



News from the Chief Executive

Congratulations to Craig Gilholm and his team at Royal Liverpool for a very successful Open Championship. The pressure was certainly on him, although you would never have known that when talking to him! I am sure you will agree that the course was a good showcase to the golfing community and clearly demonstrated that courses do not have to be green and lush to be of the highest quality. This Open must surely have played into the hands of the R&A and helped them get across the message regarding their pursuit of 'Best practice'. Congratulations and thanks are also due to the members of the BIGGA Support Team that were in action at Hoylake. They were certainly far more involved than in previous years and their contribution to the success of the event was appreciated by the R&A.

As promised I tried to resolve the issue of entry to the Open for BIGGA greenkeeper members, however my contacts were all preoccupied with the tournament and it was agreed that I would meet up with them in September for a general de-brief.

After much deliberation the Board has decided to apply for membership of the Federation of European Golf Greenkeepers Associations (FEGGA). As a member of FEGGA we can develop much more interaction with the other greenkeeping associations within Europe and as FEGGA grows in stature, it should develop the due recognition that it deserves, and will need, in order to represent the industry on a pan-European basis. Much closer to home we continue to investigate the development of working partnerships with other bodies, the latest being the Sports and Play Construction Association (SAPCA). It is hoped that we can form an alliance to develop and promote the activities of both organisations, especially at Harrogate 2007. The absence of the major machinery manufacturers at Harrogate next year is still a cause for concern. They are adamant that they can no longer afford to support two shows every year, however they are keen to continue to provide funding for education and special projects. Regrettably some of the smaller companies are 'sitting on the fence' waiting to see how the show develops and so have not yet rebooked. It's not all bad news though. Many exhibitors continue to support the event and some have taken the opportunity to increase their space allocation, additionally we have recruited some new exhibitors and hope that in the near future we will be in a position to announce a major new name to Harrogate.

Plans for the development of the BIGGA website are well under way and Scott MacCallum has already had meetings with four potential design companies.

Over the coming weeks, my colleagues and I will be taking the opportunity to attend some of the region and section golf events and we look forward to making the most of the opportunity to discuss the affairs of the Association with you. We are always looking at how we can provide a better service to members, if you have any constructive ideas then please share them with us!

John Pemberton

SCOTTISH REGION

East

The Scottish National Tournament was held at Leven Links on June 22. I understand the Course Manager Andy O'Hara and his team, presented the course in excellent condition - knowing Andy you wouldn't expect anything else! The only winner from the East Section was Keith Burgon from Goswick GC, who scooped the Apprentice Prize with a score of 78-5-73. Once again the turnout from the East was poor, with only 12 in attendance. Hopefully next year will see an improvement in numbers with our Section acting as hosts. Our thanks go to Peter Boyd and to my old friend Neil Mitchell, for their efforts on the day.

The Scottish Golf Environment Group held their annual awards ceremony at the Westerwood Hotel on June 29. Four Scottish clubs were given the following award SGEG Environmental Excellence/Golf Environmental Europe Awards: Ratho Park (East); Coatbridge (West); Macdonald Cardrona Hotel Golf and Country Club (East); Brighthouse Bay (Dumfries and Galloway).

We have two members on the move this month with the Deputy at Ratho Park, Gordon McRae, moving to Leven Links to work as Deputy to Andy O'Hara. Moving to Ratho to take over the Deputy's position is Billy Hudson, who has recently been working as Headman at Whitehill House GC in Rosewell.

Finally, Musselburgh GC held their first pre-open qualifier on July 5. The course came in for rave reviews from both R&A officials and competitors alike, which is a credit to all the hard work put in by Tom Shepherd and his team. Due to a delay caused by lightning and a play off involving 10 competitors, play did not finish until 9pm. This made it a long day for greenstaff who had started at 5am!

Until next month.

Mike Dooner

North

How's it going fellow greenkeepers? The weather is improving with some decent sunshine and rain to give the golf course some much-needed growth. I don't know about anyone else but the early part of June was still pretty cold and I would say that the growth was about three to four weeks behind last year.

The Scottish Championships at Leven GC went well, with some good scores on the day. In the main it was good weather and the golf course was a credit to Andy O'Hara and his staff, it was in excellent condition throughout. It's never easy when your peers turn up and look at your work but the course was congratulated by many on its condition (great bunkering by the way). The Scottish Champion for this year is Brian Heggie, from Piper Dam GC, who scored an excellent 69 points.

The Open Championship will have come and gone by the time you read this but I would like to pass on belated good wishes to Craig Gilholm and his team for their first Open Championship. Enjoy the experience and make those guys suffer on the links.

Murcar GC will have hosted a Challenge Tour event in early July, so I will mention how it went in the next issue.

I spoke to Bob Mackay at Aviemore again and he mentioned some severe vandalism that had been done to his second and 18th green and some areas on a fairway and practice tee. This was generally obscenities written in three foot high letters, across the main part of the green, which

resulted in a total kill of the grass. This is very unfortunate for Bob and his staff as the course has just opened and looks spectacular. Hopefully the culprit will be caught, a £10,000 reward has been put up by the owners of the hotel for any information, which leads to a conviction.

David Sinclair, who was Deputy to Hamish Steven at Cruden Bay GC, has left the profession to try something new. David has been in the job a long time and will be a loss to the Section. Hamish will miss David, as he was a valued member of his staff who he could rely on at all times. Dean Mitchell has been promoted to Deputy under Hamish and we wish him all the best for the future. Another of the Cruden Bay staff, Gareth Evans is leaving to try pastures new. I walked the Cruden Bay course with Hamish and was very impressed with the condition and presentation overall. Hamish has increased the fescue content in his greens with minimal watering, feeding and a high height of cut throughout the year. The results already show this is working well with a definite increase of finer grasses throughout the sward. Keep up the good work Hamish - it's a pity the Huns won't make as much progress as you this year. Hail Hail.

That's about it folks, keep the mowers sharp and the members happy - if you can.

Cheers.

Robert Patterson, Royal Aberdeen GC

West

Welcome to this month's report. I apologise for the lack of reports over the last two months but I've had other commitments.

After a cold start to the season the weather has picked up well with only a couple of days rain during late May/early June - long may it continue.

On April 25 we held our spring outing at Bearsden GC. There was heavy rain during the build up to the tournament but the weather was not bad on the day, with some sunshine in the afternoon. It's not easy preparing your course for the early part of the season especially when there's 40/50 greenkeepers coming to play. Well done to John Brown and his team, the course was first class, the greens were in great condition for April. Our thanks to the Captain and committee for allowing us courtesy of their course and use of their clubhouse.

The annual Greenkeeper v Secretaries match was held at Renfrew GC this spring. The secretaries won for the first time since 1998, many congratulations. A big thank you to my own club for allowing us use of the course and facilities.

The Greenkeeper/Greens Convenor match was held recently over Sandyhills GC, Greenock GC were the winners with Hugh Logue and his convenor. Once again thanks to Richard Aitken and Scottish Grass Machinery for sponsoring the event and to Jimmy Caldwell and his staff for the fine condition of the course.

I attended the Scottish National Tournament at Leven Links GC during June and must congratulate Andy O'Hara and his staff for the first class condition of the course, it was a fantastic day and the sun was shining. Once again our Regional Administrator, Peter Boyd, arranged everything and the day ran smoothly. Well done to all the helpers and congratulations to the winners.

A warm welcome to new members: Steven Wilson, Renfrew GC, Richard Cuthbert and James Keith Cowglen, Michael Baxter, Colville Park GC and Paul Mc McCormack Kirkhill GC.

The Fairways group held their open day during May at their base, at Inchinnan. I must congratulate them on a first class demonstration and presentation. The weather was terrible but the organisation was great. The range on show was first class with a wide range of companies taking part, their service area is very impressive and they have plans to upgrade. If you

have not been up its worth a trip. To David Rae, Gordon Mc Murdo and Richard Green, thank you on behalf of the Section.

Congratulations to my good friend John Barr, who has been appointed the new Head Greenkeeper of Cardross GC. At present John is at Ranfurly Castle and starting at Cardross in August. Hope you have many happy years at your new course. Davy Gall is retiring from Cardross.

A quick reminder that our Autumn Outing is at Haggis Castle on September 27. We plan to have our annual night out during late November, dates will be available as soon as possible, the venue still needs to be arranged but if anyone has any ideas please get in contact. It's always a good night so if you haven't been try to come along this year.

The results from the Drimsynie die hards spring competition were: 1. Robert Bruce; 2. Fraser Ross; 3. John Brown.

Once again we had a great time up in Argyle, many thanks to all those in attendance and to Bryce Houston for his hospitality.

I look forward to seeing everyone in the autumn.

Fraser Ross

07970366355

NORTHERN REGION

North West

A great day was had at the summer tournament at Morecambe GC. The condition of the course was fantastic and the weather magnificent, I can't say the same about my golf though. The winners were: Adam Kellett, from Lancaster GC - who reckons he has not won anything before - he beat Paul Hogan on a card playoff. The guest prize was won by Mike Crabtree who is also a member at Morecambe. Longest Drive was won by Bert Cross and Nearest the Pin had no winner as nobody landed a ball on the green.

My roving reporter tells me that the Deputy Head Greenkeeper at Preston Fulwood GC, namely Andy Merry, has been promoted to Head Greenkeeper. Good luck to you Andy. As always, if anyone has any news or just needs a little bit of advice, please contact the Secretary Bert Cross on: 0151 724 5412 or myself on: 0151 289 4625. If you are on the world wide web my email address is: jsheehan@blueyonder.co.uk.

Chris Sheehan

Northern

Well, it's the start of July and is it just me or is anyone else getting fed up with the heatwave we're having at the moment? Strimming in 30 degrees heat is just not fun!

On June 14 we ventured up to Ken Christie's course, Northcliffe, to play this years Presidents Day Tournament. I'm not sure whether it was Ken or one of his staff who changed the holes before our arrival but they certainly had a sense of humour! The results for the day were as follows: Division One: 1. Dave Collins; 2. Stewart Mason; 3. Rob Gee. Division Two: Presidents Prize - Roy Armitage 1. Adam Speight 2. John Watts 3. Derek Chew. Division Three: 1. Dave Thackray 2. Lee Graham 3. Ken Christie.

Our thanks to Ken and the staff at Northcliffe for a fantastic day. Thanks also to Tito and Boxer Chemicals for sponsoring the event and supplying much needed support to the Northern Section. Your help is much appreciated.

Over the past couple of weeks I have been lucky enough to play in two large events, held in the region. The first was the BIGGA Annual Charity Golf Day held at Aldwark Manor, which, apart from the occasional rain

shower, was a fantastic day, thank you to the staff at BIGGA for setting up and running the event.

The second event was held at Hornsea GC to celebrate the retirement of Head Greenkeeper, Roger Bielby. Roger had been at the club for over 25 years and, as I am sure all 200 players on the day would agree, that the course was a credit to Roger and his hard work over the years.

Please don't forget that this year's Invitation Day is to be held at Scarcroft GC on August 23. It will be a 10.30am shot gun start, all those wanting to play should let me know as soon as possible.

Last, but by no means least, the results of the Northern v Sheffield match. The match was played at Halifax Bradley Hall (which needs a few more steep hills!) and needless to say the trophy has got our name on it for another year, with the Northern Section running out 4-2 winners on the day. Thank you to Mike Brear and Rigby Taylor for sponsoring and organising the event, the lads from Sheffield for making the trip up, the lads from the Northern Section for winning again and to Alan Court and everyone at Bradley Hall for another fantastic day.

Adam Speight

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Cleveland

Not too much to report this month. The dry spell continues and the wetting agent flies out of supplier's doors. However, we shouldn't twist should we? Seriously though, I know some of the courses have been slow in getting good growth on the fine turf areas of courses - a very wet start to the growing season followed by a mini drought in April, a wet May and another severe dry spell. The grass doesn't know what's going on!

The autumn outing will be at Dinsdale Spa GC on Wednesday, September 20. Please arrive at 9.30am - tee time is from 10am until 11am. As members haven't been turning up at previous outings Pembo requires a £5 deposit. Please send it to: Ian at Bedale GC, Leyburn Road, Bedale, North Yorkshire DL8 1EZ.

Staying on the sporting front, Pembo is trying to organise a couple of friendly football matches against neighbouring Sections. (No fighting Baz Zidane!) The Northern and North East Section are being contacted for fixtures. Any Cleveland Section members who would like a game, should contact Ian on the numbers listed below. Ian is hoping to get some top venues for the games!

Don't forget - any news to: El Prez on 07831 214879

Ian Pemberton: 07989 508878 home: 01642 316416

Terry Charlton

Sheffield

On July 5, we had our annual golf match against the Northern Section, held at Bradley Hall GC in Halifax. Unfortunately, once again, we lost to them by the score of 4-2. The results were as follows: D Chappell and S Pickering lost 2 down; R Needham and A Unwin won 6 and 4; S Pigott and D Brownlow lost 1 down; S Dye and N Maltby lost 3 and 2, K Clarke and A Whittington won 1 up, A Bunting and K Ashton lost 1 down. I'm sure you all enjoyed the day and well done for representing the Section! I am sure we will triumph next year, when it will be held in our Section at Hickleton GC.

Congratulations go to our Secretary Chris Astle and his wife Karen, on the birth of their baby daughter Isabelle, good luck to you all for the future!

John Lax

North Wales

Congratulations to David Lewis at Conwy GC, Chris Peddie at Wallasey GC and their respective greenkeeping teams for hosting the Open Championship Local Final qualifying rounds. It's fantastic to have had this event in our region and to have these great golfing venues in the North Wales Section. My notes are going into the magazine ahead of play at Hoylake, so a full story in next months edition and a final good luck to everyone involved in the BIGGA bunker support team.

Huw Roberts from Henlle Park GC is the proud father of baby boy, William. Congratulations to him, wife Janet and big sister Emily.

Over at Northop GC, I have been told Dan Hayes has not been well recently, we wish him a speedy recovery. Also Andy Peel from Bull Bay was examined and they thought he had contracted pleurisy, but later found it was a dodgy meat pie he had eaten from the chippy that got stuck.

At Sandiway GC last month was the BIGGA golf management trophy. All reports of the course were nothing but praise, so well done the Brian Taylor and his team and why didn't any of the local teams win? The winners were Gay Hill GC from the Midlands. A good day was had by all.

That's all for this month, my organiser tells me it's time to book your hotel room at Harrogate again for January 2007. With less than six months to go, I always get phone calls in early January asking 'can you get me a room somewhere?' and I say there isn't any, you should have booked it back in August last year.

See you next month.

Mesen Cyrmu

Andrew Acorn

MIDLAND REGION

Midland

Well I've done it again, well my father has! Yes, the same venue at Hopwood for this year's Annual Angling Match on September 11. Those who attended last year shall, I hope, reiterate my obvious excitement at such an exclusive opportunity. The format shall be as last year, for those who missed out, standard match practices for the competition. To follow there shall be prize giving and a free buffet in the summer house of our most gracious host Mr.Perks (Proprietor of Rubery Building Supplies). Numbers are limited, to book your peg and for further information call me on: 07908 421 015.

Now for the boring golf, (I jest). Our Christmas Tournament is to be held at Broadway GC on December 8 at 10am. Our thanks to the club for their courtesy. Looking forward to seeing you Cedric.

It's hoped that we will produce a calendar for 2007 again, by the grace of our sponsors. If you would like to see one of your photos featured on the calendar then get snapping. Why not show-off your baby in its best light, or share a humorous moment. Please be aware of others feelings, be careful and dignified. I shall inform you of were to send your entries in future notes.

It gives me great pleasure to inform that Dave Gibbons (Rocky) has managed to con the lovely Cheryl Broadbent into becoming his better-half. The reception was held at Aston Villa FC - 50,000 chicken and chips must have cost at least a week's wages. We all wish you both the greatest of happiness together for the future.

Well I wish it was warmer. Never mind, it's perfect for fly-mowing. Sorry to those who have to carryout such duties, but by perhaps taking advantage of the many subsidised and indeed some free education courses

ran by the Section and BIGGA HQ, more interesting skills can be learnt and utilised.

Training and education - We are busy making arrangements for a range of training events scheduled for the autumn/winter. Courses arranged so far include: Lantra All Terrain Vehicles (October 4 at Gay Hill GC) £60 + VAT; Lantra Chainsaw crosscutting & maintenance (November 6, 7 at Gay Hill GC) £225 + VAT; Lantra Basic tree felling techniques (November 25, 26 at Huntingdon, Cannock) £205 + VAT; Bigga Communicating with Committees (December 5,6 at Gay Hill GC) £110 + VAT. For further details and booking forms please contact Paul Woodham on: 07880 734197 or Sami at BIGGA HOUSE.

Places are limited, so please book early. If you have other training requirements, please contact Paul. We may be able to assist with arranging a course in your local area. We are also hoping to generate enough interest to run A1, L12 courses and the Professional Development Award. For those who are not already aware of the PDA, the course was successfully run last year and those who attended the course found the training, delivered by Frank Newberry, invaluable in their personal development. These courses are funded through the ESF and are free subject to eligibility. Please let us know if you are interested in any of the GTC courses. Further details can be obtained either by contacting the GTC or Paul.

Gay Hill GC will be hosting The Bigga Midland region seminar on November 16. A programme of events is in the process of being put together so please look out for further details.

Sean McDade

East of England

First of all, many apologies for the lack of reporting of late - all blamed on a combination of moving house and being extremely busy, as I know you all are. What a start to the season it's been! With the usual hard work comes all extremes of weather - heavy rains to start and now so dry you dare not flick a fag butt!

Bringing things up to date, I will start with the Golf Day at Peterborough Milton. No apologies this time for the pin positions, they were the only ones we could make use of due to the weather, although thankfully the weather did pick up for the day. My sincere thanks go to the Board of Directors and Members of Milton for granting us courtesy of the course. Our thanks also go to the sponsors Toro, Colliers, Lambes & BLEC. All very much appreciated. As for the results, suffice to say, it was a good job Les had his truck with him to carry home all his prizes. Well done Mr Howkins and well done to Jaime Hibbert for giving him a run for his money.

The East of England Tour then moved onto Elsham and Nigel had the course in superb condition - even though he lost half of his putting green to the marquee. Good tactic mate, stops them practicing! It certainly paid off, with Nigel taking the Honours and Gary Cooper taking the Trade Prize. Normally Gary's golf is a bit like mine (not worth mentioning), but credit is due here. Well done. Good luck also goes to Gary for his new venture as an independent supplier (STG Supplies) - you would think a man of his age would know better.

The East of England was well represented at the Neil Thomas Golf Day, with two teams finishing in the top four. Congratulations.

Now is the time to be thinking about Winter Seminars and the subjects under discussion. Anybody with thoughts and ideas, talk to a committee member or give me a ring on: 07974 816927 or email: allan@jaxbaby.plus.com

Finally, I would like to wish Steve all the best on his new position as Course Manager at Immingham.

Allan Jaxbaby

BB&O

"In this forest of great trees lies Burnham Beeches Club, whose course has a setting of dignity and beauty which could hardly be surpassed." These were the words of Tom Scott, veteran Golf Writer and Editor. Founded in 1891, Burnham Beeches GC is situated on the edge of the Thames Valley, in South Buckinghamshire, with the old town of Beaconsfield to the north and the Burnham village to the south.

On July 5, the BBO held the Annual Summer Tournament at Burnham Beeches GC and the Section were faced with a day of unsettled weather that constantly challenged the golfer but also produced a winner of the Gem Rose Bowl. The results were as follows: 1. Justin Lee, Southfield GC, 44 ps; 2. Carl Small, Ellesborough GC, 34 pts; 3. Sid Arrowsmith, Frilford Heath GC, 33 pts. Nearest the Pin was won by Jon Kubota Ryan and Longest Drive by Jake Humes from Southfield GC. The John Deere Putting Green Competition was won by hop-a-long himself, Carl Small and Mark Ely took the trade prize with 37 pts.

Sid Arrowsmith presented Head Greenkeeper Lee Bishop, with a cheque for £50 to aid of the Captain's Annual Charity Fund.

A warm thank you goes to our sponsors for the day Clive Parnell and Gary Tait from Gem Professional, and Burnham Beeches GC for courtesy of the course as well as the excellent gastronomic delights served by the Chris the Steward and the Burnham catering department. The course was in tip top condition, a credit to Lee Bishop and all the Burnham greenstaff for their efforts in preparing the course which was a pleasure to play and much appreciated by all.

The next event on the agenda is already upon us with the Autumn Invitational to be held at Studley Wood GC on August 11. There are still a few places available for a last minute entry. Please contact Jon Scoones: on 07880 550 380.

Looking forward to a change after 15 years at Beaconsfield GC, Chris Lillitou has joined the staff at Burnham Beeches GC. We wish him all the best with his new job.

Eric Kinlon from the Buckinghamshire GC has joined the first time dad's club and from everyone at the Section, congratulations to you all.

If any member has any news or views they would like to share, or would like more information about the Section and forthcoming events you only have to call John Scoones on: 07880 550 380.

Mark Day
mark@day.fm

SOUTH EAST

Surrey

Wednesday, July 5. I would like to pass onto Sutton and East Surrey Water the many words of thanks that I have heard in my recent travels, from all the drought order affected golf clubs in Surrey.

That done, it's time for a report on the Surrey Section Golf Day, at Surrey Downs GC, on June 22, sponsored by Ernest Doe. Unfortunately I could not be present as I had to attend a wedding ceremony in the West Indies. Tobago, renowned for its semi tropical climate, had somehow escaped the Sutton and East Surrey Water Company's drought order and its two golf courses were spraying water like there was no tomorrow.

The many, heavy but short, downfalls of rain were a welcome relief from the glorious sunshine and kept the rain forest interior with its picturesque waterfalls and streams a lush and vivid green just like English golf courses



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in the old days. Photos are available online at: www.tropicalbeauties.co.com.

Back to Surrey Downs, and my Assistant Reporter's report.

Tony Kyle, Course Manager, must have had his team working 24/7 to get his course into the pristine condition that welcomed so many Surrey greenkeepers on that sun drenched day in June. The hospitality shown by Surrey Downs GC was fantastic and included a barbeque that Keith Floyd would have been proud of.

The day was an overwhelming success and the winner of the Cresta Cup was Roger Tydeman with 37pts. Les Salmon was runner up with 36pts, with Andy Gatland, 34pts coming up the rear. It was a pity that Roger was unable to stay for the meal and prize giving, but his water source had been vandalised that afternoon and his devotion to duty meant that his quarter pounder beefburger and sausage were hastily devoured by some other deserving greenkeeper.

Longest Drive belonged to Dave Gibbs and his mighty Wurlitzer and Nearest the Pin winner (who cannot be named for reasons best known to my sub reporter) is asked to contact me so his name can appear in next month's edition.

Dave Searles, who was bravely trying to beat the course record, failed due to a slight mishap on the 18th hole. Unfortunately he managed to find his ball so the record for the most balls lost in one round, remains intact.

Hard luck Dave.

Brian Willmott

Kent

After a hectic start to the summer - coping with the usual prolific growth of every blade of grass on the course, things slowed down and everyone started worrying about water shortages. It was refreshing to be able to escape from it all for a brief respite at the idyllic Mid-Kent GC, for our summer meeting.

Again, a strong Kentish contingent of like-minded souls turned out to play the comparatively short, yet deceptively difficult course superbly presented by Lee Sayers and his team. After first being treated to a hearty ploughman's lunch to prepare us for the ensuing battle that lay ahead, we made our way to the first tee. An ability to keep the ball straight is a definite plus point around the course, which proved to be the downfall of many hoping to be in the prizes. On a day when the temperature just seemed to keep rising, Vic Maynard patrolled the course on his drinks wagon admirably providing sustenance to the lost and weary souls as they made their way round. Many thanks to Vic and to Ernest Doe and sons, for their generosity with the drinks and some of the prizes.

Results as follows: 1. Tony Neve, Chislehurst, 37 pts; 2. Adam Marrable, Chislehurst, 34 pts; 3. Gary Branchett, Tenterden, 33 pts. Trade Prize was won by Neil Pullen on 30 pts, who also collected the Longest Drive award. Nearest the Pin prizes went to: John Fullager, Peter Leaves and John Millen.

It was a cracking day at Mid-Kent, rounded off perfectly by a lovely three course meal in the refreshingly air-conditioned clubhouse.

Thanks again to Lee and all the team at Mid-Kent for their hospitality. Details of future events, including a proposed football match against

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Essex Section and an autumn golfing day, shall follow in next month's report. Please feel free to get more up to date news however, at kentgreenkeepers.co.uk where you can also contact any of the committee with news and views.

Until next month
Rob Holland

Essex

Well then, the world of English sport has come crashing down to earth with a big bang! As I type this article the English football team have been knocked out of the World cup on penalties again - Deja vu I feel. The English cricket team have lost their 15th game out of 18 to the Sri Lankans and the Rugby team have been walked all over by the Australians. On the British front, Monty the magnificent managed to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory in the US Open and Andy Murray has been knocked out of Wimbledon, after humiliating Andy Roddick in the third round. All doom and gloom on the sporting front I hear you cry. Not so...

The top golfing event in the Essex Section's annual calendar, the summer tournament and National qualifier, took place at Langdon Hills GC on June 29. It's a superb venue, where some considerable investment has truly paid dividends. Well done Tony for presenting the course in such an impeccable fashion. A thank you is in order to Rigby Taylor and Steve Denton for sponsoring the day and thanks also to all those stalwart sponsors of the raffle prizes from the trade.

On the golf front, some sharp shooting saw Dominic Rodgers pick up Nearest the Pin for category I and Mark Stopps pick up the prize for category II.

The two people to represent the Section in the National Championship will be Tony Barker, who shot the Best Gross and Nick Gates who shot the Best Nett. Well done guys and good luck at the nationals.

Second and third in the Best Gross section went to Pat Laws and David Beale, while Sam Cook, Robert George and Anthony Kirwan finished behind Nick Gates in the Best Nett category.

As mentioned in last month's article, it's Colne Valley GC next, for the autumn trophy on August 24. Be there or be square!

Until next time - be Good!
Richard Williams
07737 985735



South West

Back in June, the Section played the annual match against the Secretaries on Cherington Course, at Minchinhampton. The weather was very hot and dry - which clearly suited the greenkeepers, as the secretaries were obviously missing air-conditioning and all of life's other little luxuries found in comfy offices and bars.

Actually, it was a great day with warm camaraderie, which was much appreciated by all competitors, especially us humble greenkeepers. Adrian Bennett, your Team Captain, was delighted to have got off to a winning start, by masterminding a 5-1 thrashing - although five of those games went to the 18th green. My own match, playing with Adam Matthews, was a one-hole victory against Ian Crowther, ex-Assistant Secretary at Minch, partnered by Geoff Beetham, retired Secretary from Stinchcombe.

Geoff Beetham never missed a fairway off the tee all afternoon. (Don't you just love the elderly opponent who wafts his tired ball much further down the fairway than you can smote yours?) 180 yards every time, straight down the middle. Completely the opposite to Adam Matthews, whose red meat diet is clearly doing the business - nearer 380 yards, but not always in quite the right direction.

Thanks to all the greenkeepers who played and sorry about the rough, (just the small matter of South West Counties Week, the week after). Thanks to Minchinhampton for hosting the event and to my staff for providing us with such a challenging course to play on.

Talking about challenging golf courses, I recently had the privilege, along with several other South West Greenkeepers, of playing at Bearwood Lakes GC near Wokingham. This very challenging, Hawtree designed "top 100" course, was in fantastic condition and our Section delegation was made welcome by Course Manager, Dan Lightfoot. We were particularly delighted when Dan told us he'd got the Black Tees ready especially for us "cause it's a better course off the black" all 6800 yards of it. Oh yes, triplex-cut double criss-cross hatched fairways, a couple of AR250 type widths of semi, and then hay length rough, (more often than not with Wayne Vincent looking for a ball right in the middle of it.) The "Lakes" bit of the name is also particularly relevant with a huge lake, complete with Canada geese, posing more problems on the back nine. As Wayne remarked while sitting at the side of the fairway, picking the seeds out of his socks: "It's so pretty, you'd really look forward to work every day".

The South West Section are staging an L12 Coaching Day at Cumberwell Park GC on September 26, from 9.30am until 4pm. Please contact Marc Haring, Education Officer, for further details on: 01225 863322 or: 07816 106146.

Cost will be in the region of £20, thanks to sponsorship from the GTC. The day is open to members from other Sections as well as the South West. Take this opportunity to keep your coaching qualification up to date.

Many congratulations to John Keenaghan on his promotion to Head Greenkeeper following a re-shuffle at Chipping Sodbury GC. John is one of those sincere guys who you instinctively know will make a go of it.

Finally, I was sitting behind the 8th tee of our Avening Course the other day, waiting to drive my machine down to the Maintenance Facility, situated over the hedge to the right, about halfway down this hoie. On the tee were four golfers, and one was about to drive. You can usually sum up how well a guy is going to hit the ball just from watching the practice swing. Well, this one looked like a one-armed bloke trying to kill an octopus with a stick. The ball predictably shot off at right angles and soared over the hedge heading directly for the maintenance area. Things took on a kind of dreamy slow motion. As the ball disappeared over the hedge, I remember thinking "wonder if the lads are back yet?" With that, all four guys on the tee winced, and most of my greenstaff appeared like little ants swarming out from behind the hedgerow waving and shaking fists. When I got down there, yes, the ball had gone clean through my car windscreen, which looked like a bomb had gone off. Never mind - he was well insured.

South West Counties Week and the South West Regional Open Championship Qualifying Round - both went really well, despite the weather. The course attracted a lot of nice comments and now I'm off on holiday. Let me know how your summer's going and I'll print it.

Paul Worster
paulw@mgcnew.co.uk
07768 394593.

Devon and Cornwall

Many congratulations to Andrew Dunstan and Terri, who recently did the honest thing and got married. Andrew is First Assistant at Newquay GC, in Cornwall, under the wing of Chris Pearson, Head Greenkeeper. Chris tells me instead of going on honeymoon, they decided to buy a house, not easy in today's climate - we wish them well and many happy years together. Incidentally, Chris told me on the quiet that Andrew is on one long honeymoon working under him at Newquay, is that correct Andrew?

June 22 - the Section held their mid-summer meeting at China Fleet GC in Saltash, it was a fun day with superb weather. The course was in excellent condition thanks to Richard Shapland, Head Greenkeeper and his staff, who did us proud.

A big thank you to Martin Ward of Symbio - sponsor for the day - who delighted the winners with some fantastic prizes. The golf competition was followed by a barbeque.

The winners were as follows: 1. Colin Wheatcroft, Plymouth Argyle AFC, 33pts; 2. David Moulding, Bigbury GC, 33 pts; 3. Jane Jones, South West and South Wales Regional Administrator, 29 pts.

Colin won Nearest the Pin on the 5th hole and Dave Moulding, Longest Drive.

It was great to see Jane at our meeting with husband Clive. They both enjoyed the day and Jane, I will watch your handicap with interest from now on.

Last but not least, a big thank you to all at China Fleet and especially General Manager, David O'Sullivan, and Head Greenkeeper Richard, for their hospitality.

Donovan O Hunt

Events Co-ordinator and Administrator.

South Wales

Hi all, It's 31 degrees, July 4, I don't want to give any readers an image, however, I am sitting in front of the computer in just my trunks - it is so blooming hot.

I have been in shorts all week, but as I am a highlander, the colour of my legs has changed in shade not to a lovely golden bronze but from a pale blue to white. I am just killing time as the semi final of the World Cup is on in half an hour.

Big Russell Anderson has just touched down in Denmark to start a new project.

Peter Lacey and I represented BIGGA at Pencoed College Open Day, on June 24, a scorching hot day, big thanks to Ted Hopkins for delivering a Toro 5400 D Fairway mower, which was displayed outside our marquee. Many thanks to Pencoed College, in particular, Paul Discome for allowing us to exhibit.

Pretty poor turnout for the summer competition - 20 including trade. Come on guys please try and attend, I know we are all very busy watering but the tee is booked from 1pm until 2pm. Hassle your bosses for a half day, there is a lot of organising for these events - for your benefit. It is a great networking day with great prizes, great courses and a cracking meal all for £13.50. The competition can't be that tough as one of my assistants bagged a prize.

The event was staged over on the Dewstow GC and we played on the Park course. Many thanks to everyone at the club for making us feel welcome. The course was in great condition and we had a super meal. Many thanks to Course Manager, Mark Harris, and his team for the hard work in preparing the course, all who played thoroughly enjoyed the course.

Many thanks to the sponsors of the summer competition, Birds of Cowbridge and many thanks to Jeff Bird for attending and helping present the prizes. They are our longest standing sponsors. Thank you from all in the Section for your continued support.

Results: 1. Birdie Cup, Gary Humphries, 34 pts; 2. Jacobsen Cup, Reece McDonagh, 33 pts; 3. Mark Wilshire, 31 pts; Nearest the Pin, Peter Lacey; Longest Drive, Nick Rawlings; Trade prize, Jim Openshaw, Mid Lube.

Congratulations to Paul Handy who has been appointed Deputy Course Manager at Newport GC.

The competitors chosen to represent the South Wales match versus the South West, will be contacted by the Section Secretary in due course.

Angus Macleod

SECTION NOTES INFORMATION

In order to improve the sending and receiving of Section Notes, where possible can all future notes be emailed to melissa@bigga.co.uk by no later than the 5th of the month prior to publication please.

Word limit for Section notes: 500-600.

You will receive an email back to confirm receipt of your notes.

If you do not receive this confirmation please get in touch with BIGGA HQ.

In the Shed ANSWERS

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SPOT THE DIFFERENCE



ANAGRAM

CAN MEET HATTRICK LEGEND
The England Cricket Team

A QUICK NINE HOLES

1. Andre Agassi
2. Alan Shearer
3. Putney
4. Pele
5. Dry wine
6. Ten
7. Arsenal
8. John Smiths
9. Phil Taylor