side! I hope that is right as Ally's wife is a lawyer and the last time I made a mistake in some information about him he threatened me with a lawyer's letter.

We haven't had any new membership applications for a while but we are making up for that this month with 10, yes 10! We extend a very warm welcome to the Section to Kris Bilby, from Kingsbarns Golf Links; Michael Robertson, Barry Ross, Neil Smith, Glenn Cameron, Gary Douglas, Fraser Cochrane, David Goldie, John Mitchell and Colin Haldane, all from St Andrews Bay. Hope to meet you in the not too distant future at some of our events.

The Section nominees for this year's Patrons' Awards are Robbie Breingan, from Muckhart GC, and Donald Gardner, from Scoonie GC. Congratulations to them both and I hope they enjoy the Harrogate Experience.

Remember time is running out for you to buy/sell your allocation of Club 2000 tickets before I give you a very public reminder. It now costs £60 in postage for one mail shot to Section members so it is much cheaper to give you a gentle reminder via this column!

John Crawford

East

Welcome to this month's column. A few things to get through this month as there was nothing of interest for the column last month. Well here we are just a few days away from Christmas and New Year so where has the year gone? The next thing we know it will be time for Harrogate and 2004. Well down to section news, the Autumn outing was held at the new course at the MacDonald Cardrona Hotel Golf & Country Club with 30+ members playing and the majority of people said they had a great day with nice meals, the course in excellent condition and also good weather. A big thanks to the management of the Cardrona Hotel for courtesy of the course. Course Manager, Robert Hogarth, and his team for the condition of the course and the hotel staff for the welcome received and the way they looked after us also thanks to everyone who ran the tournament in myself and Steve's absence. Here is the results of the day:- Best Scratch (Stuarts Quaich) Danny Murray 77, 1st class (Watermation Cup) 1. S. Cunningham 79-3-76; 2. T. Murray 83-5-78; 3. C Noble 85-6-79. 2nd Class. (SGM Cup) 1. R. Prowse, 83-11-72; 2. A. Russell, 86-11-75; 3. A. Campbell, 87-11-76; 3rd Class (STS/Rigby Taylor Cup) 1. R. Bullouch, 92-14-78; 2. Robert Hogarth, 101-19-82; 3. J. Dalrymple, 122-21-101. Best Nett (Russell's Quaich) R. Prowse 72 Nett, Veteran Prize (Eddie Holt Trophy) J. Nielson 113-21-92. Trade Prize (Autumn Trade Cup) Ian Henderson 93-9-84. New Members' Prize. M. Littlejohn 90-8-82. Guest Prize. Peter Boyd 79-3-76. Aggregate Trophy Spring & Autumn - (Bill Beverage Trophy) Alan Campbell.

By the time you read this the AGM and Annual Dinner Dance will have

passed us once again and I hope all in attendance at the dance will have yet again had a great weekend so all information from the dance and the AGM will be in next year's magazine, (think about it). If you are going to BTME 2004 I hope you have got your place on the BIGGA trip booked or your B&B booked as I've heard that the rooms are becoming hard to find so I hope you are lucky in your search for accommodation and I look forward to seeing you there.

Well done to Ian Watson, Gullane, and Colin Noble, Cardrona, as they are the winners of the Patrons' Award for the East Section this year, and I hope you both enjoy your trip to BTME 2004. I hope both of you can write a small article for the forthcoming edition of 'Greenkeeper International'. Well that's it all for this month and this year, before I go I would like to thank my committee for all their hard work over the past year, patrons for all their help (ie. raffle prizes, Help etc. etc.) so a big thanks to all of you for the past year.

So myself and the committee would like to wish you and your families a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I look forward to seeing you in the new year if you have any news for the column let's hear from you so we can get it into print as soon as possible. All the best.

Chris Yeaman

Ayrshire

Hello, hope you are all well and ready for the Festive Season. The Section AGM was held at Irvine Bogside Golf Club on Thursday October 30 where it was unanimously agreed that Derek Wilson should carry on as Secretary, Chairman and Vice Chairman stay unchanged as Martin Lothian and Marshall Sloss enter the final year of their respective positions. Stephen Higgins, from Ardeer Golf Club, joins the committee.

The Patrons' Award winners are John Mair, Beith Golf Club, and Michael Wilson, Moffat Golf Club. Congratulations to you both and I am sure you will enjoy yourselves at Harrogate.

The spring outing will be held at Prestwick St. Nicholas on Thursday April 29 with tee times from 12.30.

A good day was had by those of us who ventured to Scotsturf last month. There was plenty of machinery on view and it is always nice to bump into friends and colleagues from times past and present.

That is it for now except to say "Seasons Greetings to you all" and feel free to give me a call on 01292 478606

Dennis Tweedle

North

No new members to report this month, but overall we have done alright in members this year, so hopefully that trend will continue

The section AGM took place at Peterhead GC on October 16. There were one or two changes in the committee in that John Geddes, of Ellon GC is now the Chairman of our Section and Steve Sullivan is now the Vice-chairman. Dale Robertson of Newmachar GC is the new Secretary taking over from Dougal Duguid, of Westhill GC. Dougal has put many years of service into the running of the North Section and is going to remain on the North committee for another year to help out. I would like to thank Dougal on behalf of the members of our Section, for all his efforts over the years and wish him all the best when he begins his new role as the Scottish Vice Chairman.

Donald Patience, of Tarbet GC, has joined the committee and is a welcome new face. Donald and Hugh Mclatchie are this year's patron winners and will attend a luncheon in Stirling and also Harrogate in the spring. Their support to the Section is much appreciated.

There were 34 at Peterhead and they all had a good days golf and were well fed. Our thanks go to Hugh Mclatchie and his staff for the condition of the course and for the hospitality of the club for the day. The day took the form of an outing and this produced more people turning up for the AGM than in previous years. A first for Peterhead is the installation of electricity to their workshops. This came as a major shock to Hughie and his staff.

Scotsturf is again coming around this month and it does not seem any time since last year. Hopefully there will be a good turnout for the show as usual from the north as it is an important part of the greenkeeping calendar.

I would like to thank Campmuir for their open day at Nairn GC. The day was very well attended and we were all well fed and watered, very important for the under nourished of our profession. It gives the greenkeepers a chance to catch up on what's new in the product range, plus it gives a great opportunity





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to speak to other greenkeepers about the trade in general.

On behalf of Dale Robertson of Newmachar GC, I would like to thank Alpha plus who invited Dale on a trip to the states with their company. An enjoyable time was had by all.

Iain Gunn



## North Wales

Christmas has come early for our Match Secretary, Jeremy Hughes and his wife, Jane, on the birth of their first baby girl, Mille Tayler. Jez will have to hang up the golf clubs now for a while he is up all night with feeds and pushing the pram around Llangollen on the weekends. Well done, Jez & Jane, the fun starts here!

Mollington Grange's Course Manager, Alwyn, has attained his 'black belt' in karate and has agreed to come up to Harrogate to keep the peace in all the camps. He is also hiring a special 'Hong Kong Fuyei' guise for the event.

BTME now just less than seven weeks away so have you booked your accommodation yet? The place is full to bursting already so if you leave it any longer you might be staying as far out as Leeds and having to bus it in.

Don't forget these dates 20, 21, 22 Jan, all the latest in technology and products plus all your educational programmes and seminars you cannot stop learning and cannot miss this event.

Toro once again took clients on a trip to Spain last month and Darren Anderson was invited over to test all the latest machinery on offer.

I got an e-mail from Alec Davies last week who emigrated with his family to New Zealand just over 12 months ago and has got a job working at Russley GC in the south island living in Christchurch. He was telling me of building a new green from hollow cores – the surrounds were turfed as normal and the sub soils and root zones placed and contoured he then took the core collections from approx 14 - 15 of the other greens and then spread them evenly out over the prepared surface to achieve a thin but complete consistent coverage. Keeping a small pile to one side for any later abnormalities he applied fertiliser and a foliar feed and again after 10 - 14 days rolled and applied more feed within the month a fully rooted surface just needs sand dressing (twice a week) regular water, dependant upon weather conditions and mowing 14 - 16 days. The full 14-stage programme is on a word doc, should anyone require it give me a call.

This just leaves me to wish you all the very best for Christmas and a prosperous 2004.

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Mesen Cymru, Andrew Acorn

## Northern

I must start this month with an apology, as you will all have noticed the lack of notes in last month's magazine. This was due to me being on holiday at the time of the submission date, sorry for that. If you are interested I had a fabulous time on the West Coast of America.

Anyway, down to Section News. September saw our Invitation day take place at Wetherby Golf Club on a warm and sunny day. David Hannam and his team had the course in great condition for members and their guests. The winners on the day came from the host club with Dave Hannam and B. Jowitt (45pts) pipping Alan Baxter and A. Taylor on a count back. In third place came Phil Roebottom and B. Wragg (44pts) followed by Chris Hill and R. Smith (43pts). Nearest the pin prizes went to B. Wragg and Frank Stewart. Big thanks must go to the host club for their hospitality and courtesy of the course. Rigby Taylor who sponsored the event again put on a splendid prize table.

October saw our autumn tournament (sponsored by Bob Wild Grass Machinery) and AGM take place at West Bowling Golf Club. The weather again was another warm affair with no rain. Benny Hill and his staff had done a sterling job on the course, which everyone who played appreciated. The catering staff also took good care of us, and again thanks to all at West Bowling and our sponsors at Bob Wilds.

At the AGM we had a disappointing 33 members present and with two apologies for absence where were the other 270 of you? A lot of debate about the lack of interest at non-golfing events was discussed and it was decided not to run any more social functions for the time being. The committee is the same as last year with the exception of Andy Slingsby who was voted on to the committee. It was also good to have Peter Larter, our Regional Administrator, present at the meeting.

Late October we had our Dog Race night with only six greenkeepers out of 20 on the coach. A great night was had by all with no doubt a few sore heads and empty wallets felt the next morning.

Our next event is our nine-hole Christmas Competition that is at Elland Golf club on December 10. £16 per person a week before the event with limited places available. Tee off is at 1pm (Shotgun Start) so can everyone be at the venue no later than 12noon. Dress code for the event is smart casual (no Jeans, trainers or collar-less shirts please).

I hope you have all made arrangements by now to either visit the BTME exhibition and/or some of the educational workshops in Harrogate next year, as time is fast running out as we race towards that time of year again.

That about wraps up another year for me. May I just finish by wishing you and your families a very Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

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Dave Thackray

## North East

Retired Alnmouth Village and Warkworth greenkeeper and local celebrity, Willie Holden, hasn't been too well recently. He suffered a heart attack and a stroke last November and was in a coma for two weeks but after some time in hospital he made some progress and got back home, even though he was wheelchair bound. Speech also proved difficult for Willie at this time and for anyone who knows him, this was very frustrating.

Unfortunately, in August this year, Willie suffered another heart attack which meant another month in hospital. He's back home in Lesbury now but he is currently paralysed from the waist down. However the good news is that Willie's speech is back to normal so his wife Brenda is now suffering from the old witty comments that he is renowned for.

All members of the greenkeeping fraternity wish Willie continued progress along the road to better health.

Jimmy Richardson

## North West

Hello again. It is November 3 as I write these notes, and I was just reading about the annual threats of the postal workers, airport staff, fire fighters and rail workers going on strike again, as is usual in the build up to Christmas. If they do go on strike I suppose the buckets will be getting shaken again to support them. It's a good job greenkeepers don't go on strike otherwise the strikers would have nowhere to spend their spare time.

Little or no news has reached me from section members so the report will be quite short. Daniel Chamberlain, from Manchester Golf Club, was appointed Head Greenkeeper at Whitefield Golf Club and I feel sure he will be the right man for the job. The National Tournament at Coxmore and Hollinwell Golf Clubs was well supported with 90 players, but only five from the North West. Perhaps we will have better support next year as the tournament will be in the Leeds area.

That's it for now other than to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year. Hope to see you all at Harrogate.

Bert Cross

## Cleveland

By this time members read this the festive season will be fast approaching. So may I wish all BIGGA members a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

As soon as we are back to work after the holiday break thoughts will turn to the BTME show at Harrogate. I am sure that the turf management industry now believes that it is the major show of its kind. Our Section always gives the show excellent support and I'm sure that 2004 will be no exception. Our highly respected Chairman, Tony Smith, of Teesside Golf Club, is giving a talk on



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'Stress in the Workplace'. Get along and heckle him! Tony has also become a Deputy National Board Member – Well done Smiffy.

Some news from the Richmond boys. Congratulations go to Anthony 'Titch' McGeough has recently passed his NVQ 3 – Greenkeeping. He has since chosen to progress onto an HNC course at Askham Bryan. We wish him continued success! I'm told the top man at Richmond, Tony "The Fringe" Burge, hasn't been too well recently. However my spy informs me that he still pops in most days to make sure that the lads are keeping "his" place right. Hope your recovery continues Tony.

The final piece of news from North Yorkshire is that Richmond Golf Club staff are constructing a new green 'in house' to an amended USGA spec. We hope the weather holds until the job's done, boys.

I recently popped into Headlam Hall Hotel and Golf Club, near Piercebridge, and what a lovely little spot it is. Chris Fiddel, formerly of Billingham Golf Club, has helped with the construction of a smashing little 9-hole course. One particular par-3 has the green built out into a lake. What a little tester that will be when the course opens next June. All of the greens have a pop-up irrigation system and a new fairway mower has just been ordered. Some local golfers have already joined and Chris and the management have made plans to get the balance right between use by hotels guests and members. Good luck to Chris and his staff.

Don't forget lads, any news to TC on 07831 214879

All the best, Terry "El Prez" Charlton

## MIDLAND REGION

### Midland

Welcome to the "Christmas Special" edition of "Around The Green".

To begin with, something I forgot to mention last month. Rigby Taylor held their annual "Stableford Doubles Tournament" at Gay Hill Golf Club on 24 September. The course was in excellent condition as produced by Mr P. Woodham and his excellent team. You all should be very proud of your track gentlemen. Our thanks to Gay Hill GC for making us so welcome, and of course thank you to Tony Cheese for organising such and to Rigby Taylor for it's kind sponsorship. The winners on the day being N. Bird and R. Carter. I'm sure next year's event shall be as successful.

For the last 19 years our Section has annually played a 36-hole competition, consisting of morning greensomes followed by afternoon singles, against the East Midland Section. The match was held at Edgbaston Golf Club, and as always, the course was immaculate. A fine tribute to the skills of Mike Hughes and his superb team. Mike how on earth were you able to organise the fly-by of Concorde? The match's score finished at 11.5 to 3.5 in the East Midlands favour. Well done to the East Midlands, your company was a pleasure as always gentlemen. Our greatest thanks to Edgbaston GC for affording us their kind hospitality, and yet again thanks to Rigby Taylor and Tony Cheese for organising and sponsoring the event. The overall score to date is 15-4, to us.

I have the lovely pleasure of welcoming Mr A. D. Throssell, of Gaudet Luce Golf Club, to our Section. We all look forward to seeing you at our many differing events Adam.

Don't forget the Section's AGM is to be held at Enville Golf Club at 4.30pm on 9 December. Please attend. Your views, opinions and council are of huge importance.

For the last 12 months you have been subjected to my reporting of the Section's news, events and general goings on. I have endeavoured to report such within our humble notes with a degree of joviality, sincerity and humility. I hope you have enjoyed such, and a huge thank you to all that have provided me with the bones for our notes. Indeed ladies and gentlemen, without your support these notes would not be possible. Anything to report? Then please call the Schwillbilly hot line on: 07816 410552.

On behalf of the committee, I would like to wish you all a very merry Christmas. "Now, where's that Mead?"

Sean McDade



## BB&O

Has it rained yet? I keep asking this because it is quite incredulous that the answer could still quite possibly be an emphatic NO! It is even possible the greatest rainmaker known to mankind, bonfire night has not stirred the soul of Aquarius. I guess we have much overseeding ahead of us next spring but there is plenty of time left to contemplate the actions required. Our AGM went off without any problems at the Springs Golf Club. At least 50 people attended; so many in fact that I lost count. We now have our new Secretary, John Scoones, Course Manager at Caversham Heath GC, and Treasurer, Mitch Stewart, Deputy Course Manager at Henley GC. Mark Day, of Tacit, will be representing the trade and producing the editorial for the Around the Green news. If you wish to contact Mark with any news you can always ring him on: 07887 723377. We would ideally like to see someone take up the position of chairperson. If anyone would like to come onto the committee in this, or any other capacity we would welcome the support.

May I post a very special thanks to two committee members who have finally decided to rest from such activities, Lindsay Anderson, Course Manager at Badgemore Park GC and Adrian Cooper, Managing Director at the Springs GC. These two characters have been committed to moving the BB&O Section forward for over ten years so much respect is due their way. Also thanks Adrian for the organising the chips and sandwiches for the lads. You keep a smooth pint of Boddingtons on tap! Next years fixtures have been finalised and are as follows: The spring tournament at Badgemore Park GC on April 22; the summer tournament at Calcot Park GC on June 24; the autumn invitational tournament at Caversham Heath GC on August 11 and the Winter Turkey Trot at Parasampia GC on November 4. You will be receiving a fixture card, similar to last year but a new improved version with more detail on the events being held. Thanks go to Mr Alan Wright for organising the print of these cards and TH White for sponsoring the cards.

I was sorry to hear that Ray Clarke has left as Course Manager at Harleyford GC. He has gone into his own business and we wish him great success with his new venture. I am pleased to report that my Deputy at Maidenhead GC, Christopher Mitchell, will be taking over from me as Course Manager in December with Barry Gardner stepping up as Deputy Course Manager. I wish them the very best with their endeavours at the club. I know the members think highly of them, which, in this day and age, is gratifying indeed. It just leaves me to thank all those members who attended the Section dates this year and I wish all our members, your families and loved ones, the very best for Christmas and the New Year ahead.

David Haskell-Craig

## Mid Anglia

The Section's third competition of the year was held at Berkhamsted Golf Club at which we had 33 players attending. Our thanks must go to Gerald Bruce and his team for the superb condition of the course, knowing how difficult it has been this year with the severe lack of rain, well done to all involved. Also thanks to the Berkhamsted Golf Club for their hospitality on the day.

The results of the day were as follows: 1. Geoff James 36pts, John O'Gaunt; 2. Gerald Bruce, 35pts, Berkhamsted; 3. John Smith, 33pts, South Beds. Alan Grew, Berkhamsted, won the Longest Drive, and Mark Day, Tacit, won Nearest the Pin. Thanks to Driving Force Leisure for sponsoring the day and to our other reps for their donations to the prize table.

With our Spring, Summer and Autumn competitions we use a scoring system to find out who the most consistent player is, so the more you play the more points you could gain and like Gerald Bruce become Player of the Year. Gerald will receive a Trophy and a £250 voucher which will go towards a weekend break that has been kindly sponsored by Turner Groundcare. Kevin Armstrong, John O'Gaunt, was runner up and Nigel Phelan, St Johns Hospital, was third.

The Autumn competition also means the AGM and thanks to all those who attended. Officers elected to stand for committee were - Chairman; Steve Mason; Vice Chairman, Frank Scullion; Secretary and Treasurer, Gerald Bruce; Match Secretary Richard Saunders and other members John Wells, Colin Robinson, Mark Ellis and Bob Butfoy.

May I now take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year and let's hope we have a bit more of the wet stuff next year.

Steve Mason

## East of England

The annual match between the EOE Section and the Secretaries' Association went down to the smallest of margins before the result was decided. After eight matches the result was 4-4. So the rules stated we got a result on holes won and the outcome was nine holes up to eight with the Secretaries winning by one hole.

Thanks to Jim Birkett and his staff at Holme Hall for producing an excellent course enjoyed by all.

Nearest the Pin went to G. Macdonald, Longest Drive went to R. Welford.

Thanks must go to Tim Cannon and David Hornsey, of Cannons Turf, for sponsoring the day. New sponsors for 2003 and we hope for many years to come.

The last golf day of the year was played at Carholme GC where new Head Greenkeeper, Stuart, and his staff produced a good testing course thoroughly enjoyed by all. Hope you settle into your new position Stuart. Lawn Mower Services were the sponsors for this competition and we thank Chris Overton and Dave Hampshire for all the wonderful prizes.

The winners on the day with a net score of 60 were J. Hewson, G. Cooper and G. Macdonald. Second with 60.5 was I. Batty, P. Fell and I. Roberts. Longest Drive went also to I. Batty and Nearest the Pin went to R Welford.

The AGM followed the meal and after some lengthy discussions the new committee was elected.

Stuart Clayton was nominated on as a committee member and Les Howkins was elected as Secretary. Graeme Macdonald will stay on as Deputy Regional Board Member after 10/11 years as Secretary.

The Order of Merit Blazer was won by Graeme Macdonald, of Newark Golf Club. The blazer will be kindly sponsored once again by Nigel Lovatt, of Lely Toro.

New positions to greenkeepers in the area are R. Welford taking the post of Head Greenkeeper at Immingham; Stoke Rochford has a new Head man, Retford has a new Head man and Seacroft has a Head Greenkeeper and as mentioned Stuart, at Carholme.

Congratulations to local greenkeepers Russ Moody and Tim Jones for winning the Stirrup Open in October.

Thanks to all, Graeme Macdonald

## East Midlands

This year's Rigby Taylor golf match against the Midland Section was held on October 20 at Edgbaston GC. The day started badly for our side with the late withdrawal of our lowest handicapper Ian Marshall, meaning we would be one short. However Tony Cheese, of Rigby Taylor, stepped in as a late replacement to save the day. The weather was set nice and sunny with a good forecast, helping everybody to look forward to the day. After our morning Greensomes we took a very healthy 4 points to 1 lead, with Gavin Robson & Stephen Mackie winning by 4 & 2; Jeff Dickinson & Russell Allen, Steve Goode & Greg Skinner, Anthony Bindley & Adie Porter all winning their games by the narrowest of margins 1 up. The only defeat came in the first game of Tony Cheese and Chris Brown.

After lunchtime refreshments of soup and sandwiches it was time for the Afternoon Singles. The Section previously have never fared too well in this format and had only won the trophy three times in 18 years. However each and every player put in a determined effort, enabling us to win 6 games, halve 3 and lose only the 1. Stephen Mackie enjoyed the biggest winning margin 8 & 7. The other winning players were Russell Allen, Adi Porter, Anthony Bindley, Gavin Robson, & Greg Skinner. The most amazing fightback was from Chris Brown who came from 4 down to halve his game. Steve Goode & Jeff Dickinson also fought hard for their half.

The eventual result was a winning score of 11 1/2 points - 3 1/2 points. Our thanks should go to Geoff Little & Tony Cheese, of Rigby Taylor, who organised the day. Mike Hughes and his staff for setting up such an excellent golf course, the Steward & Stewardess for a great meal, and Edgbaston GC for allowing us courtesy of their fine course.

Finally a special thank you should be extended to Rigby Taylor for sponsoring the day, and to all those members from both sides for participating in a great event.

Jamie Bedford would like to thank all those Greenkeepers who attended the Seacroft weekend, which included Steve Goode, Gavin Robson, Adi Porter,



## Around the Green

Dave Leatherland, Greg Skinner, Kevin Kinzer & David James. The winners over the two days were Dave Leatherland & Steve Goode. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Seacroft GC for courtesy of their fine course.

Antony Bindley

### SOUTH EAST

#### Essex

On behalf of the committee and myself I would like to wish all of you a Happy New Year and let's hope the weather in 2004 will be a lot kinder than this year. I would also like to thank the trade for their generosity for either sponsoring a golf event or donating prizes for the raffle. Without their support the days would not be as successful.

With no golf days to write about although Dave Beale has virtually organised the 2004 Golf Events, your personal fixture list will be with you earlier than last year.

Here is a review of 2003's Education Events. The Spring saw a full house and successful manual handling and fire training courses held at the Burstead. Our first two day tractor driving training has had some excellent feedback and with the next one to be held in February, which is already full, I have already started to compile a list of names for the Autumn and Winter 2004 courses. Anyone wishing to add their names to the list or would like to attend the professional image/communication 1-day course (already have 7, we need at least 12) at the Burstead, costs £30. Please contact me on 07984 867939 in the daytime or on 01245 603131 in the evening.

Finally here is my recent moan from a golfer at the Essex.

He complained to one of my lads that the fairways were too hard and this was due to the lack of slitting carried out this year. What weather has he been enduring over the last 12 months? It makes you wonder what planet these people come from.

Martin Forrester

#### Kent

Not much news to report this month, please don't forget about the Winter golf day which is being held on December 10 at Birchwood Park Golf Club, if you want to participate but haven't received a form, give me a call and I will have one sent to you.

Congratulations to Steve Suttle, Course Manager at Northforeland Golf Club for completing the London to Brighton road race.

All that it leaves me to say is I hope that you all have an enjoyable Christmas and good New Year.

Phil Belton

### SOUTH WEST & SOUTH WALES

#### South Coast

The end of another year and it has certainly tested all our skills as greenkeepers. The Section has been quiet over the last month so it leaves me time to thank our sponsors for all their support over the year. Without valued sponsorship we could not provide such good Seminars and golf days so a huge vote of thanks to all our sponsors who have given both their time and money to the section. We look forward to working closely with you again next year. A couple of reminders next. You have all received details of the Amenity Technology sponsored coach trip to BTME by now and I can honestly say the event is one every greenkeeper should attend at some point. It really is a highly rewarding week and the sponsored coach allows you to attend at a very reasonable price, so let's see some more faces from the section there! The final touches are being made to our Section seminar which will be held at Canford

Magna Golf Club on February 26 so put the date in your diary. This just leaves me to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year on behalf of your committee and when you are making those new year resolutions give some thought about supporting your Section more next year.

Until next month., Alex McCombie

#### South West

A great day was had at Marlborough Golf Course, despite the continuing drought the course was in great shape, the walk around was well attended and was superbly conducted by Marcus and as usual raised some interesting topics for discussion.

Team results:- First place went to Mark Prentice, Mike Sage and Martin Samuels, Second place Roger Neil, Chris Sealey and Derek Farrington. Nearest the pin par 3 Pete Seviour, nearest the pin in 2 Pete Habbard.

The AGM went smoothly as I am reliably informed, no change in your leaders unlike the Conservative Party, I wonder which one of us has "a bit of the night about him" I've got my money on Nobby! Only joking another well organised day we are all very grateful.

There doesn't seem a month goes by when I'm not congratulating Robin Grieves on another new job. Anyway congratulations on your appointment with Countrywide.

Congratulations to everyone at Minchinhampton GC upon winning the best newcomer category in the BIGGA Environmental Competition, a superb effort. From my own experience I know how tough the judging is and the work involved to get to the stage of being judged. £500, that should buy a few pints of organic beer.

Don't forget your training requirements. The management and computer training days I have organised with BIGGA were filled within days, so the need must be there, but yet again I can only run these courses when the demand is there so contact me. The next event is at Landsown Golf Club on Tuesday, December 9. No course walk. I find it hard to believe that when you are reading this it will almost be Christmas, so may Santa bring you all your desires and festive cheer.

Guy Woods

#### Devon and Cornwall

Our first Autumn Meeting was held at Truro Golf Club on Wednesday, October 22. The day started with 26 members competing for the D.O. Hunt Trophy, a Stableford format which produced some fine scores. The winner was Jacko "The Bandit", from Tehidy Park, with 38 points. Runner up was Gordon "The Yips" Tamblyn, from Mullion GC, also with 38 points and third place went to Craig Martin from Falmouth G.C. with 37 points. Head Greenkeeper, Jim Sheehan, and his staff presented the golf course in superb condition and thanks to Jim's deputy Steve Tiddy for escorting members on the customary course walk. A few more thanks, firstly to Truro Golf Club for allowing us the use of their excellent facilities, the caterers for putting on a splendid lunch, to the bar staff for keeping the lads well watered and last but not least, to our sponsors for the day, Don Hunt, of Roffeys. Don has been an ardent supporter of our section since its inception in the 1970s and I would like to thank him for his support.

The final of the Vitax Matchplay, a knock-out competition, which runs through the Summer months, was also played at Truro Golf Club with the Home Club's Head Greenkeeper, Jim Sheehan, beating Peter Rendell from West Cornwall on the 21st hole. Jim was presented with £100 of Marks and Spencers vouchers by Joe Crawly, South West Area Manager of Vitax and runner up Peter Rendell received £40 of Marks and Spencer vouchers. The section would like to thank Vitax for their continued sponsorship. The day concluded with a raffle with prizes kindly donated by the trade. We have also introduced this year a prize draw for members attending the course walk. A signed copy of Jim Arthur's book "Practical Greenkeeping" was won by Bill Mitchell, of Perranporth.

Dates for your diary:- Wednesday, November 19, Section AGM. at Bigbury GC; Wednesday 19/20 November, Regional Seminar at Cannington.

If you have any news or views for this column, please do not hesitate to contact me on 01822 617671.

Steve Evans