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SCOTTISH REGION

Annual Conference, Business Learning Centre, Lauder College, Dunfermline. On Tuesday March 2, 2004 BIGGA Scottish Region will again present their Annual Conference at the Business Learning Centre, Lauder College, Dunfermline.

For 2004 we have speakers from all sides of the industry coming to Dunfermline to provide topics relevant to everyone.

The speakers include Neil Baldwin, Omega Sciences; David Briggs, Campey Sports; David McLay Kidd, a Golf Course Architect; Rex Kimberly, Terralift and Richard Minton, of Complete Weed Control. From the ranks of the greenkeepers we are delighted to have Ian McMillan MG, Course Manager, Murrayshall Golf Club, and Duncan McGilvray, from Potters Bar Golf Club. All these speakers will provide interesting and varied talks that are relevant to all in greenkeeping.

The Conference Centre at Lauder College is centrally located and has easy access from the motorway. The Centre with its first class facilities is the ideal location for this event. It is hoped that greenkeepers, greens convenors and secretaries will attend.

Application forms will be available in the early part of January 2004 and will be posted to all members in the Scottish Region.

Peter J. Boyd
Regional Administrator.

Central

It seems a bit strange as I am writing this report in early December, it's supposed to be winter time and we are still cutting grass! Are the courses going to get any rest before opening day? I hope all this report reaches you this time as with my skills, my dyslexic computer and a faulty fax I sometimes have problems communicating with HQ.

I know they are not all my problems but that's another story.

Elmwood College in Cupar was the place to be on November 11 when a very successful workshop/seminar was held. Over 40 members took the time to attend and participated in a very interactive meeting with four excellent speakers in Douglas Shearer, from Elmwood College; George Murray, an Employment Consultant; Ian MacMillan, Course Manager at Murrayshall Hotel and Golf Courses, and Stuart Cruickshank Course Manager at Deer Park Golf and Country Club. Our sincere thanks go to everyone who helped to make this a very successful event, which hopefully we can build on for future events.

Congratulations from everyone in the Section go to committee member Ian MacMillan on becoming a grandfather, Ian's daughter, Gaynor, presented him with a lovely granddaughter, Isobel, on November 11. All are doing well and I don't think Ian has come down from Cloud 9 yet.

Congratulations also go to Jimmy Kidd who is leaving Gleneagles after many years and taking up a new position in Barbados. I hope all goes well with you and your family in your new venture. Scotland won't be the same without you Jimmy!

Club 2000 winners in the second half of 2003 were D. Peddie, L. Kennedy, T. Comerford, G. Smith, J. Wallace, G. Butter, B. Irving, B. Cruickshank, M. Baxter and K. Thomson and everyone should have received their cheques by now. At the time of writing I am still waiting for 225 members to purchase or return their tickets. I sent tickets out to 283 members so you can plainly see how many give support to the Section.

Next month I will include the names of everyone who has still to purchase/return their tickets and the following month I will include those who supported this venture.

We extend a warm welcome to one new member this month in Jonathan Pendry from Gleneagles. As usual, hopefully Jonathan will manage to attend some of our future events where he will get the opportunity to meet some of his fellow members. The dates for this year's golf tournaments at Elie and Downfield have yet to be confirmed, but I will get in touch with you all as soon as I have them.

John Crawford



Peter Larter
NORTHERN & MIDLAND
 Tel: 01476 550115



North

Six new members to report this month and they are all from Skibo Castle GC, Christopher Mailley, William Matheson, James Shepherd, Glen Herbertson, James Mcbeath and Campbell Mackay. Gary Gruber, the new Head Greenkeeper at Skibo Castle, is also a member, so we have a full squad from Skibo. Welcome to the Section, lads.

Scotsturf has come and gone again and in speaking to members who made it down, there were quite a few companies who did not exhibit this year, maybe preferring once every two years. But I think everyone who made the effort had a good day.

Harrogate is coming again this month and Peter Boyd has negotiated a very good deal for our Scottish Region of £165 for three nights accommodation in the Moat Hotel and travel to and from Glasgow. Places on this package may well all be taken now, but there are other places to stay if it is necessary to do so.

George Mitchell, from Newmachar GC, was nominated for the LANTRA modern apprenticeship awards for his work on Level 3. George's achievement in attaining this nomination was high praise indeed, and although he was not successful in attaining the top prize, the nomination was a first.

The Patron's Awards for this year went to Hugh Mclatchie, from Peterhead, and Ken Andersen, from Newmachar GC. They recently attended the awards dinner in Stirling, along with the new Secretary, Dale Robertson, and would like to express their thanks to the Patrons for their continued support. They go down to Harrogate as part of their award for supporting the section throughout the year.

Dale is trying to set up an e-mail data-base for all our members, if they can get access to a computer, so as to make it easier and cheaper to contact members of any forthcoming outings etc. Dale's e-mail address is dalengc@hotmail.com. Dale's mobile number is 07711274525.

The outings for next year are for Spring, The Moray Old Course; Lossiemouth, on Thursday, May 27, while the autumn outing is to be at Westhill near Aberdeen in September.

Due to a mix with the reports the November's report was printed for a second time. Apologies for this to our members.

George Aitken, of Peterculter GC, is retiring from greenkeeping. George is a great supporter of BIGGA and was an ever present at outings. I would like to wish George all the best for his retirement on behalf of all the members of our Section. On the subject of older members, it was good to see Donnie Dingwall is still doing well at the ripe old age of 78. Donnie who is a former Head Greenkeeper of Strathpeffer occasionally pops up to make sure the things are being done properly. Also another former Strathpeffer Head man, Robert Hardie, is due to become a father again. So best wishes to young Bob and his family.

If any greenkeeper would like to do a Level 3 in greenkeeping from our Section, could they give me a phone as I am trying to get a group set up in the north area who can maybe do the qualification on a fast track basis over a year. Anyone interested could contact me on 01997 420155.

I would like to wish the members a belated Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and I hope the winter is not too severe
 Iain Gunn



North East

In October at Seahouses GC we had our annual match against the East of Scotland. The match was a closely fought one once again as it turned out the game ended in a draw so the North East Section retained the trophy.

On behalf of both Sections we would like to thank the sponsors, Stewart's of Edinburgh for sponsoring the day and look forward to the return match next year.

Well, as you will have already read by now, Tony McLure and his team from

Whickham GC played in the John Deere Team Classic in November and finished 20 under par. Quite a good score you would think but the winners were a staggering 39 under. However, I'm sure the lads had a memorable time and enjoyed every bit of the challenge.

Well, it's that time of the year again when everyone will be doing their winter jobs spare a thought for those who are doing major jobs with the likes of Tyneside GC and Hexham GC. For those of you who know Tyneside well, next time you drive over the ravine at the 15th hole, notice the difference as they have partially filled it in making it easier to maintain and nowhere near as deep as it was.

Next it's Hexham GC as they are in the process of a redesign on the 18th hole, by dropping the ridge across the latter half of the fairway by a metre to make a flatter landing area plus reshaping the existing bunkers to grass faces. Work in the area is approx. 2500 square metres. Well they might be finished that job around January if they are lucky with the weather.

Anyone else with any news on their winter programme that they want mentioned give me a ring

0191 413 5232 or e-mailat JFroud123@aol.com
 Jimmy Richardson

North Wales

Happy New Year and a warm welcome to North Wales 2004. This month sees our Section Secretary, Andy Campbell, take up his post as Chairman of BIGGA from the current Chairman, George Brown. It will be a busy year for Andy attending all the shows in San Diego, Canada, Norway, Ireland, Italy the list goes on. Not to mention all the Dinner functions. It's going to be tough but I am sure he will cope and do a sterling job promoting the organisation.

Wendy O'Brien, also from Carden Park, has excelled in her newly chosen venture as a guest speaker at educational seminars, Wendy first compiled a revue of her Augusta experience in last year's North Wales seminar (featured in Greenkeeper International) and has since spoken at Cannington and The National Turf grass Conference in Southport. So be quick if you wish to book Wendy for your event as her diary is filling up.

Darren Anderson has attained his HNC in greenkeeping and Peter Sproston will be handed with a Bravery award in February at the Hanover International Hotel from the Fire Brigade for his heroics in saving a motorist from a crash last year.

Dougie Neilson has had a baby boy of 11lb 8oz, which is quite an achievement for a man, and Paul Lowe from Rhuddlan (with his wife) has had a baby girl. Congratulations to you both.

Our Spring seminar will be held once again February 24, at Carden Park, along with training courses in March and April – please contact the committee for details.

Forms for inclusion on to the coach for Harrogate will be in the post second week of January. Please return them ASAP so as not to miss out.

Our Christmas tournament was held at Abergele in December and a big thankyou to all those who took part and made the day a great success. We had just over 60 entrants and we thank Darren Anderson and his team for the fine presentation of the course. The new USGA greens had a good speed on them and the putts took all the breaks. Thanks also to the caterers for the turkey dinner and to the club for the courtesy of the course.

The results are as follows: Members. 1. Allen Lewis, 37pts; 2. John Evans, 36pts; 3. Haydon Jones, 36pts; 4. Rob Myatt, 35pts; 5. Kevin Lewis, 35pts. Guests. 1. Islyn Luke, 35pts; 2. Karl Ashley, 35pts. Trade. 1. Yours Truly, 36pts. The Aggregate Cup for the year was Jeremy Hughes. There were 2 Nearest the Pin Prizes, sponsored by BATgolf.com, and both were won by Rob Myatt, AbergeleGC, and Nearest the Pin, sponsored by Major Owen, won at 5' by Peter Sproston. Thanks also to all the trade Patrons of North Wales for their sponsorship.

I finish with a note to my old friend Bill Lawson. Bill, please note I haven't mentioned pubs or darts this 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

North West

How lucky can we get? Each year we have the AGM in December and we also play for the President's Cup and each year we have been blessed with good weather as we did once again on December 4. A turnout of 39 members and trade members enjoyed an excellent day at Wilmslow GC where we had the tee from 10am after a breakfast of bacon baps and coffee. As mentioned, the weather was good, and the course was in great condition as usual, with the greens as fast as during the summer month's. All credit for this goes to Steve Ultram and his dedicated team.

We played a Stableford round and although it is not an easy course (it is a qualifier course for The Open) the scores were good, with Peter Hogan winning the Presidents Cup with 39 points. Peter has picked up most of the prizes from this year's tournaments, so I think somebody will have to noble him next year.

The golf was followed by the AGM which was also attended by Peter Larter, the Northern Region Administrator. Mike Davie, the Section Chairman, stepped down this year after serving for four years as Chairman, and Paul Eddlestone took over as Chairman for the coming year. Mike was presented with a beautiful engraved hip flask to show the Section's appreciation, and I am sure it will be put to good use. The committee opted to carry on for a further year, with the addition of Alan Donlevy making a total of 10 committee members. The committee comprises: Chairman, Paul Eddlestone; Secretary, Bert Cross; Treasurer, Bill Merritt; Mike Davie, Steve Ultram, Chris Sheehan, Paul Walker, Clive Poole, Aidie Holt and Alan Donlevy.

As the meeting was about to close, the Chairman sprung a surprise on me, and I was presented with a magnificent framed picture of the Old Course St Andrews. This was because I have completed 25 plus years on the N/W Section committee. I had not realised I had done that long, but somebody had been doing their homework. I can assure everybody that it is greatly appreciated and is now displayed in pride of place in my home. Many thanks to everybody. I will close now but I am always available for any news or views on: 0151 7245412 or 07761 583387.

Bert Cross

Northern

Too much eating, drinking and merry making? Never mind as BTME is almost here. Yes another one is upon us and I hope to see a lot of you either in the show, at the seminars or in the bars in Harrogate making the week another success for our Association.

As normal, I am writing these notes weeks ahead of the publishing date. In fact I am writing it before the Christmas golf at Elland Golf Club, (you think you're premature!). So, I am unable to report on the goings on at the event but I will tell you all the gory details in February's issue.

In the next month or so I am hoping you will all be receiving the new Fixture and Events list for the coming year. This will include details of our spring lecture and possible dinner dance.

Again can I plead with you all, as you can see, I am struggling for content so any news or views would be appreciated or am I writing this for my own enjoyment?

Please note my new address at the end of these ramblings. I have moved much nearer your Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer and President and hope I can now do more drinking of the Black stuff or some Timmy Taylor's with them.

Last, but far from least, I must thank all at BIGGA House, and especially Ken Richardson, on the informative computer training three others and myself received through the Regional Training at a bargain price of £60 for the two days. Again and again I hear people say, "What do I get for my annual subscription?" Well, I am sure if you just took up one of the many days put on by the Association in Autumn and Spring you will have recouped the cost of it. So, if you would like to benefit from the training get in touch with headquarters and ask them if they can run a course in your desired field.

Talk to you all again next month, hope the heads are not too sore after BTME.

To contact me: Laburnham Cottage, Keighley Road, Denholme, Bradford, West Yorks BD13 5LY Tel: 01274 834551 Mobile: 07976876264

Email: Dthackray@aol.com

Dave Thackray

MIDLAND REGION

BB&O

Another year bites the dust, Christmas is over, new resolutions begun, the Atkins diet going strong coupled with the latest nicotine patch fix and we are all ready to rock and roll for 2004.

The final of the Regional Rigby Taylor Team Knockout has now been played with a 3 and 2 win favouring the Tartan duo Ross Wilson, Colin Hutt, Parasampia GC and magnanimous in defeat Simon Robinson, Alistair Higgs, Calcott Park GC. This event was greatly enjoyed by all who participated and a vote of thanks must go to the organisers.

On a mild, wintry morning in November, the BB&O gathered for its annual Turkey Trot at Frilford Heath GC. Sixteen teams of three with best two counting was the format, which was well represented from the three counties, after a low calorie bacon roll and coffee, a close fought battle commenced on the red course (a fine example in a Heathland setting). The course was very well prepared and in excellent condition due to Course Manager, Sid Arrowsmith, at the helm with his band of merry men, working wonders over the last year in maintaining such a fine golf course. A very big thank you to Sid and all the lads. The results were as follows: 1. Team Henley, Mitch Stewart, Dave Parish, Mike Johnson, 84 pts; 2. Team Flackwell Heath, Steve Gardner, Tony Simpson, John Rouse, 83 pts; 3. Team Hinksey Heights, Dave Shepard, Adam Thompson, Craig Marsh, 81 pts.

Thank you to Frilford Heath GC and Peter Dier, Vice Captain, for making us all very welcome and also for the gastronomic delights and facilities available to us on the day.

Sponsors for the day were Avoncrop Amenity with Colin White in attendance dishing out the well-earned prizes between the 3 teams. We thank you for your continued support. It was nice to see a few new faces on the day and we hope to see many more of you at our events in 2004.

Shot of the day must go to Jason Payne, Burnham Beeches, whose tee shot on the 9th, hit the trees, ricochet out, bounced on the roof of Carl Small's buggy putting his pacemaker on red alert, and landing in Nathan Bond's (the group in front) golf bag, never to see the light of day again.

Congratulations to Leon Brant, from Datchet GC, who is suffering from sleep deprivation with a big smile on his face as his wife has just given birth to a new baby boy, Jack. We all wish him and his new-born family the very best.

Finally a special mention to David Haskell Craig who has been our Section Secretary and stalwart at our golf days over the last few years, organising and making sure we all had a superb day out, David is leaving Maidenhead GC in the capable hands of Chris Mitchell, his Deputy, and emigrating to Australia. As you are reading this, he will probably be sunning himself and sticking another shrimp on the barbie in Sydney Harbour, just as we prepare ourselves for the whirlwind of activity at Harrogate. We wish the "Pommie David" (his new nickname) and family the very best success for the future down under.

Happy New Year to you all.

Mark Day

Midland

Hope all had an excellent Christmas, and trust too much drink was not taken. A respected University Professor recently reminded me that: "One knows when one has drunk too much, as one shall be found lying on the floor holding on for dear life, as if one lets go, one should surely fall off!". What a delicious quote.

Last month I was fortunate enough to have been selected for interview with mind to a position as a Head Greenkeeper. I consider myself knowledgeable and experienced within greenkeeping, and other related fields. However, at interview I found myself somewhat nervous and indeed unable to string together a coherent sentence despite the greatest efforts of the kind interviewers. Thankfully, Andy Smith has organised an "Effective Communication" two day course to be held at Shirley Golf Club on 16 & 17 March at a cost of £60 plus VAT. This will obviously be specifically dealing with the many differing aspects of communication from the greenkeepers' point of view. To book your place please call either Andy on: 07977 145091, or myself



Derek Farrington
SOUTH EAST, SOUTH WEST & SOUTH WALES
Tel: 01903 260956



on: 07816 410552. Trust me, time and money well spent.

Now for something a little lighter. Ray Wise, First Assistant, has knocked-up 25 years excellent service at Great Barr Golf Club. From both the Section and your work colleagues, congratulations and keep up the good work Ray. Wishing you well for the next 20 in our fine profession.

We have two new members to welcome to our fine Section this month, Mr C. P. Jones and Mr R. Wakefield, both being from The Worcestershire Golf Club. We look forward to seeing you at our golf tournaments gentlemen. I hope that your handicaps are not as kind to your game as our Regional Chairman's, Gavin Robson. At a recent Regional Committee Stableford match he scored 41 points, of which contained two blobs. Great golf, Gavin, particularly off 21. What's the name of that Chinese soup?

Rhys has once again secured four superb venues for this year's golfing fixtures. These being: Spring, Olton; Summer, Moor Hall; Autumn, Hawkstone Park, and Christmas, Trentham Park.

For many years now, Mr A. Smith has served our Section as a diligent and knowledgeable committee member. Due to other commitments he has decided to stand down. I, the committee, and I am sure the members, would like to thank Andy for his input and commitment to the Section. Your counsel will be sorely missed Sir.

Looking forward to seeing you at BTME 19-22/1/04. Wishing us all a happy and prosperous New Year.

Sean McDade

Mid Anglia

Firstly, I must apologise to Nigel Phelan and his club. I wrote in last month's issue that he was from St Johns Hospital, but he in fact works at St Andrews Hospital. (How many of you noticed that one?). Sorry Nigel. I hope everyone has had a good Christmas and welcome to 2004.

On December 4, we took part in our final competition of the year at the well renowned Brocket Hall. With nearly 100 participants this was certainly a venue to be appreciated.

Our thanks go to John Moorhouse and his team for the excellent condition of the Melbourn course. Thanks also to the caterers for the traditional Christmas fare. With the format being Texas Scramble in teams of four the results were as follows:- 1. Berkhamsted, 59.2; 2. Boughton Loam, 59.4; 3. Mid Herts, 60.0. Longest Drive, Alan Grew, Berkhamsted. Nearest the Pin, Rob Caitlin, Seoul Nassau.

Congratulations to all who received prizes on the day. These were kindly donated by Avoncrop Amenity Products and our thanks go to our sponsors of the day and also to Barry McCloskey and Colin White for presenting them.

Hopefully, by the next issue, we should have confirmation on the education programmes and their dates and venues. As soon as we know, you will.

I hope everyone has a great 2004 and we as a committee would like to see more of you at the Spring, Summer and Autumn tournaments.

Venues are as follows:- John O'Gaunt, Spring, 36 holes; Mount Pleasant, Summer, 18 holes; Woburn, Autumn, 18 holes+AGM; Chesfield Downs, Winter, 18 holes Texas Scramble.

Steve Mason

East of England

First of all I would like to wish everyone a happy, prosperous and fusarium free New Year. Christmas over and done with for another year and we can all look forward to lighter nights (and mornings) and the playing season, that will be upon us before we know what's happened.

This is my first entry in Around the Green since taking over from Graeme MacDonald as Secretary, I would like to thank him for all his hard work over the years and for handing over some very well organised paper work.

Plans are well under way for a Section seminar day that will be some time in February or March. More information will appear in next month's magazine and invitations will be in the post as soon as I have confirmed the details.

Finally, if any one has any news about new jobs, marriages, new family additions or even winning a prize with a good day on the golf course please let me know. If you ever have any questions please don't hesitate to contact me on 07702 435122 or e-mail me at leslie.howkins@ntlworld.com

Les Howkins

East Midlands

The 2003 AGM was held at Kibworth GC. on November 12. We had 30 members attend the AGM with one or two interesting points being raised. Our present Chairman, Adi Porter, finished his term as Chairman, and was thanked by the incoming Chairman, Ian Needham, for his valuable work to the Section. The following committee were also duly elected. Vice-Chairman, Frank Kempster; Secretary, Antony Bindley; Treasurer, Gavin Robson. Committee members, Richard Barker, Adi Porter, Kevin Kinzer, Jamie Bedford, David James. Jeff Dickinson and Steve Goode had retired from the committee, and Richard Barker has retired as Treasurer.

Before all this took place we all had the pleasure of playing the course, in a three-man Texas Scramble format, the winning score of 64-3.2-60.8. belonged to Simon Banks, Adrian Rhodes and Greg Skinner. 2. Richard Barker, Kevin Kinzer and Andy McGreal 67-4.6-62.4.

Thanks should go to Kibworth Golf Club for courtesy of their fine course, Rival Catering for a truly grand meal, and Chris Butlin and his staff for a well presented golf course.

Once again could I please remind all members to enclose their entry form and cheque before the closing date. Next years Spring Tournament will be held at Kirby Muxloe Golf Club on May 12.

Finally there are two places going spare for a Chainsaw course at Beedles Lake Golf Club on March 2 & 3 if anybody is interested please give me a ring.

Antony Bindley



Devon and Cornwall

Our second Autumn meeting was held at Bigbury Golf Club on Wednesday 19th November. The day started with Rob Guntrip of Devon Garden Machinery starting our golfing members on the 1st tee. Thirty-four members were competing for the DGM sponsored Toro Trophy. The remaining 25 members were escorted on the customary course walk with Head Greenkeeper, Graham Davis.

After some light refreshments, we were treated to a superb three course lunch so a big thank you to the catering team. I would like to thank Bigbury Golf Club and their staff for the use of their excellent facilities and the warm welcome extended to us. I would also like to thank Graham and his staff for presenting his golf course in fantastic condition. Graham has always been an ardent supporter of our Section and the golf course is a credit to him. Another big thank you has to go to our sponsor for the day, Alan Domett of Devon Garden Machinery, for his continued sponsorship. Alan has supported our Section for more years than I can remember and it was great to see him looking so well after his recent illness. After lunch, we held our AGM and everything went quite smoothly. There was little change to the committee apart from Martin Samuel, of Sheriff Amenity, who was voted on as new Trade Member replacing Billy Spratt who has left the industry.

Unfortunately, I will be standing down as Secretary in January 2004 due to personal reasons and a successor is currently being sought. It has been an honour and a privilege to be the Secretary of the Devon and Cornwall Section. A truly fantastic bunch of lads (and lady Katie Walls) with the friendship and comoradary second to none. And after all that, anybody wishing to fill my boots, please give me a ring!

After the AGM, we held the prize giving. Winners of the Toro Trophy were Simon Coombes, from Dainton Park, and Dave Harding, from Exeter, with a staggering 49 pts. Second with 48 pts were Simon Saunders and Scott McAuley, from Woodbury Park, and third were Simon Clarke and Justin Woods, from St Mellion, with 47 pts. Bill Mitchell, from Perranporth, won the Course Walk prize, Jim Arthur's book Practical Greenkeeping 2nd Edition. Bill also won the Course Walk prize last month, which was Jim Arthur's book Practical Greenkeeping 1st Edition! Guess who ain't getting a raffle ticket next month, Bill? Although I have to say, he did give back his last month's prize and after a redraw, Richard Wisdom, of Okehampton, won the first edition.

Dates for your diary: Our meeting at Royal North Devon on January 14, with

Andy Cole, of PSD Agronomy, presenting the afternoon educational talk. Andy is one of the top agronomists in the country and one certainly not to be missed.

The BTME trip to Harrogate is from Tuesday, January 20 to Friday, January 23. Amenity Technology are once again sponsoring the coach and the package cost is £140 per person sharing a twin room. Please contact our Regional Administrator Derek Farrington on 01903 260956 for further details.

Steve Evans

South West

So Christmas is over. There are more needles on the floor than on the tree. Holiday and diet adverts are on the telly and guess what? I am writing this article the day after another successful golf day (it's like back to the future doing these articles). Our Christmas tournament was at Lansdown Golf Club. Dare I say a few problems were apparent with certain aspects of the course but I am sure things will improve in the near future. Thanks for your superb hospitality. Results as follows: In first place, local talent, Richard Carter along with A. Matthews with a score of 68. 2nd place. Paul Godwin, now with Kendleshire Golf Club, after 15 long hard years at Tracey, sorry the Gloucestershire, and playing partner, John Batchelor, 68. Third, more local talent, Rob Lane, of Lansdown, and partner Wayne Vincent, 64.

Nearest the Pins. John Keenaghan and Allister Turner, a rare sight on the golf course, but accurate. A total of 40 on the day. Nobby would like to thank all helpers and participants for their continued support and not forgetting our fabulous patronage sponsors, BS Mowers, Irritech, Amtec, Abbots, Rigby Taylor, Avoncrop, Bioseeds, ALS, Roffeys, and Symbio.

I personally haven't witnessed the Dave Baugen makeover myself and I have it on good authority that it was real and not a 'syrup'. But was it really a purple perm or just a trick of the light? Apparently Robin Greaves was seen later trying to sell a copy of Jim Arthur's, Practical Greenkeeping on the streets of Bristol mumbling something about needing a bed for the night.

On a slightly more serious note, as a Section we are hoping to run a follow up to the Frank Newbury head office sponsored two-day presentation skills course held here at Bath, sometime in late February early March. It's a fantastic course so please contact me if you are interested, I should have some prices soon. Don't forget the training express risk assessment day again here at Bath Golf Club, January 27.

Good luck for the forthcoming year and may the Spring be kind to us all.

See you soon

Guy Woods

South Wales

Hello folks and welcome to another episode of Around the Green, the section, where nosy parkers, yes that's you, read what's going on in the Regions across the Country.

Firstly, I would like to wish Adrian Panks (Strimmer boy from Dudley) all the best and a quick recovery after a recent illness. Any excuse to get out of writing this article.

Secondly, the Lord was looking down on one Andy Roach, when Andy teed off on a par 3 in the recent Welsh Amateur Championships and accidentally hit it straight into the hole for a one. Well done and although we were not there we will all gladly accept a drink at the next meeting.

Thirdly, I hope the New Heads and their families from Langland and Neath are settling down and are enjoying working and living in Wales.

Some results: Rigby Taylor Match-play. Daryl Bray & Lee Jones beat Gareth Evans & Alun Crichton; Jamie Probert & Herbie Probert Beat Andrew Phillips & Neil Ruck; Jim McKenzie & Jake Waites beat Angus Macloed & Mark Wilshire; A. Panks & G Humphries beat Dave Gladwin & Alain Morgan; Henry Stead & Dai Morgan beat Andy Roach & Micky Davies and

R Anderson & P Holmstrom beat Emyr Nickels & Adam Jones.

Overall Winners. Lee Davies and Daryl Bray, both Morrision, beat Fescue Pete Lacey, Pennard, and Steve "Smooth Talk" Mills, Gower.

Education.

Now is the time to start organising and enrolling onto course for the next year – our Section college, Pencoed are running excellent courses for all abilities and are pro active in the development of greenkeeping so if you would like to or you know of any one that would benefit from their services then give

Paul Discombe a call for a chat and a prospectus on 01656 302600 or email enquiries@Brigend.ac.uk

The BIGGA website has been running a discussion forum covering all issues that greenkeepers come up against all the time and I would encourage all to participate as it is useful resource for information.

The BTME Exhibition fast is approaching and hopefully you will have take the opportunity to visit this excellent exhibition and get updated on the modern techniques and machinery.

Question - Do you think these shows work and how many of you will benefit from your visit or is it pointless? Your feedback is much appreciated.

You can contact me on email KerryjokoJones@yahoo.co.uk

I have been prompted by PL to post the score by which they beat me and my partner by in the Rigby Taylor Matchplay - Kerry Jones & Darryl Jones lost to Peter Lacey & Steve Mills 6 & 5. Fluke

Cofion cynnes/Best wishes.

Kerry Jones

SOUTH EAST

Surrey

Sorry about the lack of input into last month's Around The Green but news was either nil or too late for the magazine deadline. I trust you all had a Merry Christmas and are looking forward to a New Year that will bring the ideal weather for whatever your course requires.

My seaweed indicates that the weather in 2004 will bring joy to your hearts but remember it is more probable that your greens committee will bring a pain to another part of your anatomy. November 24, 2003 was the date of the annual England vs Scotland battle at Hankley Common Golf Club and due to some misunderstanding, which in the opinion of all the other team members was due entirely to my age and gradual loss of brain cells. If true I offer my sincere apologies to both team Captains. Perhaps next year to avoid embarrassment and confusion they should both assume I am playing for the other team and let me sit quietly in the clubhouse bar while trying to remember who and where I am. The result was a draw and therefore England retain the Cup.

Surrey Section had its Turkey Trot and AGM at Royal Epsom Golf Club on December 4 and as expected the course was, in Mark Harvey's opinion, excellent and the best it's been since the defection to Essex of that humble and abstemious Scotsman, Mr Douglas Ignatius Fernie. We all enjoyed a windswept game a few beers in the bar and a most enjoyable traditional Christmas dinner. The result was: 1. Chris (Sharkie) Hartnett, 40pts, Addington Palace Golf Club; 2. Derek Cunliffe, 37pts, Old Thorns Golf Club; 3. Tony Bremer, 37pts, Dorking Golf Club. Nearest the Pin was officially won by that great golfer, Tim (Tacit) Webb, but he graciously declined the spotlight as Tacit were the sponsors and so Adam Lunoe, from Richmond Golf Club, received the prize. Longest Drive, into the wind and easily over 100 yards, was delivered by Rob George, Coombe Hill Golf Club.

The AGM had an attendance of over 60 members and was conducted and concluded in a very efficient manner. Billy McMillan confirmed that Bert Watson retires this month from Tyrrells Wood Golf Club and requested that he should be made a life member of BIGGA. Derek Farrington has put the necessary wheels in motion and I hope soon to report that this has been agreed. Good luck, Bert and have a great retirement.

It was also announced by Anthony Freeman that, sadly, Ted Stiles died on Monday November 10. Ted was a most enthusiastic member of the Surrey Section and served for many years on the committee. He was a keen swimmer and played water polo for the county. Ted was also an engineer in the Merchant Navy before joining the Drift Golf Club as a Mechanic/Greenkeeper. Several members attended the cremation service at Walton and a floral tribute was presented on behalf of you all. Paul Weston has been sent a card from Sheila, Ted's wife, thanking Surrey Section for fond memories of golf, snooker and a few friendly pints.

Your committee had its latest meeting on December 1, at Epsom Golf Club. The venues for 2004 events are almost complete and include the following golf clubs, Cuddington, Coombe Wood, Clandon Regis, Laleham and Sunningdale. The Gentleman's Dinner at Walton Heath will be on March 12. Details of this year's Bioseed Bowl will be sent soon but please remember that all competitors must have an official BIGGA, golf club or golf handicap to enter.

Brian Willmott

NORTHERN IRELAND

Well, did you get to the show in Dublin? I stayed in a really posh hotel with the boys from Raddison Roe Park Golf Club. I arrived first and sat in the bar, while sipping my pint. I looked around, the bar/restaurant was packed full of very smartly dressed people. I certainly would sooner keep the women for a week than a fortnight. Then, all of a sudden, four boys from Limavady walked in. Priceless!

I don't know who phoned me in the middle of the night but I found myself talking to someone on a 'big white telephone'. I remember my mummy used to hold my forehead but Lawrence couldn't have cared less. He asked 'Were you talking to someone?' Some folks need it spelling out, don't they?

John Nolan, from Edmonds Town GC, Dublin, was looking very well indeed. Maybe his honeymoon in South Africa contributed to that. Congratulations, John.

Mr President. I first met the Pres 40 years ago. He came down from Scotland and joined the police SVC (scratch golfer by the way). He was our local rural Bobby. On his night shift he used to set off in his Morris Traveller (do you remember those wooden framed estate cars?), drive round to the local village pub, lift the rear end and put a crate under the axle. He'd put it into first gear, let it run, spend the night in the pub and take her back in the morning with the miles on the clock. Happy Days. He represented the British Police at Golf and played at Royal Portrush, a long time ago. He said the only thing he can remember was looking out of his hotel window in the morning and seeing someone coming down the road on his bike. The only thing keeping him on the road was he kept hitting the kerb either side of the road. He eventually came up to a pub, got off his bike, let it go and walked straight into the bar. I didn't think Joe Findlay was at Portrush then.

Now Serious.

At the AGM on December 3, officers were elected. Ken Henderson, Chairman; Emmett Curran, Secretary; Micky O'Neill, Treasurer and comps and Andrew Kerr, Education.

A special thanks was conveyed again to sponsors of the year. I, in error, forgot to thank Karl Veshar, of Vesta Irrigation, for the sponsorship at the golf day at Portstewart Golf Club and Coburns for sending two players to England. Please accept my apologies. Once again thank you to all the companies who have contributed this year.

Very Serious.

The AGM was poorly attended. Your committee works very hard to provide you with golf days, education events, conferences etc. So, it was very disappointing that you couldn't turn up for one evening either just to express your dissatisfaction or your compliments, or to provide some input into what is, after all, your group. I'm sorry if I have touched a nerve but then I hope I have.

Mickey O'Neill and Ken Henderson won the quiz. Not surprising as Ken got me to repeat every damn question. Andrew Kerr and Jonathan McCabe picked up the booby, again not surprising as Jonathan said he is still on honeymoon.

Once again sorry for what I have said but it needed to be.

Graham Prosser

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This competition is not open to BIGGA Staff or non-members.

The solution to the December Turftime Teaser was 'MJ Abbott'. The lucky winner of the Sony CD Walkman is Tim McCreadie from Royston Golf Club - WELL DONE!

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