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## SCOTTISH REGION

### Ayrshire

Check it out now Funk-Soul-Brothers! If any of y'all are interested in playing football against the West Section give me a ring on 01292 478606. We are aiming to get the match played this month or next.

Hope those recently returned from Harrogate all had a great time and any sore heads are recovered. I mean what with all that increased brain activity from the various educational opportunities on offer!

Our own Iain Barr succeeds Archie Dunn as Scottish Chairman, so on behalf of the section, all the best Iain and enjoy your term.

Congratulations also to George Brown who steps down as National Chairman and resumes normal life again. I'm sure all the section appreciates the work George has put in to improve our standing both in this country and throughout the world. I've heard through the grapevine, however, that as George resumes his golf matches with plans to up the stakes, so to speak, his wife Brenda would prefer he leave the prize as before, whatever the cost!

Remember any news just keep to yourself, coz I'm on a roll. Yeah Baby!  
Dennis Tweedle

### Northern

Just the one new member to report this month, and that is, Dennis Lake, who is an assistant greenkeeper at Cullen GC, in Moray.

Hopefully everyone has got over the New Year celebrations without too much trouble and is looking forward to the new season, which is not that far away.

Harrogate will have come and gone by the time you will receive this report. No doubt there will be plenty to report on in next month's report.

The Scottish Conference is taking place at Dunfermline College on March 2. There are many speakers organised for the day and I am sure it will be worth the effort, to make the trip down.

Another former greenkeeper still on the go is Malcolm Macdonald, formerly of Kingussie GC, for many years. He is 80 now and still going strong.

Not much else to report this month, but if anyone wants anything mentioned in the report then phone me on 01997 420155.

Iain Gunn

### East

Welcome to the first column of the year and a happy new year to you all. The Section held its AGM at the beginning of November at Winterfield GC and we had more than 20 members in attendance, which wasn't bad at all.

This year we changed the format and had the AGM first, then a light lunch, then a game of golf over 10 holes in the four-ball better-ball format. This was a success and we will continue that next year.

The AGM was very quiet with the only changes being to the committee structure with Andy Forrest, Peter Ormiston, Robert Hogarth, and Stuart Crawford all standing down. Since then Craig Pennycuik has also stood down, so I would like to thank them for all the time and effort they have put in over the years and hopefully can welcome them back some time in the future. Thanks lads.

The committee has agreed to have a slimmed down group for the future. The committee is now: Chairman, Chris Yeaman; Vice Chairman, Graham Wood; Sec/Treasurer, Steve Dixon; Past Chairman, Tom Murray; and Messrs Greenwood, Neilson, Watson, and the new member voted on at the AGM, Frank Forrest of Swanston GC.

Welcome to the committee, Frank, and we hope you enjoy your time with us.

That's all the news from the AGM except a big thanks to Winterfield GC for the use of their facilities and courtesy of the course; the clubhouse staff for looking after us and Craig Pennycuik and his team for the condition of the course and for having excellent weather laid on for us. Thanks also to Regional Administrator, Peter Boyd, for coming along on the day and keeping us up to date with things that are happening in the Association.

The annual dinner dance took place in Aberlady, at the Kilsplindie House Hotel, on December 6 and what a great night it was. All those who attended enjoyed themselves, which is what it's all about. The meal was excellent, the disco good, the refreshments even better and the company superb, so roll on next year – we hope to see you there.

People on the move this month are Colin Noble who has left Cardrona Hotel Golf





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and Country Club to take up the position of Head Greenkeeper at Peebles Golf Club and Billy Hudson who has left Newbattle GC to take up the position of Head Greenkeeper at Whitehill House GC. Congratulations to you both and all the best for the future.

By the time you read this Harrogate BTME 2004 will have passed so I will have a report next month from the conference and the show.

Well that's it for this month and I hope your winter programmes are proceeding and the weather is good to all of us as we head towards another busy season.

I will have in Section news next month dates of outings etc., etc. Please can somebody send me something of interest to put in this column, as you must get bored with what I write. Let me know if you have some old pictures of interest so we can get more things in each month.

I'm sitting here waiting. Here's all the information you need to send news to me: Westwyn, West Linton Golf Club, West Linton, Borders, EH46 7HN, or phone 01968 661313 (home), 01968 661721 (office), 07719 580 449 (mobile) or e-mail CHRISJY26@AOL.COM. Come on who's going to be first?

Chris Yeaman

### Central

Due to lack of time there is not a great deal of news for you this month.

With regards to previous reports on this year's spring golf tournament, which we had planned for Elie, due to circumstances out of our control, we are in the process of making alternative arrangements and hopefully Crail Golfing Society will be the venue instead of Elie. I will keep you posted.

A new member joining us this month is James McAdam, from Glenbervie Golf Club, and also from Glenbervie, rejoining the Section is Michael Hanlon. We extend a warm welcome to them both from everyone in the Section.

As I said in the first paragraph, time is short this month so I will give all of you who have still failed to purchase or return your Club 2000 tickets another month's grace to do so.

Well, that's it for this month. I'm off to the green staff Christmas night out in New York!

John Crawford



### North Wales

Well another BTME Show is done and dusted and so the season begins. It was great to see so many of you make the annual pilgrimage to the now capital of the greenkeeping world – the coach was full (on the way up) but not on the way back, I wonder why?

Perhaps you enjoyed a late night in one of the local hostels? Our thanks once again to Danny Tomkins and Amenity Technology for their sponsorship and the gratuitous food and beverages up at the Old Swan Hotel, from one and all.

Those of you making the trip across the pond to the GCSAA show in San Diego may well be on your way as this magazine arrives through your door. Bernhard's are once again taking a 10-strong delegation to meet up with US superintendents to gain knowledge and see how the same jobs are done over there – if you are thinking of a trip to the show next year it is back in the Orange County Convention Centre, off International Drive in Orlando, Florida. Get your names posted to Bernhard's for consideration. This really is a fantastic trip and it is educational as well!

Our North Wales Golf Days for this year have been penciled in place, 'four' in all. The first is the spring tournament at Porthmadog GC on May 20 followed by the N. Wales versus N. West match at Vale Royal Abbey GC on June 9 for a 1.30pm start (please get your names down as we require a full and unbeatable team). The autumn tournament is at Bromborough GC on October 1 and the Christmas one is back at Prestatyn GC on December 1.

There will also be a Golf Management Trophy hosted by BIGGA on August 23. This will be in team format and consist of the Greenkeeper or Course Manager with the Secretary and Professional and one other committee member from their respective clubs (more details to follow).

We look forward to seeing as many of you attending as possible. These are fun days out and whether you can play golf or not it is a good day out and a chance to meet up with your counterparts.

The Spring Seminar will take place this month at Carden Park GC. Now in its

second year it has a host of speakers with a wealth of knowledge and if you can make the time it is well worth a visit, the date is February 24. Start time is 9.30am to finish at around 3.45pm. The cost for members is £20 each, non-members £25 each, including food.

The guest speakers are Peter Wisbey, from Woodhall Spa; Tony Smith, from Teeside GC; Bruce Jamieson, an independent agronomist for tournament play. Steve Cox, Head of Tournaments from the PGA, will be talking on setting a course up for a major event and tournament rules. Your key host will be Duncan McGilvary. We have only enough space for 100 people so get in touch as soon as possible so as not to miss out! See you next month.

Any news or views give me a call.

Home 01925 263394. Mobile 07778 162162. e-mail acorn@golf@supanet.com

Mesen Cymru

Andrew Acorn

### Northern

Hi guys, hope you've all recovered from the show at Harrogate and you've not gone and blown your budgets on too many fancy new machines and other tempting things on offer?

The Christmas golf event was a great day and thanks must be passed on to everyone at Elland Golf club for their hospitality. A total of 40 played on a dry and bright day with many compliments on the condition of the course being passed on to Richard and his staff.

A shotgun four-man team event was the order of the day with some confusion over the scoring being encountered by most of the teams. We will be looking into a different format for the next one. After everyone had handed in their cards it was decided to draw the cards to win the prizes.

Amenity Technology sponsored the presentation table with everybody taking a prize home. A traditional Christmas dinner was then enjoyed. A coach taxied some of the golfers on the day, letting them have a few beers – no doubt there were some sore heads the next morning.

Two pieces of sad news to bring you: Les Kirkbright sadly passed away in December and Brian Hudson on New Years Day. Both will be missed at all our golf and Section events. Our sincere condolences to both families.

On a brighter note, news has just reached me that our President, Den Cockburn, has just been accepted for Life membership in recognition of his hard work and dedication to the Association. Congratulations, Den, from everyone at the Northern Section.

I am hoping, as I said last month, that a fixture list of events will be with you shortly, but as I am writing this I am still one venue short for our golf events for this year.

Welcome to Paul Emmanuel who has joined our Association this month.

That's about all for now.

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Dave Thackray

### North East

Latest news from Longhirst Hall GC, is that they are currently planting 500 trees, at the moment using the tree spade with the hope of planting a further 500 before the spring – these are mainly on the new 18 holes.

Turfing is going strong, with all remaining drains getting sorted before they open the new course.

Hopefully the punters will see the efforts that have been put in when the season starts. It's made a big difference to the look and feel of the new holes and they are looking forward to shaping it up again around the new plantations.

Jimmy Richardson

### Cleveland

Well, by the time that Section members read this month's offering, BTME will have come and gone. I hope all the hard work that the Association puts into its organisation has reaped the usual dividends. I hope Tony Smith's talk on 'Stress in the Workplace' went well.

The recent mild, wet weather has seen an increase in fungal attacks and it has also made it difficult for courses carrying out major constructions.

The Bedale Golf Club greens' team has thrown a challenge down. They wonder if any clubs in the area fancy a game of indoor five-a-side football. They are prepared to travel. If anyone is interested in playing please contact Pembo on 07989 508878. If you lot get some games under your belts it should help in honing your skills ready



for the Rigby Taylor Indoor Football tournament coming up this spring.

Tony Mears has forwarded details of an extensive course extension and drainage scheme recently carried out by Dinsdale Spa. Four acres of farmland was purchased and has been used to extend the course by 400 yards. Cliff Addison Drainage installed over 3,500 meters of drainage.

Stage one comprised of the construction of a new pond, a new tee and new green. The green will be needed in the spring. Trees, gorse and broom will also be planted to enhance the area. Most of the work has been done 'in-house' so congratulations to Tony and his fine team.

Stage two will commence next autumn with another green and tee planned for construction on the existing course. On completion of the whole project the course will benefit from a new par-4 hole and an extended par-4. Let's hope for good weather for us all.

Any news to myself on 07831 214879.

Cheers

Terry 'El Prez' Charlton

## North West

I will once again be struggling for news as nobody has submitted any, but I would like to congratulate Peter Cross and Warren Bevan on being selected for the Bernhard trip to the GCSAA in San Diego, California in February. I am sure this will be the trip of a lifetime being able to meet greenkeepers from overseas, and to see how things are done over the pond. Good luck to both of you.

I am presently working on getting venues for this year's golf tournaments etc. and as soon as this is completed I will get the fixture lists completed and sent out to you all.

The Regional final I organised for the last four years has now been cancelled, but the Regional Administrator, Peter Larter, will be organising a tournament involving teams from golf clubs, consisting of Secretary, Captain, Greenkeeper and a golf club member. Scotts will sponsor this, and further information will follow shortly.

Don't forget to read the education pages in the magazine, as there are plenty of educational presentations available in all areas.

That's it for now but you can contact me on 0151 724 5412 or 07761 583387. Good luck in 2004.

Bert Cross

## MIDLAND REGION

### Midland

With it being the romantic month of St. Valentine, I was rather hoping to report on the antics of our Chairman Mr Stant. However, he has for sometime now been in a wholesome and rewarding relationship. Therefore attention must be cast elsewhere. Since my good friend John James Joseph Wilkes (Deputy at Harborne) entered a chatroom on the internet he has, for some reason, been traversing the length and breadth of Britain. John, on the 14th, take the day off, the post person will need a hand! Wherefore art thou Romeo?

The Christmas tournament was held at Enville Golf Club on December 9. Our thanks to Graham Patrick and his fine team for preparing the course to such a high standard at perhaps the most difficult time of the year. What fantastic greens. The results of the day were; 1. E. Stant and J. Palmer; 2. A. Walker and P. Woodham; 3. D. Fellows and W. Ganning; 4. S. Mucklow and R. Thomas.

Our thanks to M. Chamberlain of Tacit for sponsoring the main prize table, and to M. Raynor of Scotts for the wine on the table.

Our greatest thanks to Enville Golf Club for affording us such a wonderful day, and allowing us to hold our AGM there.

Your committee has remained the same as last year. President, P. Richmond; Chairman, E. Stant; Deputy Chairman, R. Thomas; Treasurer, G. Cunningham; Secretary, S. McDade; Committee: N. Couchman, D. Gibbons and, after plenty of arm twisting, A. Smith.

For some 26 years Dave Morgan (retired, Rigby Taylor) has served the Section alongside B. Pilsbury as an auditor. The committee and members thank you for your kind service and time over the years, Dave. We all wish you a well-deserved, long and happy retirement. Tony Cheese has kindly taken over from him. "Come back Dave!"

Due to a double booking the Spring Tournament is now to be held at Trentham Park GC on April 21, and not at Olton GC as reported in January's Around the Green.

The Treasurer has asked that could those wishing to attend, please send entries as soon as possible to make number planning and finance a lot easier. Thank you.

Over the last 12 months it has been lovely to see many new faces at our events, I hope this encouraging trend will continue this year.

For those who have yet to take part in our events, may I point out that not only do you get to enjoy some superb venues at great value but they are also an excellent opportunity to promote yourself, the Section, and are, by their nature, educational. Please join us; you will be made very welcome. We all look forward to seeing you.

Finally, don't forget the 'Effective Communication' course to be held at Shirley Golf Club on March 16 and 17. Should you require a booking form please contact me on 07816-410-552 or ring BIGGA HQ.

Looking forward with anticipation to receiving a Valentine's card, but hopefully not from my mates, again! Dream on Schwilbilly!

Sean McDade

## BB&O

As always we hit that time of the year when the spirit of Harrogate remains a distant memory as we all get ready to tackle the year ahead.

The new Rules of Golf introduced this year are the biggest revision for 20 years, with each of the 34 rules governing play being amended by the R&A, within which there are many areas of interest to both playing and non-playing greenkeepers.

These changes came into force on January 1 and commenting on these changes R&A Rules Secretary, David Rickman, said, "In an essentially self-regulating sport, players need the rules readily available and as simple to understand as we can make them."

One key area is how the game is played with particular interest paid to the upkeep of golfing etiquette in the modern game. Indeed the section on etiquette has been totally rewritten and now spells out in great detail the manner in which the game should be played and the responsibility of each and every player to repair divots, pitch marks and spike marks on the greens.

It also makes it clear that before leaving a bunker, players should carefully fill up and smooth over all holes and footprints made by them and nearby, made by others.

Disregarding of etiquette to the detriment of others can be regarded as a serious breach of the rules of golf and may lead to rule 33-7 being invoked.

Rule 33-7 states: if a committee considers that a player is guilty of a serious breach of etiquette, it may impose a penalty of disqualification under this rule.

While it is the duty of every professional minded greenkeeper to keep abreast of new developments within the industry it is not often we are gifted with a new rule that allows its interpretation to so handsomely sit in the greenkeepers right hand.

As with many golfing rules if the players are oblivious to its existence they will certainly not abide by them.

It is therefore up to the greenkeeper to inform the playing members of his club of these new changes, and to seek back up from his committee, that course etiquette is being followed or the previously mentioned sanctions may apply.

While many members may be happy to putt on a bumpy surface and, when missing the putt, curse the greenkeeper for the poor state of his greens, not too many would be keen to be disqualified from an event for not repairing the pitch mark they had just made.

Perhaps we will see lots of shiny new pitch repair forks being slipped in and out of our members' pockets this year?

And stranger still, perhaps one or two will actually know how to use them!

On that note before I bid you farewell with an early reminder of our forthcoming Spring Tournament to be held at Badgemore Park GC on April 22. Contact Secretary John Scoones 07880 550380.

Mark Day

mark@tacitgolf.com

## SOUTH WEST & SOUTH WALES

### South Wales

Croeso pawb/ Hello everyone hope you all had a lovely Christmas and looking forward to a new year.

Firstly, on behalf of all the South Wales Section, I would like to congratulate and thank Peter Lacey for his undoubted commitment and efforts over the last 10 years





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as Section Secretary.

A second generation greenkeeper Peter has represented the South with professionalism and help raise the profile of greenkeepers, Peter was presented with a token of thanks at the Christmas event well done mate!

Golf results: Christmas competition held at the glorious Pyle and Kenfig Hill golf club in December. 1. P&K Captain: Viv Morgan; 2. Alan Abel, Complete Weed Control; 3. Winner of the Vitax Shield: Paul Wilkie, P&K; 4. Emyr Nickels, Inco GC; 5. David Gladwin, Carmarthen GC. Nearest the Pins: Alan Abel, Peter Hampton, Tony Horne, Clive Moran. Longest Drive: Mark Wilshire. Longest Walk: Paul Smith, P&K.

A total of 40 played golf and 50 attended evening meal.

Presentation of letter opener and Quach to Secretary, Peter Lacey, in recognition of 10 years of service as Section Secretary - many thanks.

Thanks to P&K Golf Club for their hospitality, etc. Vitax and Joe Crawley who couldn't be with us but is making a good recovery and will be with us at the BTME in Harrogate. To Celtic Mowers, and Ceri Richards, for organising the half way house, refreshments and for organising the superb prize table. All trade who supported the day and guests from the Club, IOG, WGU.

Education: Please find below the 'Winter Evening Lecture' series for 2004. These evenings will be held at Pencoed College (except for the millennium stadium visit), near Bridgend, in the lounge bar and will commence at 7.00pm. This series has once again been sponsored by Avoncrop Amenity Products to whom we are indebted for their continued support and sponsorship of education in the South Wales Section.

Wednesday January 14: Millennium Stadium Visit. Meet at Gate 4 at 7pm.

Come and join us for a tour of the stadium by IOG Chairman, Tony Horne, while the new pitch is being installed for this year's Six Nations Championship.

A Buffet Super will be provided, courtesy of Inturf.

Wednesday February 11: Mr Peter Roberts, of Hydroscape.

An update on irrigation, legislation and responsible water management and usage.

Wednesday March 10: Annual quiz and social evening.

Wednesday April 14: Huw Morgan MG. Course Manager of the Wilderness Golf Club. 'The Route to Master Greenkeeper' and 'Back as an Open Qualifier'

Thursday April 15: Annual spring seminar at the Royal Porthcawl Golf Club.

9.30am - 4pm. Details to follow.

Our sincere thanks to all who give freely of their time and efforts to ensure this education series continues. To all speakers and participating companies, to Pencoed College, the IOG, Peter Gillard, Ray Burrows and Avoncrop who continue to support and sponsor this series of educational events.

Those attending any/each of the above educational evenings can claim a single CPD credit.

Any information on the Greenkeeping front then get in touch at [kerryjokojones@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:kerryjokojones@yahoo.co.uk)

Cofion Cynnes a blewdyn newydd dda.

Best wishes and a happy new year.

Kerry Jones

## South Coast

Christmas has come and gone and we are now well into the new year. The Section has been quiet over the last month with little to report on. The new year seems to have had a bad start for three of the clubs within our Section as there has been a spate of vandalism. Trevor Blythe, at Hockley, had a bad vandalism attack where two morons in 4x4s decided to 'off road' across his course causing £16,000 worth of damage.

Queens Park Golf Club has also been a victim of the 'off road' brigade but with motorbikes. Parkstone has seen one of their greens doused with a can of petrol and set light. If our jobs aren't difficult enough, we have to repair the damage made by mindless idiots!

On a lighter note we must congratulate Joe Cooper on his selection on to the BIGGA delegation to the GCSAA show in San Diego. Having been fortunate myself last year I can honestly say you will have a great, but hectic, week, Joe, so enjoy yourself.

If you have not returned your completed registration forms for the Section seminar then please get them back to me as soon as possible. I look forward to seeing many of you there on the day. I am just preparing to travel to BTME which I will report on in full next month

Until next month

Alex McCombie

## South West

Happy New Year to you all. Not much to report on since the last time. However, there is one piece of news that may interest you, I am leaving Bath Golf Club at the end of March and becoming self employed and, guess what, specialising in fine turf maintenance, landscaping and conservation.

I will still be your education officer and an associated member of BIGGA, so I will still be responsible for all your training needs. I will also be an NVQ assessor, so please do not hesitate to contact me if you need any assessing on your golf course.

The course walk on your golf days will continue and hopefully enhanced with follow up talks afterwards (watch this space).

By the time you read this another successful BTME will have taken place and thanks to our continued patronage support we will hopefully be offering another expenses paid trip to next year's event at Harrogate.

Sam Kennedy, from Bowood Golf Club, has been our first successful candidate and attended BTME from the Sunday through to the Thursday. If anyone is in doubt about the patronage scheme, the money is being ploughed back into education and we hope in the near future to be funding our own education days and seminars.

If you have any ideas how the money should be spent then please contact a committee member with your ideas. See you at West Wiltshire Golf Club on February 25 for our first tournament of the year.

Contact me on 01225 333928. Mobile: 078123 80936.

Guy Woods

## Devon and Cornwall

Our Christmas meeting was held at Okehampton Golf Club on Tuesday December 9. The format for the day was Greensomes Stableford with 60 members competing for the P.J. Flegg Trophy. The Head Greenkeeper, Richard Wisdom, escorted the remaining 21 members on the customary course walk.

After an excellent Christmas lunch, comedian, Jimmy Quinn, had everybody in stitches for over an hour! After this, Paul Watson, of P.J. Flegg, presented the prizes for the day.

The winners of the P.J. Flegg Trophy were father and son combination, Paul Bullen, formerly of Newquay (now retired), and Jonathan Bullen, of Staddon Heights. I would like to thank, on behalf of the Section, the catering staff for a superb lunch. Also, thanks go to Richard Wisdom and his team, for presenting the course in excellent condition and to Okehampton Golf Club for the use of their excellent facilities once again.

I would also like to thank comedian Jimmy Quinn for making our day even more enjoyable and, last but not least, thanks to our sponsor, Patrick of P.J. Flegg Ltd. Patrick has sponsored our Christmas event for the last 20 years and the section would like to express their gratitude for his continued support.

Dates for your Diary:

Our next meeting will be held at West Cornwall Golf Club on Wednesday February 18.

The Section will be holding a machinery maintenance workshop at Seale Hayne College on Monday, March 1, and details will be sent out to all members in due course.

If you have any information for this column, please contact me on 01822 617671. Steve Evans



## Kent

As we start a new year what sort of weather can we look forward too, will it be a cold start with a long warm summer like last year or can we hope for some rain?

On to the Turkey Trot which was held at Birchwood Golf Club on December 10. Rob Holland, Course Manager, and his team produced a course in excellent condition. Even with rain prior to the day the course had great putting surfaces, which I am afraid, as my playing partners can confirm, were too good for me. I only had the odd 1,2,3 etc. three putts. We were even lucky enough to have the sun, which made for a good all round golf day, from speaking to fellow competitors it was a thoroughly good event.

I would like to thank Rob and his staff for preparing the course to a high standard, to the catering department for the evening meal and to the management of the club for allowing us to hold the event at Birchwood Park GC.

The results. 1. Neil Pullen, 42 pts; 2. Rob Holland, 39 pts; 3. John Fullagar, 37 pts.



Longest drive went to Duncan Kelso and nearest the pin was Michael Wigston.

We would like to thank Ransomes Jacobsen for the coffee and food on arrival and Tacit for sponsoring nearest the pin and the longest drive.

Other sponsors included Avon Crop, Driving Force Leisure, John Shaw Machinery and Parkers. Thank you to all of the companies for their support at this event and over the previous year.

The results from the Kent Section AGM will be in next month's issue.

That just leaves me to say have a good month.

Phil Belton

### East Anglia

What! Another year gone... must have blinked. Anyway, Happy New Year and all that. Hope you had a good Crimble. Another Turkey Trot came and went and it was a marvelous day as ever. No rain, slight frost, handsome. Course was in good nick, Ian and the crew.

There were 80 half asleep souls in the clubhouse at 8 o'clock in the morning. Considering the distances some travelled, the North Norfolk Nomads in particular, that is something else.

It shows how we all enjoy this event at Thorpeness every year. It really does go like clockwork, due largely to our watch-making secretary/motivator, Ian Willett. Where would we be without him?

By 10 o'clock most of us were awake and by then we'd played at least six holes and were getting into the swing, so to speak. By 2.30pm we were all having a slap up meal in a nice country club overlooking the sea. The food was lovely then came the prizes presented by Mick Crabtree, Thorpeness Vice Captain (I've always wanted to be one of them!).

It was a Texas Scramble and the first team was called 'We're Alright'. They were Alan and James Sharp, Bob Barnes and James Burton and they scored 54.9. The second team was not called anything but there were two Nomads in there. They were Roger and Stuart Plummer, David (Jim) Hawkins and Richard Whiting with 55-6. The third team also had no title but 'Desperados' springs to mind! They were Stephen Curtis, Paul Gould, Stuart Edge and Gavin Playford with 56-6.

The main sponsors were CMW but there were others (take a deep breath).

Nearest the pin on the 2nd, 7th, 10th and 16th was sponsored by Aitkens, Seoul Nassau (DFL), Collier Turfcare, John Deere, Tomlinson Groundcare - Ben Burgess respectively. And won by Martin Mison, Alan Sharp, Stuart Plummer and Mark Clements. Nearest the pin in two on the 6th was sponsored by Toro and won by Peter Howard. Take another breath there's more.

Longest drive: on the 1st for 16-28 handicaps was sponsored by Prime Irrigation and won by Ian Willett, on the 4th it was sponsored by Autoflow and won by Andy Curson. 0-15 handicap on the 18th for everyone was sponsored by Consultant Clarkson and won by Neil Meadows.

Other Sponsors were: Ransomes Jacobsen, SISIS, Atterton & Bernhard, Bartram Mowers, K.B. Leach, Sheriffs, Scotts, Rigby Taylor, Headland Amenity Products and Tacit who sponsored the baguettes.

We had a brief speech from Edward about the Clarkson Cup which is a new knockout competition played through the summer. I'm sure it will become more popular as time goes by. This year there were six teams and the Royal Plummers won it from the Royal Corner.

We also had a speech from our proud President, Colin Rushbrook. He is keeping a tradition going started by Ernie, to present a bottle of port to a greenkeeper for his contribution to greenkeeping. This year I was the proud recipient (when I find out what I've done I'll let you know).

Seriously though, I was really pleased. The funny thing was I was taking down what Colin was saying and I suddenly thought, "I know that bloke" well there aren't too many cockneys up here.

Then came the AGM. Bit longer this one, after some discussion it was decided to reduce the committee to nine.

Well that's nearly it except to say all our venues are booked for this year and half of next year. Ian and the team are doing a great job, long may they continue. Just one more thing I missed out, one of our sponsors in the last report but I can't remember who it was. I think it was an Olympic team, yes Seoul Nassau or DFL for short. Sorry about that. In case I forgot Tacit sponsored the baguettes (bacon rolls)

I'll get it right one day.

Mick Lathrope

### Surrey

Hello February, goodbye January and BTME at Harrogate. Goodbye workshops, seminars and the opportunity to meet old friends in that old fashioned wine bar the Peppermint Hippo. I shall be reporting on any humorous incidents from Harrogate in next month's edition.

A Surrey away team went down into deepest Sussex to play in their Turkey Trot at the East Sussex National Golf Club on December 12 and I am pleased to report that our team, Tony Bremer, Anthony Freeman, Mark Harvey and yours truly, played with such skill and determination that we managed to win the event despite the cruel weather and the harrowing journey down in Barry Robertson's car.

Congratulations to Murray Long and his recent addition to his family. This is stop-press news, no names and weight etc. yet, but these details will appear next month. Congratulations also to Colin Gibson, the new course manager at Purley Downs Golf Club. Welcome to Surrey and we look forward to meeting you at this year's events.

A short report I'm afraid but this month is quiet and it's the best I can do. Let me know your news and maybe you will star in a future edition.

Brian Willmott

### Essex

Firstly a belated Happy New Year to you all. Let's hope this year the weather is a bit kinder to us all. My name is Geoff Smith, I'm Deputy Course Manager at Abridge Golf & Country Club, I won Golfer of the Year last year and I am your new scribe for my sins. I will try to put something in every month, but please, ladies and gentlemen, contact me with anything of interest or juicy gossip so I have lots to write about. You can contact me on 07763 778269.

Our last golfing event was at Forrester Park in November where I won Golfer of the Year. The weather was very kind to us all and Roland and greenkeeping team presented a fine course to us. Thank you to his staff and Forrester Park Golf Club for a very warm welcome and an excellent meal. I would also like to thank our sponsor, Ernest Doe, for the days. Thank you also to Headland, Seoul Nassau, Banks Amenity, Rigby Taylor, Tuckwells and Tacit for their expensive raffle prizes. Thank you to Don Clark, Course Manager of Orsett Golf Club for his not-so-expensive raffle prize.

Texas Scramble was the format for the day which I think every which I think everybody thought was a good idea and made a change. The winning team was Richard Hare, Arnold Phipps-Jones and second was Mick and Jim Dilliway and the youthful Dennis Smith and finally, and definitely least, was the very quiet and reserved team of Richard Lewis, Simon Banks and Mick Fance.

After an excellent meal, excellent drinks, excellent service from Forrester Park staff, excellent prizes, an excellent raffle and Arnold Phipps-Jones's speech we held our AGM. Officers elected for the coming year were as follows Chairman, Arnold Phipps-Jones; Secretary, Martin Forrester; Treasurer, Dominic Rodgers, and Competitions' Secretary, David Beale. Golfer of the Year was then presented, which I won. I thought all the venues in 2003 were excellent and thank you to everyone involved at the courses and to David Beale for organising them.

Richard Hare and Dominic Rodgers represented the Essex Section at last year's National Tournament. Dominic had a bad start to his round, good middle section and recovered well, Richard spent the night before with Dominic and just did not recover.

Dave informs me that next year's events are as follows - April 27, Channels Golf Club; June 23, Ballards Gore Golf Club; August 5, Saffron Walden Golf Club; October 6, The Burstead Golf Club and finally, November 30, Orsett Golf Club.

I hope to attend all of these and hope to win Golfer of the Year, which I won last year. It was good to see so many new faces at our golf days last year. What did disappoint me though was that green staff who played in their own golf days did not attend other golf days, let's try and put that right this year.

On the subject of David Beale, congratulations to him and his partner on the birth of their daughter Poppy. Don't worry Dave, if you think it's hard now wait 'til she gets older and starts bringing boyfriends home who are greenkeepers.

Hope you guys and girls have all had a good time at Harrogate I look forward to hearing and then informing you all of some good stories, top money will be paid.

Not quite last but nearly congratulations on behalf of the whole of the Essex Section to Andy Sheehan who takes up his post this month at the illustrious K Club. Good luck, Andy and keep in touch. We look forward to Dave arranging the away day at the K Club next year.

Finally I would like to just inform you that I won golfer of the year last year. Hope to hear from some of you soon.

Geoff "Golfer of the Year" Smith