



SCOTTISH REGION
Peter Boyd
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North

Three new members to report this month and they are John Robertson, from Camperdown GC, Dundee; Derek Lithgow, from Banchory GC, and Willie Rusk, from Torvean GC. Welcome to the Section.

The spring outing has been set for Forfar GC on May 7, and by the time you receive this magazine the outing will have just passed. The Autumn outing has, as yet, not been fixed up.

The Scottish Championship is at Turnberry in June and should be popular so if you are interested then you had better get your entry back quickly to avoid disappointment.

The Secretary has asked me to inform you that there are training courses available from BIGGA this autumn, or which are subsidised by BIGGA for £30 per one day or £60 per two day course. These courses need to have about 10 people attending and can be about anything which you may want training in, from health and safety, to computer training, book keeping etc. If you need any more info then phone Dougal Duguid on 01224 740329.

Anyone willing to nominate their club for the AGM in October can do so by phoning Dougal as well.

Also should anyone with 200 club tickets return them as soon as possible if you have no intention of purchasing them. Return them to Andy Wilson of Brechin G.C.

Finally congratulations to Jim McCormick, of Kirriemuir GC, for trying to raise £3400 for the Anthony Nolan Trust, which is a very worthy charity providing bone marrow for patients suffering from leukaemia and other bone marrow diseases. Good luck and I hope the Section will support Jim in raising some cash. Jim being of athletic mould anyway, will nip up and down Mount Kilimanjaro quicker than it takes Hamish to buy a round of drinks. Come to think of it, that gives Jim about three weeks. Cannot be named for fear of legal action and automatic appearance in the Rangers News. That is just too much to contemplate.

I hope the weather is kind to you for the coming month and the season gets to a good start, we all need it.

Iain Gunn

Ayrshire

Hi everyone and welcome to yet another enthralling edition of Section News.

Commiserations first to the Golf Club Secretaries after sustaining their fifth straight defeat to the greenkeepers by six matches to four. Prestwick St Nicholas played host to the annual event with the sun shining and links in immaculate shape and a good day was enjoyed by all, so I'm told.

Dunsky Golf Course bathed in warm April rays was the venue for the spring outing on April 17. Results: Scratch . S. McBlain. First Class. 1. J. Mair; 2. W. Mercer; 3. G. Morrison; 4. B. Aitken. Second Class. 1. P. Tulloch; 2. G. Haughie; 3. D. Norquoy; 4. J. Paton. Trade Prize. A. Cruickshanks.

Our thanks to the club for allowing us the day, to the catering staff for looking after everyone and to the Green Staff for presenting such an excellent layout.

BIGGA Chairman and Ayrshire Section member, George Brown, provided the after dinner speaking so I'm sure all in attendance will have felt they got a good

bang for their buck that day.

Rigby Taylor has generously donated a trophy for the Second Class winner. We appreciate your support.

Tuesday, September 16 is the date set for the Autumn Outing and concluding leg of the Harry Diamond Jug, Beith GC being the location.

Good luck to all the Ayrshire members competing in the Scottish National Greenkeepers' Championship being played on June 17 over Turnberry's Kintyre course. I'll be shocked if the trophy were to cross the county line after all the scores are counted. So you can take that as the gauntlet being thrown, other Scottish Sections.

People on the move recently include Section member, Barry Crawford, from Old Prestwick to Southern Gailes and possible future member, Kerr Rowan, from Paradise... I mean Turnberry, also to Southern Gailes. I'm sure they'll both enjoy getting in on the ground floor of what promises to be another exceptional venue in Ayrshire. All the best lads.

Call me on 01292 478606 with any news or funny stories, or something.

Have a nice day.

Denis Tweddell

Central

We begin this month's report with the sad news of the recent tragic death of section stalwart Alex Robertson from Grangemouth Golf Club. Alex died as the result of a road accident last month. Our sincere condolences go to his family at this very trying time. (There is a fuller article concerning Alex in the magazine).

New members joining us this month are Kenneth Currer Smith, from Scotsraig Golf Club; Alex Nimmo, from Stirling Golf Club, and Adam Head, from Auchterarder Golf Club. We extended a warm welcome to them and as usual hope to see them at some of our future events. Kenneth actually attended the Spring Tournament at St Andrews Bay so we had an early opportunity of meeting him.

Speaking of future events, you already have the date for the Autumn Tournament at Alloa Golf Club. Another date for your diary is the one that every member wants to attend, The AGM, which will be held on October 30 at Gleneagles. Plans are also underway to present an educational type workshop in early October at a local college, when the speakers will be an Employment Solicitor, a college Head of Department and two Course Managers. Fuller details of all events will be included in future Section reports, but in the meantime if you wish further information please contact Ian MacMillan on 01337 857294. Forms for all events will be mailed to you shortly.

The first golf tournament of the season was held on April 29 at St Andrews Bay when 60 members and guests enjoyed playing over the Torrance Course, which was in excellent condition on what for many of us was the only dry day of the week, (yes, the weather appears to be shaping up as in the last few years, rain, rain and more rain!) Our sincere thanks go to everyone at St Andrews Bay, especially Course Manager Neil Ballingall and his staff, the bar and catering staff for keeping us fed and "watered" throughout the day and to Golf Co-ordinator, Graeme Dawson, for all his assistance in making the day possible.

Thanks also to everyone who assisted on the day issuing and collecting score cards, selling raffle tickets etc, with special thanks to all the patrons of the section for their continued support.

Prize winners were as follows.

Best Scratch. Simon Crawford, Gleneagles, 74. Best

Nett. Paul Conway, Drumoig, 70. 1st Class 1. Alan Paterson, Gleneagles, 79 bih; 2. Charlie Macdonald, Crieff, 79. 2nd Class 1. Kenneth Smith, Scotsraig, 76; 2. Gordon McRae, Ratho Park, 79 bih. 3rd Class 1. Mike Horkan, St Andrews, 83; 2. Gregor Butter, Drumoig, 84. Stewart's Quaich. Simon Crawford, Alan Paterson, Gleneagles, 153. Patrons. Kevin Brunton, Greentech, 77. Guests. Shane Nicol, St. Andrews, 73 Mike Dennis prize for highest score at 15th Hole, Dennis's Dream. Derek Scott, Scoonie, 8.

Congratulations go to Kenny and Fiona Duncan on the birth of their baby daughter Amy and also to Allan and Kerry McCulloch on the birth of their baby daughter Amber. There must be something in the water at Dunfermline Golf Club as Kenny is Head Greenkeeper and Allan his deputy. News on the rest of the staff will follow shortly!

John Crawford

West

Welcome to this month's Section news.

April 3, Secretaries vs. Greenkeepers match hosted at Prestwick St Nicholas GC. Our Section was represented by Gavin Jarvis (Secretary) and Gerry Bruen, Williamwood GC, whom, I may add, won their match to give the Greenkeepers victory on the day and to retain the trophy for a second year.

Everyone who attended thoroughly enjoyed the day where it continued to be blessed with fine weather which allowed Head Greenkeeper John McLaughlin and staff to present an excellent conditioned course. Congratulations to John and staff, members and council of Prestwick St. Nicholas GC for hosting this event.

April 10 saw Renfrew Golf Club host the Greenkeepers-Convenors competition sponsored by Richard Aitken and SGM. Competitors attended and enjoyed the continued good weather and excellently prepared golf course, all down to Fraser Ross and crew. I personally thoroughly enjoyed my day and look forward to returning soon. Our playing partners on the day certainly enjoyed their day. East Kilbride GC picked up first place with Millport GC coming in a very close second only to be beaten on a count back on BIH. Second year running for Millport Golf Club, make it third time lucky in 2004! Brian's hoping we will be blessed with such a fine spring in 2004 as East Kilbride GC host this competition next year. That's what you get for being so lucky on the greens Brian.

The committee would like to congratulate Fraser Ross and staff for an excellently prepared course so early in the season, members and council of Renfrew GC for their warm welcome and hospitality and finally a big thank you to the sponsors for the day, Richard Aitken and SGM, as without them such enjoyable days would not exist.

May 1, Spring outing, hosted this year at Hilton Park GC. The fine weather just had to come to an end, unfortunately for John Robertson and staff a few days prior to this event. Thunder and heavy rain returned and continued until the morning of the competition, some heavy showers interrupted maintenance but the greens staff were able to present the course in a playable condition. A very big thank you to John and his greens staff for making sure the competition was played. Also to members and Council of Hilton Park GC for their warm welcome and use of their facilities not forgetting everyone attending on the day, in non-favourable conditions, who bravely attempted a round of golf. Some excellent scores were posted considering the conditions. Results are as follows:

Scratch. C. Goodhall, 72. Category 1. 1. Gerry

Bruen, 72-2-70; 2. S. Taylor, 72-0-72; 3. James Ellis, 77-5-72. Category 2. 1. Wallace Wilson, 91-18-73; 2. S. Brawley, 89-14-75 BIH; 3. Daryl Robertson, 93-18-75. Category 3. 1. Neil Middleton, 89-20-69; 2. David Mowatt, 91-19-72; 3. Martin Fabiani, 107-26-81. Visitors prize. James McCall, 87-18-69. Trade prize, Kenny Hunter, 80-11-69. A quick mention for Colin at Blairbeth Golf Club. You can pick up your prize for the worst score from Gavin Jarvis. Oops! Sorry Colin I wasn't supposed to mention that!

That's all the reporting this month, as always, if anybody has any information to put in the magazine contact me on tel/fax:- 01416 445783

Douglas McIntosh



Cleveland

Firstly, the members of the Cleveland Section wish Dave Jobey all the best in his new position as Head Greenkeeper at Consett Golf Club. His replacement as First Assistant at Brancepeth Castle is Andrew Welsh, promoted from within. Good luck too Andrew! You'll need it working alongside super Kev!

The Spring Tournament was held at Brancepeth Castle Golf Club on April 30. I had a round with the lads and everyone thought that the course was in truly excellent condition especially with the very long 'strange' weather we have had this spring. Congratulations to Kevin Heslop and his staff and a big thanks to the club for their excellent hospitality (the steak and kidney pie was delicious).

Results were as follows: 0-9 Handicap 1. Jim Thompson, Darlington; 2. Phil Hargrave, South Shields. 10-18 Handicap 1. Mark Brown, Brancepeth Castle GC; 2. Marc Kerr, Middlesborough; 3. Ian Holoran, Middlesbrough Mun. 19-28 Handicap 1. Ian Pemberton, Bedale; 2. Roy Applegarth, Richmond; 3. Eddie Coulthard, Crook. Trade. 1. Alan Cordingley (bandit); 2. Neil Thompson.

These members are expected to represent the Section in the Northern Region finals later in the summer. The date is yet to be confirmed. Please inform Barry Walker if you cannot make it once the date is passed on to you all. As the competition is taking place 'in our patch' at Middlesbrough Municipal GC. All members should do their best to support the event.

Barry Walker won the Turfcare Specialists Ten Pin Bowling qualifier in Newcastle recently and he will play Tony Bell in the final in May. Tony, who is Head Groundsman at Middlesbrough Football Club won the Teesside Heat. May the best man win.

Just a quick mention from Bill Thompson of Border Sports. He's just had a new knee-joint and now he's having trouble with the other one. We'll have to call him the bionic man. They can re-build you, William!

Finally, on behalf of the Section, can I wish Dave Coulson, of Sunderland Football Club, success in his future, wherever that may be. Dave, a Section member, has just been made redundant by the club following the massive financial losses.

Any news to T.C. on 07831 214879
Cheers, Terry "El Prez" Charlton

Northern

Flaming June already. Can we really be half way thorough the year? I hope all your courses are in tiptop condition and the members are enjoying the fruits of

your labour!

A great day and night was had by all who attended the Spring Tournament at Kirkbymoorside Golf Club. A hot day in the 70s and a large turnout with some old and new faces making appearances made the day kick off to a good start. Ian Donaldson and his greens team produced a fine and testing course for us all to enjoy. Our joint sponsors for the day were Alpha Amenity and Headland who put on a fine prize table of golfing goodies for the winners who were as follows. Scratch Cup Alan Baxter. Div 1.1. Dave Collins; 2. Richard Harris; 3. Andy Clarke. Div 2. 1. Roy Armitage; 2. Ben Besau; 3. Richard Smith. Div3. 1. Michael Gregson; 2. John Dobson; 3. Dave Gardener. Nearest the Pin was won by Richard Harris. Simon Heppenstall and Mike Brear won the trade prizes. A great meal and a few beers followed by a presentation to Les Kirkbright in recognition of his support of the Section over many a year. Many thanks once again to our sponsors and Kirkbymoorside for all their help in setting up the day.

Our next golfing event is President's Day at Pike Hills Golf Club on June 12. Tee off from 1pm. Sponsors for the day are Bob Wild Grass Machinery. The usual £16 cheque a week before the event payable to "BIGGA Northern Section" will reserve you a place.

The roses match will take place at Cleckheaton Golf Club on Wednesday, August 13. If you would like to be considered for the team could you let one of the committee know by mid July.

The section is also trying to put another football team together to play in a tournament between Rigby Taylor, Sheffield Section and a Leeds United team. The event will take place some time in September at Thorp Arch. Anyone interested, please let me know.

Welcome to Lee Dacre, of Oulton Park Golf Club; Anthony Payne, of Cave Castle Golf Club; Philip Carter, Richard Smith and Terry Smith, all of Low Laithes Golf Club, who have recently joined our Association.

Speak to you again next month. Happy Greenkeeping

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Dave Thackray

Sheffield

Hello to all in the Sheffield Section.

Firstly, I would like to thank Steve Patrick, of Blackburn Rovers, and Keith Kent, of Twickenham, for sparing their time to come and visit us at Rotherham Golf Club and entertaining us for our February lecture. And to Mike Brear of Rigby Taylor for fixing up the event.

I would also like to thank Mr Bob Taylor of the STRI for such an informative lecture about wildlife upon golf courses and how we, as greenkeepers, can help with the preservation of nature.

I would also like to thank Rotherham Golf Club for their support, giving us a venue for all our Section meetings and lectures.

And not forgetting to mention our sponsors for our golf days ie Gem Professional, Mansfield Sand, Textron and Rigby Taylor.

Now, after all the formalities and thanks are over, and now that spring has finally come, it is time for a new season of golf competitions. Our first competition was held at Lindrick Golf Club on April 30 and I think that I can speak for everyone who attended, that Lindrick Golf Club was in excellent condition and our thanks go out to Lindrick for their generosity in allowing us courtesy of the course, and to Kevin Hazelhurst and his team for presenting such an

excellent course. Well done lads!

The results are as follows, 1. C. Hopper, 38pts; 2. D. Chappell, 35pts; 3. S. Wells, 32pts; 4. J. Lax, 32pts; 5. G. Wells, 31pts; 6. S. Pickering, 31pts, and best guest, M. Self, 36pts.

Because our first tournament was a qualifier for the Regional Golf Tournament, the qualifiers are as follows: Handicap 1-9 D. Chappell, G. Wells, M. Holden and reserve M. Knowles

Handicap 10-18 C. Hopper, S. Pickering, I. Whitehead, and reserve R. Tyson.

Handicap 19-28 S. Wells, J. Lax, A. Linley and reserve G. Brammah.

Details for the competition will be sent out as soon as they are available.

Lastly I would like to thank James and Graham, of TT Pro Turf, for sponsoring the event and for donating the excellent prizes for our prize table.

Our next competition will be held at Chesterfield Golf Club on July 23.

See you soon

Chris Astle

North Wales

Our Spring Tournament was held at Mile End Golf Club last month and a detailed report of the results will be in the next issue.

We still require members willing to put their courses forward for hosting a BIGGA golf day this applies right across the North Wales Section as we do like to spread the locality of these events to include everybody. We currently have no dates as yet for the Spring, Autumn and Christmas Tournaments for the 2004 season so if you wish, contact a committee member to discuss helping out. This we would be grateful for – Jez Hughes, Terry Adamson, Wendy O'Brien, Trevor Johnson, Andy Campbell, Stuart McCall, Don Pemberton or myself. Don has put forward his course at Vale Royal Abbey for the N. Wales vs N. West match next year.

I would also like to thank Dave Orchard, and GEM, for their kind sponsorship of this day as they have done for the last number of years.

We somehow struggle for a team of 12 players for this match. This year's was held at Ringway Golf Club. Thanks to them and to Jim Grainger and his staff for presenting a great golf course.

North West had a full team of 12 but our Section could only muster up seven players, so we decided to draft in a few extras and had 21 in total playing a Stableford event – we had approx five out of the six top scores so North Wales won back the shield for 2003.

If you feel you may be able to play in this event next year please contact us.

The Spring Seminar held at Carden Park was a great success and will be hosted again next year – we will try to bring the date forward to the middle/end of February which may help those of you with early work commitments in March. If you have any issues or ideas about the event please let us know.

Keith Holmes retires this month from his long and dedicated service to golf greenkeeping. For the last eight years he has been working at Carden Park, before which he was at Old Padeswood, Wrexham, Dunham Forest, Bolton Lostock Park to name but a few. We wish him all the best and perhaps his wife, Freda, will see a bit more of him now he's not on all those early morning starts.

Two other greenkeepers from Carden Park helped out at the Benson & Hedges tournament at The De Vere Belfry last month. They were Simon Ashley and

Ian Leary.

Bill Lawson, ex Heswall GC, EGA/BGGA and BIGGA, reaches the grand age of 70 next month. We wish Bill all the best for then, still very active in his love for the profession and great friend of Derek Green, from Royal Liverpool GC. I think that Bill will be of active support come three years this July at Hoylake.

And that's it folks see you next month. Any views, news or information, please contact me on: Home 01925 263394 Fax 01925 269622 Mobile 07778 162162 e-mail acorn@golf@supanet.com Mesen Cymru Andrew Acorn

North East

Tyneside GC played host to our Spring competition on April 30. Our thanks to the Head Greenkeeper and his staff for the excellent condition of the course considering the weather we have had. Not the perfect start to the season.

Special thanks to the following sponsors: Turf Care Supplies; Border Services; Aitkens; Scotts; Aventis; Greenlay; Shorts. Thanks once again for your loyal support.

Best nett. A. Doig, Tynemouth GC, 79-6-73; Best gross. A. Dalby, Warkworth GC, 79; Assistant's Cup. B. Wilson, Stocksfield GC, 83-9-74; J. Hood, Linden Hall, 80-5= 75; J. Richardson, Hexham 84-8-76; J. Storey, Alnmouth, 81-5-76

Qualifiers for the Regional final will be notified in due course and, for once lads, you will have a short journey this year as I do believe it will be held at Middlesbrough sometime in August.

The Autumn competition has been fixed up and for the first time it will be held at Bellingham GC. For those who have not played it before I suggest you give it a go and you will be pleasantly surprised at the layout of this track.

One other thing springs to mind. Can anyone tell me why numbers are dropping at an alarming rate for the spring and autumn comps? We, the committee, are now getting worried. It was not so long ago we would have 35 people playing now it's down to 20 at the most. We have given it a thought ourselves, maybe we could change the tee off time to the afternoon so you don't need all day off. If you come up with any suggestions either give myself a ring or get in touch with either Steve Pope or Russ Black as we will listen to your ideas. One thing that causes a problem with the spring comp is when Easter is as we try to keep a full week clear either side. Hence why this year was later than usual.

Jimmy Richardson

North West

Late April and at last we have some much needed rain. Strange as it may seem the April showers kept away, and the long dry spell with cold winds did not do anyone any good. It seems that hollow tining and top dressing seems to be the norm in modern greenkeeping during March, but this year we had hardly any growth during April due to the cold spell, so many greens suffered... and so did the greenkeepers. As usual the club members had watched The Masters, and then complained because their greens were not as good as Augusta. You can't win them all.

I had a phone call from Alec Davies the other day. Alec and his family have emigrated to New Zealand and he tells me that they have had no rain for almost

four months, but most courses have wall-to-wall irrigation systems so it's no worry to them. The family are enjoying the change I am sure, but he said greenkeeping is quite different out there with different growing conditions, and pests and diseases, but he said that golf committees are just the same as here. I wonder what he meant?

There will be Regional courses available for the autumn of 2003 and spring of 2004. The cost of the one day courses are £30 + VAT, and two day courses are £60 + VAT. There will be a minimum number of delegates for each course. Eg. four for a chainsaw course and six for a management course. The cost of these courses include tea/coffee and lunch. There is a long list of courses available so if you feel your staff might be interested, please ring me or Ken Richardson at HQ and we will arrange the course for you.

The match between the N/West Section and the N/Wales Section was played at Ringway Golf Club on Thursday, April 10. I was not able to attend but I am told that Jim Grainger and his staff had the course in great condition and with many changes since we last played there. The N/Wales Section could not field a full team, so I understand a Stableford game was arranged. Many thanks once again to GEM Professional for sponsoring the day.

The next golf will be the Summer Tournament at Deanwood Golf Club on Thursday, June 12. All applications to Bill Merritt, The Lodge, Beacon Park Golf Club, Beacon Lane, Dalton Up Holland, WN8 7RU, including a cheque for £20. Soup and sandwiches will be served at 12:30pm, and an evening meal and prize presentation after the golf. Tee-off time is 1.45pm.

That's it for now but give me a ring with any news on 01517 245412 or mobile 07761 583387.

Bert Cross



MIDLAND REGION
Peter Larter
Tel: 01476 550115

East of England

You will be pleased to know that the East of England Section is still alive and kicking. There has been no news from the Section for some time now, but hopefully we will be putting pen to paper more often from now on.

Throughout the winter we had two well-attended seminars by Frank Newberry and Dennis Mottram and a visit recently to Cannons Turf.

Frank talked on the "New Supervisor" and Dennis enlightened us with his new talk about "Water and the Golf Course".

Both seminars were well attended and already we are booking this coming autumn courses and seminars.

In April we had an evening tour of Cannons Turf Farm and a talk by Ben Petitjean of Barenbrug. Thanks to Tim Cannon and staff for a well organised visit. About 20 members were well fed and watered and were delighted to see some quality turf growing in our area.

Our first golf day was the best-attended start to the season for quite a few years. The Section played over a windswept Burghley Park GC which was in its usual excellent condition thanks to David Salisbury and his staff.

Rigby Taylor sponsored the day and we express thanks to Stuart Jeffs for donating some great prizes.

Prizewinners were: 1. Mike Smith nett 71; 2. Gary Salisbury 71 (on count back) 3. Daniel Wells 72. Longest drive went to G. Macdonald. Nearest the Pin went to David Wellberry. Trade prize went to Ian Mauwer.

Welcome to our new members Gordon Cooke, of RAF Conningsby; Nathaniel Smith, of Belton Park; Jonathan Hubbard and Derek Beba, of Tydd St. Giles. Graeme Macdonald

BB&O

What a fantastic start to the summer with clear blue skies and plenty of sunshine. It is a shame the grass found this all too much for good growth but firm putting greens left golfers with good pace on the surface and a requirement of skill to keep the ball under control when going for the pin. Now we have sweet rain to ensure we all run around like headless chickens trying to control the rampant growth. There is no such thing as a seasonal pattern when it comes to predicting what weather is around the corner year on year. Interesting times I am sure you would agree.

Recently I requested feedback on any Section members who wanted to take up any training in our area that could be of benefit to your personal circumstances or golf course. I have received no requests so far so I wish to raise this issue once more. A course will only run if there are enough members to make it viable but the list of courses is extensive. If you are interested in what these are then contact BIGGA HOUSE or me for more details. The costs are incredible, only £30 + VAT for a one-day course or £60 + VAT for a two-day course per person, including lunch. These courses only run if a certain number of candidates is reached but these numbers are often low, typically 4-6. Please give this some thought, as the deadline for applications for these courses is July 16.

I see we continue to attract new members so I wish to add my own personal welcome to those joining this Section in our Association. I will send out the current list of golfing events to each new member but if anyone does not receive this then please call me and I will send a copy.

Our next golf event is at Donnington Valley Golf Club on July 1 and is sponsored by Tacit. This event is an 18 hole Stableford with teams of four. Our start time is 1pm so those attending please try to arrive in plenty of time to get booked in as we make up the teams to play on the day. This event will be followed by an evening meal in a wonderful old building overlooking the course so if your golf has been pitiful, there will certainly be a delightful end to the day. Cost is the usual £25 and cheques must be made payable to BB&O Section. These can be sent to me at Holly Lodge, Pond Lane, Hermitage, Thatcham, Berks, RG18 9RN. If you need to phone then call me on 07778 765021. With no Section news coming my way I wish you all success in your respective clubs. At least with the passing of time we are left alone to grow grass and not vegetables!

David Haskell-Craig MG

Midland

As some of you may be aware, in the past I have competed in the noble sport of Ballroom and Latin dancing. At the Vale's evening meal, M. Bryan must have mistakenly picked up his Latin outfit. All in black and looking rather Latino, I was unaware he also indulges in the prancing arts. Perhaps we may now

call him Zorro or Enrique. Wish on, chap!

The Spring Tournament was held at the Vale GC. Our thanks to M. Heath and his fine team for presenting the course in such wonderful condition, a great tribute to your skills. Also our thanks to the club's Captain, Mr. J. Eastoe for his kind welcoming hospitality. The results of the day: Best Gross, M. Hughes. Best Nett: N. Bird, D. Fellows, R. Carter, M. Bryan, N. Gilkes. Our thanks to M. Raynor, of Avoncrop, for sponsoring the main prize table. Also thanks to Ruffords for sponsoring; Longest Drive, M. Hughes, and Nearest the Pin, D. Fellows (with a hole in one). Cheers for the drink, Dave.

It was also very nice to see four new faces: S. Raybould, A. Moss, J. Moverley, and P. Rainford.

Anyway, let's get down to some educational possibilities. From letters of application and CV, dealing with peers, supervisors and trainees, through to presentation of reports and verbal communication with committee and members. At all levels, effective communication is perhaps the greatest tool at one's disposal. Andy Smith, yet again on your behalf, is organising an "Effective Communication" course to be run in the autumn. The course is a full day at a cost of approximately £40 per person. Cheap at half the price, and I personally look forward to attending. All interested please contact Andy on: 07977-145091.

It gives me great pleasure to welcome seven new members: D.A. Hood, R.I. Stretton, A.T. Thompson, R.C. Walthew, R. Williams, G. Jarvis, and finally, S.T. Beveridge. What a great name, and yes I know! Should you or indeed existing members require a list of events, please have no hesitation in contacting me on: 07816 410552, or visit the BIGGA website at: www.bigga.org.uk.

Also could you all amend your records in regards to G. Cunningham's (Treasurer) post code, such should read: ST15 8FG.

Now a tempter for all you who like dangling your worms. Is anybody interested in a Course Fishing Match at a private pool, with prizes and grub to boot? Allen Southam, of Hanson Aggregates, has kindly offered the Section the afore with full sponsorship, and after speaking with him, I get the feeling that the fishing is rather good. Opportunities like this don't come along every day. Let's take advantage. Interested? Then call myself or Allen on: 07976 853777.

And finally, good luck to I. Cureton, A. Quaterman, and R. Dimmock, in their new positions. Also, well done to T. Cheese in qualifying to play in The Open Championship qualifiers. We are all behind you Tony. Do us proud. What a great achievement, wishing you the best of success from the Midland Section. Looking forward to reporting the results of the Snooker and Darts evening next month (kindly sponsored by N. Tyler of Alpha Amenity). Anything you may like to share with the Section, please let me know.

Cheers

Sean McDade

Mid Anglia

It was decided at a recent committee meeting of the Section to contact all Course Managers or Head Greenkeepers. We are looking for your views on what type of training courses you would like held in our area. This is in response to the cancellation of two computer training courses due to lack of interest. We would be grateful for positive feedback as the cost of putting on courses is the lowest it has been for some time, due to subsidies from HQ.

Onto other news. Sad to hear that Paul Lockett, of

South Beds, is leaving greenkeeping to pursue a career in landscaping. Paul was very active in BIGGA for many years putting a lot of effort in for the benefit of others and we wish him every success and happiness in his new vocation.

Sorry there's not much news, if you have anything you wish to pass on to your section comrades please contact me or any committee member.

Have a good summer.

Jim Cassidy



SOUTH EAST
Derek Farrington
Tel: 01903 260 956

East Anglia

April 15 saw the first match of the season, when our merry band of 44 arrived at Waldringfield Heath Golf Club. Keith Titshall and his boys had made a splendid job of the course, despite not being able to water due to a punctured tank liner. The greens ran true and the weather was very pleasant, all in all a very good day was had by all. We wish to thank Matt Bartram, Tony Nelli, from Bartrum Mowers, and Ian Mitchell, from Textron, for being our main sponsors for the day also Ellis Cummins, from Sovereign Turf, for sponsoring Nearest the Pin and Longest Drive. I would also like to thank Derek Morella, the new owner of the course, for allowing us to play. Please pass on our thanks to all the staff for the excellent service we received on the day.

So to the winners 0-10 H/cap 1. N. Brewster, 71 net; 2. P. Howard, 75 nett on countback; 3. A. Carter, 75 nett. 11-18 H/cap 1. S. Thompson, 68 nett; 2. J. Timms, 70 nett; 3. Ian Willett, 73 net. 19-28 1. G. Rayfield, 67 nett; 2. R. Ransome, 68 nett; 3. K. Titshall, 75 nett. Trade and guest 1. N. Ashman; 2. E. Clarkson. Longest Drive R. Boyce, Nearest the Pin S. Thompson.

The two representatives for the BIGGA National Championship are N. Brewster (best gross 76) and G. Rayfield (best nett 67). The coverted toilet seat went to Toni Nelli by popular request for forgetting to put down half his team members on the application form. The next meeting will be at Bury St. Edmunds Golf Club on June 17, this will include the Captain/Greenkeeper Shield.

On behalf of the section may I thank the following sponsors for their support at this meeting – Rushbrooks & Son, SISIS, Lely UK, DFL, Atterton & Ellis, Consultant Clarkson, Bayer, Tomlinson Groundcare, Ben Burgess and John Deere. Colin (EI President) has been hard at work as usual and has managed provisionally to book all the courses for 2004 (see fixture list). On a more personal note my granddaughter, Sky, is nearly 2 and has picked up the habit of nicking her mother's mobile phone and calling her nanny, Christine, from time to time. It's nice to know she is getting her priorities right. Ha Ha.

See you all at Bury
Ian Willett

Sussex

The Sussex Section can be incredibly lucky with the weather or incredibly unlucky. The Spring Meeting this year was a lucky one! Willingdon Golf Club provided not only a wonderful course under the care of Peter Negus, some wonderful hospitality in the Clubhouse, but also some wonderful weather.

Now Mike Ring, of Rigby Taylor fame, has a

reputation for being a really nice guy, an honest and trustworthy representative of his Company. He does not, however, have a reputation for being an average golfer. If the Section could give him more than his 28 handicap they would gladly give it. He has won the "Longest Walk" prize more than most. He assures everyone that he has not been practicing or had lessons so you can imagine the surprise when Mike not only took the 'Trade Prize' with a nett 72 but tucked away a 5-iron on the 142yd 10th for A HOLE IN ONE! Willingdon Golf Club have a tradition of placing a bottle of scotch and glasses on the bar with an invitation to help yourself. In addition Mike treated all to copious quantities of wine with their evening meal. Well done Mike and well done Mike and Rose Gould for organising such a great day.

Other prize winners on this John Shaw (Machinery) Ltd sponsored day were:

Best Gross. 1. Lawrie Tremlett (Nationals Qualifier); 2. Ray Day; 3. Mike Gould. Best Nett. 1. Jon Hill (Nationals Qualifier); 2. Rob Hudson; 3. Peter Negus. Longest Drive: Matt Hutchinson. Nearest the Pin: Trevor French

The next Sussex day is at Piltown Golf Club on July 2. We need more members there.

Jon Budd

SOUTH WEST & SOUTH WALES

Tel: 01288 352 194

Course Management Trophies

The dates this year are:

Wednesday 6 August Tredegar Park
Thursday 7 August Bristol & Clifton
Wednesday 13 August Moors Valley

Invitations have been sent out. If you have not received an invitation and would like to play please contact Paula Humphries on: 01288 341418

South Coast

With The Masters behind us the golfing season is well and truly upon us. Who would have had money on Mike Weir winning? I had my money on the Tiger but what do I know? I tipped Arsenal for the Premiership and that just about sums up my skill in betting!

The last month has been slightly busier on the Section and at last we have had some rain. I'm pretty sure that we can thank Ashley Wood's Head Greenkeeper, Tony Hyde, for the much needed rain. With no rain for weeks and the imminent arrival of the Section at Ashley Wood for the spring tournament I have it on good authority Tony was out twice a day with his prayer mat. Thankfully for him and the rest of us it worked! The 27 hole Spring Tournament was again sponsored by Vitax and Avoncrop and the weather stayed kind for us although the wind made for some very testing conditions. We played 18 holes in the morning then had a much needed lunch before playing a further 9 holes in the afternoon. The standard of golf was excellent considering the testing conditions and winners on the day were:

1. Tony Gadd, 61pts; 2. Alex McCombie, 58pts; 3. Alan Magee, 56pts; 4. Fred Deamen, 55pts; 5. Phil Wentworth, 54pts. Under 25's: Mark Gray Longest Drive. Rob Wills. Nearest the Pin. Paul Jackson.

Many thanks on the day to Ashley Wood for their superb Hospitality; to the caterers for two excellent meals and special thanks to the Captain for his

generosity in supplying the wine for dinner. A huge vote of thanks to Tony Hyde and his hardworking team in producing first class conditions for us. I told you not to worry about it, Tony! We cannot thank enough our sponsors of the day, Vitax and Avoncrop. The prize table was superb and we must thank Colin White and Joe Crawley for all their time and effort! More on Joe later! Lastly, many thanks to Chris Sturgess. Your hard work is much appreciated!

I was fortunate to attend an excellent two day course on presentation skills and public speaking last month along with five other greenkeepers. The course was run by the dynamic Frank Newberry who passed on some excellent skills to maximise presentations to committees, members etc. All of us left the course feeling more comfortable and confident about our future presentations. The course was much needed by me, particularly as I have been included on the list of speakers at the National Education Conference at Harrogate next year.

We must congratulate Moors Valley's Ian Noble on his excellent run in the London marathon recently. Ian crossed the line in just under three hours raising over £600 for the RNLI at the same time. A superb all round effort, Ian. Well done!

On Saturday night my wife and I attended the closing performance of Carousal at the Cricklade Theatre in Andover. So what you say! Well, the show was staged by the Andover musical and operatic society and the cast included our own Joe Crawley and his wife, Lisa. Joe was cast in the lead role of the bad apple Billy Bigelow and his wife played Julie Jordan who, needless to say, falls in love with Billy. I have to say I haven't enjoyed a show so much for a long time. Joe was superb and gave a faultless performance that I will remember for a long time. The whole cast led us superbly through this epic love story. I also learnt that night that the famous Anfield theme 'You'll Never Walk Alone' wasn't written by Gerry and the Pacemakers! Thank you Joe for an excellent night and I'm already looking forward to Oliver next year.

The draw has been made for the 2003 Jim Fry Pairs Knockout Competition. All of the entrants should know who they are playing by now. So let's make life easier for Phil Wentworth by completing the matches promptly and ensuring that we phone the results through to him immediately after the match.

It was good to hear that a great friend of mine, Rob Crouch, has once again joined the rank and file of greenkeepers after taking a couple of years out of the profession. Greenkeeping has certainly missed you and I know you will be an excellent addition to the team at Canford Magna. Welcome back Rob!

Our next meeting is the Invitation summer tournament on Thursday, July 17 at Stoneham Golf Club. The day will be sponsored by Huxleys and Rigby Taylor and the format is fourball better ball. Cost of the day is £18 per person and cheques made payable to BIGGA South Coast should be forwarded to Chris Sturgess at 40 Kinsbourne Way, Thornhill, Southampton, Hampshire SO19 6HB.

Until next month.

Alex McCombie

South West

I shall start with the results from Thornbury. 1. S. Richards, D. Smith and A. Knight. Gross. 64, Nett. 61; 2. R. Louisson, N. Turner and C. Sealey. Gross. 67, Nett. 63; 3. P. Goodwin, M. Sage and J. Acton. Gross. 68, Nett. 64. Nearest the Pin. M. Sage, Nearest the Pin in two, D. Smith.

Our thanks to Steve and his team at Thornbury for

the use of his course. It's a shame there weren't more in attendance to appreciate it. I ended up winning the book for attending the course walk by the simple fact I was the only one there (boo, hiss). The book will be presented at the Summer Tournament. I shall keep trying.

Our accounts are looking very healthy again for which our thanks must go to our Patronage supporters MJ Abbotts, BS Mowers, Amtec, Bioseed, ALS, Symbio, Avoncrop.

Could we have the trophies back for the summer tournament please.

See you at Orchardleigh Any news?
Email greenkeepers@bathgolfclub.fsworld.co.uk
Tel: 01225 483486 Mobile: 07812 380936
Guy Woods

Devon and Cornwall

As I write this report, I am looking out of the window with a huge sense of relief as the rain has finally arrived. We have had 9mm of rain in the past 7 weeks and with no irrigation at Yelverton, it has been a very difficult few months. Looking on the brighter side, no irrigation means no burst pipes, which usually occur on a Friday afternoon., Don't they Richard.

Our Summer meeting sponsored by Rigby Taylor, will be held at Trethorne Golf Club on Tuesday, June 17. Tee off times will be between 1.30pm and 2.30pm with a course walk for non-golfers followed by an evening meal. Full details will be sent out to you shortly.

Next season's meeting venues have almost been completed and I am looking forward to meeting up with many old friends and new faces.

Alan Dommet, of Devon Garden Machinery, is recuperating after his recent operation and we all look forward to seeing him out and about in the near future.

Please contact me if you have any news for next month's magazine on: 01822617671.

Steve Evans

South Wales

Our first competition of the year was held at Langland Bay GC playing for the Amtech Shield. Not to be put off by the dreadful weather, some 40 members competed. In first place with 39pts was Daryl Bray; 2nd on 38 was Peter Lacey and third with 35 pts was Alan Crichton.

Thanks to Langland Bay for looking after us so well, especially Ian Harwood and the greenstaff for the preparation of the course. Thanks to Liam Galway, from the Greenkeeper Supply Company, for donating some excellent prizes on the day, and for helping out with the prize giving.

Our Section seminar held at Royal Porthcawl GC and sponsored by Symbio was another great success. Neil Carter got things going with a brief talk on course ecology, this was followed by part one of Martin Ward's presentation on microbial activity. At lunch local John Deere dealer, Frank Sutton, displayed some of the latest John Deere kit, and then it was back inside to listen to part 2 of Martin's talk. A big thanks to Symbio, Frank Sutton and Royal Porthcawl GC for making the day a good one.

On a lighter note, Cardiff GC Course Manager, Russell Anderson, has just become the proud father to a baby girl. I spoke to Russell at Langland Bay and he told me mother and baby are fine and so far he has not had to many sleepless nights.

Adrian Panks

NORTHERN IRELAND

I begin this month by offering condolences to Michael Norman, from Malone, on the tragic loss of his brother. Our sympathies go to you from all of your colleagues and friends.

Well, how's the form, Congratulations to Ian Harrison and Victoria on a baby girl, April. Ian says breast feeding is difficult while cutting the fairways, but he is getting the hang of it (cutting fairways that is).

If you have any news for me regarding matches and hatches or anything else please call me N/I: 07774 789111 or R.O.I: 0504 24777.

We've just had a great day at Kirkistown Castle thanks to the club and Paul Lappin. I have seen how Paul has brought the course on since he has been there so it was great to play it at last. I got a bit wet over the last three holes but I was in good company.

Results: 1. Noel Crawford, RCD, 39 pts; 2. Michael King, RCD, 33 pts; 3. Gary Crawford, RCD, 33 pts; 4. Terry Crawford, Clandeboye, 33 pts. (I think these Crawfords are all interbred). Longest Drive. Justin Waddel, Fortwilliam. Nearest the Pin. Gary Crawford, RCD

Paul Lappin was presented with the Golfer of the Year Trophy 2002. Congratulations to him.

I must say a word or two about Noel's performance, 39 points off scratch, some going, a score we dream of off any handicap. Congratulations. I putted really well, if you got the line they held it. My partners told me the fairways were good, I told them when the rough grows it will be murder and that the newly raked bunkers were a pleasure to play from.

Finally, a word of thanks to the sponsors for the day, Allister Wilson, of Drilling & Pumping, Newtownards. We hope you enjoyed your day and many thanks for your generous contribution. My prize was one of their business cards with the phone number of a good teaching professional on the back.

On the way back on the M2 towards Antrim I was overtaken by a three legged chicken. It ran up the slip road at Templepatrick so, curious, I followed it into Frank Ainsworth's yard. I said, "Frank, I've just seen a three legged chicken run into your yard." "I'm breeding them," he said, "for the food industry". I asked, "What do they taste like." He said, "I don't know we haven't caught one yet."

Well, like me, I'm sure you would have liked to have seen Darren Clarke win The Masters. I've just been with Godfrey (larger than life our Godfrey) he was in strict preparation shovelling cones on the 18th. I now know all about and look forward to a drop of the green label.

News from the canteen. The current holders of the biggest consumers of food goes to Fortwilliam Golf Club. Well done boys. They might change their tractors every three years but at least they clean the cooker every two years.

What poor Micky O'Neill has to put up with with Sam and the form of Leeds United, I dread to think. Come back Don Revie. All is forgiven.

Well that's all from me. Be good.

Graham Prosser