



News from the Chief Executive

Upon my return from two weeks holiday I realised how the days suddenly seem to be growing shorter and any prospect of 'a few holes' after work is no longer an option. It seems only yesterday that I was writing about looking forward to playing more golf in the forthcoming season, getting better value for my subscription investment by playing more often and perhaps clipping a shot or two off my handicap, all ambitions that were never fulfilled! Like so many golfers today I am finding it more and more difficult to justify regularly spending at least half a day on either Saturday or Sunday away from home. This, coupled with the rising cost of golf membership, is perhaps symptomatic of some of the problems in golf generally. We discuss sustainability of grass species and playing conditions however, I do sometimes wonder at the sustainability of the number of golfing facilities that exist today.

This year has been as difficult, if not more difficult in some areas, as can be recalled in recent times. Lack of rain and restrictions on water usage have created undue pressure on greenkeepers as the quest for improved performance by many golf clubs continues. Somewhere in all of this I personally cannot help but feel that there is a wake-up call for many average clubs, members clubs in particular. Just what the answer is I am not sure however, over the coming years I can see severe financial pressure being a real threat to the existence of some facilities, or perhaps my interpretation of trends is wildly wrong!

On a more positive note I hope that you have all taken time to study the 'Continue to Learn' brochure for Harrogate 2007 that contains an unprecedented choice of Workshops and Seminars. Some workshops are already 50% booked, so if you have a specific preference then I urge you not to delay your booking form any longer than necessary. The exhibition for 2007 will occupy Halls A, B, C, and M and at the time of writing there is only a very small amount of space left to sell. There will be a number of new exhibitors and a detailed preview will appear in next month's Greenkeeper International. In the meantime further details of the event can be found on the Harrogate Week website: www.harrogateweek.org.uk.

The National Tournament, early in October, produced a worthy champion in Tony McLure and my congratulations go to him. My thanks go to the other competitors for supporting the event, to the members and Committee at Burton on Trent GC - who were excellent hosts and to Gavin Robson and his staff for the presentation of the course. In addition I would like to acknowledge the generous financial support of Ransomes Jacobsen, without which the event would not have been viable.

Development work has already commenced on the redesign of the Association's website following the appointment of a new design team. The new site will incorporate many of the suggestions that have been made by members and is due to be launched in January at Harrogate Week. The new format will give Headquarter's staff full control of content management meaning that it will be far easier and much more cost effective to keep the data up to date.

During the coming weeks I will be attending the Regional conferences and I look forward to meeting as many members as possible.

John Pemberton

SCOTTISH REGION

Harrogate Week 2007

The Scottish Region once again offers their members a subsidised package deal for Harrogate Week 2007.

The Package includes: Entry to Continue to Learn Seminars (seven in total); three nights Bed and Breakfast in en-suite twin rooms on 23rd, 24th and 25th January, 2007 in the Holiday Inn, Harrogate, (formerly Moat House Hotel). Package cost: £261.00. Accommodation package only: £156.00.

To obtain booking forms contact the Regional Administrator, Peter J. Boyd on: 0141 616 3440 or 07776 2422120 or email: pj.boyd@btinternet.com

Ayrshire

The autumn meeting and final leg of the Harry Diamond Trophy was contested over Western Gailes GC. Although not present on the day myself, I have it on good authority that Jim Devlin and his staff had the links in first class order. On behalf of the Ayrshire Section I would also like to thank the Captain and committee at Western Gailes for allowing us courtesy of such a prestigious course. Likewise to all bar and catering staff for their friendly service on the day. We had another excellent turn out with 35 players taking part. The results were as follows: Harry Diamond Trophy - Duncan Gray, 62pts (better 2nd round); 1.1 J McLachlan, St. Nicholas; 1.2 G Morrison, Largs Kelburn; 1.3 S Higgins, Ardeer; 1.4 J Mair, Hamilton; 2.1 M Green, Ballochmyle; 2.2 D Gray, Pines; 2.3 J Wilson, Ballochmyle; 2.4 J Wilson Bogside and Trade Prize - D Duthie, Richard Aitken.

The AGM will have taken place by the time you get this, so I will pass on any slightly interesting information next month. Honest!

Lastly, our match versus the N. Ireland Greenkeepers will have been decided on Friday, October 20. I will let you know most of the gory details of this 24-man thriller next time! Ta ra for now!

Denis Tweddell

Email: denis.t@hotmail.co.uk or: 07939104701

East

I start this month's report with a question - which would you prefer, a feast or a famine? Well, judging by the news and views, which have been pouring in from all quarters during the past week, the former is the resounding winner!

The Greenwood family from North Berwick are very much in the news this month with Stuart being appointed Scottish Chairman of BIGGA. He takes over the chair from Ian Barr of Largs GC, who has carried out his duties in exemplary fashion during the past two years. I also understand from a reliable source that Stuart is due to be appointed captain at Kilspindie GC, which all in all should make for an extremely busy 2007.

Not to be outdone on the news front, Stuart's daughter Fiona has just returned from Kenya where she spent six weeks doing voluntary work. During her time there she and her fellow volunteers helped complete the children's refuge centre in the town of Embu. The centre runs various pastimes for the many street children in this poverty stricken part of Kenya, including craftwork and sport. The trip was rounded off by climbing to the summit of Mount Kenya, Africa's second highest mountain at 17500 feet.

Finally, Fiona would like to thank everyone who helped make this trip possible with their kind support.

On Wednesday, September 27, the Section held their autumn outing at Glencorse GC, where, thankfully, good weather prevailed on the day.

The results are as follows: Scratch, C. Yeaman, 69; 1. I. Bell; 2. N. Jacob; 3. K. Hodges; Best Nett, C. Yeaman; Trade, J. Darling; Veterans, G. Wood; Nearest the Pin, T. Murray; Straightest Drive, Stuart Crawford.

The highlight of the day was an amazing round of 69 by Chris Yeaman, of West Linton GC, although there is a suspicion that Kenny Mail might just have collected his P45 if he had bettered his boss's score!

A big thank you is due to Glencorse GC for granting us courtesy of the course, to the bar staff and catering staff for keeping everyone fed and watered, and last but certainly not least to Ian Bell and his team for presenting the course in excellent condition. On a negative note, once again the attendance was disappointing, with only 33 appearing on the day.

Some weeks ago I visited Winterfield GC at Dunbar and although I failed to find Head Man, Craig Pennycook, and I almost had a run in with a car. On making my way across the car park to the van, a car entered the car park and headed in my direction. I was almost at the point of taking evasive action when it screeched to a halt a few feet away, and a voice from the driving side announced, "You didn't recognise me, did you?" With that, the well-known features of Jimmy Neilson appeared and I breathed a sigh of relief, safe in the knowledge that if he hit my right leg I had a spare one in the van! Many of you will know Jimmy had a successful hip operation in 2005 and, in fact, has just had the other one done. Although it is early days, Jimmy tells me his golfing days will be back with vengeance in 2007.

The Christopher Yeaman Junior Charity Trophy was held at West Linton GC on Saturday, August 26. This year 66 teams of four took part, including various trade companies such as: Thomas Sherriffs, Hendersons Grass Machinery, Lawnmower Services, Golf Car Company (Scotland) and Polaris UK. In addition the greenkeeping fraternity were represented with players from West Linton, Murraysfield, Ravelston, Craigmillar Park and Bonny Island GC, River State Nigeria.

In all, the event raised a grand total of £4,850, which has been donated to various good causes.

Finally, the Yeaman family is grateful to all who contributed to the fundraising efforts, with a special thank you to Lawnmower Services for their generosity and support.

As a footnote, Christopher junior has just commenced a four-year university course in Golf Facility Management at Dornoch. How the years fly. It seems not time at all since he was attending primary school - I must be getting old!

And finally, Kenny Mail, of West Linton GC, was married to Gail on August 12 at Fettes College. The reception was held at the Belford Hotel in Edinburgh, where everybody, including the greens team, had a fantastic time. I wonder how straight the cutting lines were the next day!

Until next month - Don't work too hard.

Mike Dooner

North

The autumn outing on September 14 was held at Fraserburgh GC. The weather early on that day was terrible to say the least, but it dried up enough to allow the golf to be played and a good day was enjoyed by all. Our thanks go to John Littlejohn and his staff for their hard work and good condition of the course on the day.

The results are as follows: Sweep - 1. R. Warrender, 2. B. Brooks, 3. R. Donald, 4. M. Maclean; Longest Drive - 1. M. Ross, 2. S. Brown. Class, 3. S. Simpson; Nearest the Pin - K. Fowler; Special Prize Putter - B. Middleton; Guest Winner - P. Stewart; Trade Winner - R. Warrender; Committee Winner - H. McLatchie; Veterans' Trophy - 1. R. Donald, 2. H. McLatchie; Apprentice Winner - 1. E. Rankin, 2. M. Main; Class 3 Nett - 1. G. Asher, 2. H. McLatchie, 3. A. Grant; Class Nett 2 - 1. B. Brookes, 2. B. Craig, 3. R. Pirie; Class 1 Nett - 1. M. Maclean, 2. P. Don, 3. N. Kidd; Scratch Hampton Trophy - 1. C. Nicol, 2. K. Thomson.

I would like to officially welcome Stuart McCole and Chris Haspell, from Castle Stuart, near Inverness, to the North Section. The new development at Castle Stuart is well underway with a lot of material moved and several holes sand capped and shaped ready for the next stage in the spring. Chris Haspell was heavily involved in the Fescue trials in Denmark over the past few years and worked with the Danish Golf Union in conjunction with the STRI, doing Fescue trials on various sites across Denmark. I'm sure Chris' knowledge of fescues will be invaluable, as this site will be seeded out with Fescue only over the entire golf course. I have no doubt, knowing Stuart, that this project will be a great success and a tremendous addition to the fine golf courses already in the North of Scotland. I recently played Kingsbarns, and the legacy that he left there is testament to his knowledge and understanding of Fescue and how they can be managed in the modern greenkeeping world.

I hope all your autumn renovation work has gone to plan and there has been recovery after the dry summer. Even in Mid October we were getting 19 degrees in Aberdeen.

Ross Macrae who is an Assistant at Newmacher GC, has become a father again for the sixth time - another boy, which gives him three of each. Well done Ross, you'd better tie a knot in it soon or your going to have a first eleven before long.

The section AGM results will follow in the next issue.

Keep up the good work, and let me know any interesting stories if you hear them.

Robert Patterson

Royal Aberdeen GC

NORTHERN REGION

North East

On September 28 we had our autumn competition at Stocksfield GC, again this year we were graced with not just good weather but a course worthy of playing considering the way the weather has been this year. Thanks to Head Greenkeeper, Roy White, and his staff also to the catering staff, everyone seemed happy enough.

As usual the local trade provided some excellent prizes and our thanks go to the following: Greenlay, Shorts of Whitburn, Turf Services Ltd, Lloyds of Throckley, Border Turf Services, Phil Newton of Aitkens and Paul Foston of Alpha Amenity well done lads once again.

The leading scores are as follows: Best Gross, A. McLure, 73, Whickham GC; Best Nett, A. Ingles, 75-4-71, Newcastle Utd GC (on a countback); G. Morgan, 76-5-71, Crook GC; A. Miller, 84-13-71, Crook GC; M. McCririck, 77-4-73, South Shields GC; R. Reid, 80-6-74, Prudhoe GC; K. Dinsdale, 94-20-74, Northumberland GC; J. Gibson, 77-3-74, Northumberland GC; B. Wilson, 84-9-75, Stocksfield GC and S. Pope, 90-14-76, Tyneside GC.

Don't forget the AGM is at Tyneside GC on October 25, all members will be notified, so don't say you knew nothing about it as it's already been in the magazine.

Jimmy Richardson

North West

After all the nice weather, here comes the rain. Good job we got the hollowtining out of the way, otherwise it would not have got done at all.

The North West Section autumn tournament has taken place at St Annes Old. I could not attend but Bert informs me that the 40 members, who turned up, had a great day - it was nice to see a few new faces and I hope you all

enjoyed the day. The winners were: Best Gross - Mike Hunt; Best Nett - Brian Storey; Aggregate Cup - Peter Hogan; Vets' Cup - Peter Hogan; Guest Prize - Gary Potter; Nearest the Pin - Mike Hunt; Longest Drive - Eddie Ainsworth.

Many thanks go to the greenstaff and committee of St Annes Old GC for the wonderful condition of the course, the fantastic meal and also their hospitality. The next event for your diary is the North West Section AGM and President's Cup, which will take place at Wilmslow GC on December 7, meeting at the club for 9am (bacon butties) and then we have the tee from 10am. This is followed by a traditional Christmas dinner with all the trimmings. This is a very popular event and I would urge you to book places early. To play in it you must send a cheque for £20 payable to BIGGA North West Section. The address to send your cheque to is: Bill Merritt, The Lodge, Beacon Park GC, Beacon lane, Dalton, Wigan, WN8 7RU.

As always, if anyone has any news or just needs a little bit of advice, please contact the secretary Bert Cross on: 0151 7245412 or myself on: 0151 2894625. If you are on the world wide web, my email: jsheehan@blueyonder.co.uk.

One last request, I have received a letter from one of our members who is looking for a change of job, he is very experienced and is looking for a job as an assistant or deputy head greenkeeper. If anyone is looking to fill a vacancy please contact me and I will pass it on to the person concerned. Thank you.

Chris Sheehan

Northern

I will start this month's report with a quick reminder for you all, I'm sure most of you don't need it, but for those of you that have forgotten, this year's Christmas Golf and AGM is being held at Clayton GC on December 7. The tee off time for the day is going to be around lunchtime, so it gives you all a chance to work up a thirst before you arrive!

Unlike other events in the past, we are forced to ask for a deposit of £10 to secure your place for the event. This deposit will be non-refundable if your place is cancelled within a week of the day, and anyone who hasn't paid a deposit or the full amount by cheque to myself, or another committee member up to a week beforehand, will not be entered to play. We are sorry to do this but with the recent autumn tournament at Ganton GC, ten people cancelled in the last couple of days. Luckily we were able to fill those places but normally we would be struggling and then left with a food bill and no entrance fee with which to pay it.

Speaking of Ganton, I must thank Phil and his team for producing a fantastic course and putting up with hand raking those bunkers, I personally felt they weren't quite large or deep enough!

The results of the day, which was kindly sponsored by Alpha Amenity and Scotts are as follows: 1.1 - Rob Gee, 1.2 - A. Court, 1.3 - A. Baxter; 2.1 - F. Stewart, 2.2 - D. Heaton, 2.3 - K. Grey; 3.1 - S. Wells; 3.2 - M. Patrick and 3.3 - S. Heaton and Trade - E. Carter.

Can I also say thank you to Ed Carter, from Scotts, and Clive Higginbottom and Paul Foston, from Alpha, for the help and continued support for the Northern Section. The same must also be said for Ian Collett, Simon Heppenstall and Mike Brear, of Rigby Taylor, for the help in setting up this year's Invitation Day at Scarcroft GC. The Golf Events we put on would not be possible without the help of all our sponsors, so thank you to all for your support.

The winners of this year's Invitation Day were Dave Collins and Tito Arana with a fantastic 44 points. Second place went to Tony Gerrard and D. Hughes, again with 44 points, but they lost out on a back 9 countback to Dave and Tito. Third place went to I. Huddleston and J. Harrison who between them played the back 9 in 6 under par to score 27 points on the back 9 alone - 43 points in total for all 18.

I'm pleased to announce that all the profits from our day at Scarcroft have been donated to the Roman Jarvis Trust Fund, which has been set up by the club for the son of the late Telford Jarvis. Telford was Head Greenkeeper at Scarcroft, until his sudden death a couple of years ago, which shocked and saddened us all. The course on the day was in fabulous condition and was a credit to both Telford's hard work and that of current Head Greenkeeper, Ronnie Myles, and his team. I'm sure everyone will agree it was a pleasure to play. The idea of making the donation came from John Waite, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank John for the suggestion.

Please don't forget that if your payment has not been received a week before future events then I am afraid you won't be playing, so please do get your names and cheques in as early as possible.

Adam Speight

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Cleveland

Well the autumn we've had so far has been great for getting seed to grow. However, existing grass has been growing like the clappers and disease has also been common. I have also had several people comment on the number of crane fly spotted recently. This could well lead to lots of leatherjackets causing problems later.

By now the trip to the dog racing at Sunderland will have taken place. I hope it was well supported again because we had a great time last year.

The turn out at the Groundsman's bowls match held in Durham in August was a little better but only from the Dinsdale Spa staff, family and friends. It's a good night in a wonderful part of the area with a superb buffet to follow kindly funded by the Groundsmans Institute. Our thanks go to Durham City Bowling Club for their hospitality.

I recently attended the Tony Mears 'Talk In' at Dinsdale Spa GC. Section members who supported it, as follows: Barry Walker, City of Newcastle GC; Phil Hargrave, Crook GC; Ian Holoran, Middlesbrough Municipal GC; Tony Burge and Anthony McGeough, Richmond GC; Richie Hood, Houghton-le-Spring GC; Mattie and Lee, Oakleaf Golf Complex. Tony presented a marvellous insight into the major construction and drainage work carried out by him and his staff over the last two years. Tony and the lads - Ian Dunnabie, Ian Davies, Colin Tinkler, James Taylor and Rob Hancock - are justifiably proud of their achievements, which have transformed the course into one of the best courses in the North. Well done! I would also like to say that the club deserves great credit too for making the cash available to Tony. Too many times we hear of the course playing second fiddle to the clubhouse extension or a new car park. Surely the course makes the club.

The results of the Stableford competition autumn tournament held at Dinsdale Spa Golf Club in October were as follows; 1-9 handicap, 1. Phil Hargrave, Crook GC, 35 pts (back 6); 2. Mark Brown, Brancepeth Castle GC, 35 pts; 3. Phil Graham, Bishop Auckland GC, 32 pts; 10-18 handicap, 1. Robert Hancock, Dinsdale Spa GC, 36 pts; 2. Ian Holoran, Middlesbrough Mun GC, 33 pts; 3. Chris Fidell, Headlam Hall GC, 31 pts; 19-28 handicap, 1. Ian Dunnabie, Dinsdale Spa GC, 30 pts; 2. Ian Pemberton, Bedale GC, 28 pts.

The Nearest the Pin competition was won by Richie Hood, of Houghton-le-Spring GC. Phil Hargrave won the Longest Drive with what was described by Pembo as an Exocet of a shot. Dennis Armstrong, the Dinsdale Spa Greens Chairman, won the Best Par 3 score competition. The trade prize was won by Eddie Simms, of Par 4 Irrigation.

However Pembo also asked me to mention the funniest thing he has ever seen on a golf course when Barry Walker (now known as Rick O'Shea) sliced a drive, which hit his bag, then someone else's bag and finally finished up in a bunker. As a reward for this fantastic entertainment Baz received the Tacit

dartboard so he can practise getting missiles to go somewhere near the target. Tacit were the main sponsor of the day and our many thanks go to the company and their Area Sales Manager, Peter Marshall. Other trade members who attended and or supplied prizes were Aitkens, Lloyds, Par 4 Irrigation, pbi, Rigby Taylor, Tower Chemicals and Turfcare Specialists. The turn out was good with 21 players enjoying a fantastic course. The greens were fast and true, the presentation of the course was outstanding so, yet again, many thanks to Tony and the lads. Finally thanks to the club for their generous hospitality and lovely food.

Finally, a reminder about the TSL Annual Quiz Challenge against the Groundsmen which takes place on Wednesday, December 6 at Mount Oswald GC commencing at 7.30pm. Get there and defend your title boys!

Any news to T.C. on 07831214879

Terry Charlton

Sheffield

On September 25, the Sheffield Union held their annual greenkeepers competition at Bawtry GC. The day was spoiled by very heavy rain which caused the competition to be reduced to 12 holes and after this the eventual winners were Ian Whitehead and Hillsborough GC - well done again Ian again, I believe that is the third year running! The results were - 1. Ian Whitehead, Hillsborough GC, 31pts; 2. C. Neville, Phoenix GC, 28pts; 3. R. Needham, Hickleton GC, 28pts; 4. P. Hobson, Bondhay GC, 27pts and 5. J. Finney, Bawtry GC, 27pts.

On December 11 we will be holding our Christmas competition at Worksop GC, you should soon be receiving your entry forms. While on the subject of Worksop, may I congratulate Tim Gittins on being appointed Head Greenkeeper at Worksop following Barry Lax's retirement at the end of October. Tim moves to Worksop from Notts GC - all the best Tim and I look forward to working with you.

Earlier this year Roy Ward from Matlock GC retired after 47 years service to Matlock! Roy became Head Greenkeeper 35 years ago after his father Harold retired after 50 years service to Matlock! Obviously a very loyal family Roy! Roy was made an Honorary Life Member of Matlock GC. May I, on behalf of the Sheffield Section, wish Roy a very long and happy retirement and also, may I congratulate Tim Bloodworth on becoming Head Greenkeeper at Matlock.

Once again, if anyone has any news, feel free to contact me on: 07793111845 or at: jv.lax@tesco.net.

John Lax

North Wales

Congratulations this month go to our Section Administrator, Jeremy Hughes and his wife Jayne on the birth of their new baby girl 'Maddison Ruby' who joins her sister 'Millie Taylor'. Contractions started at home and before an ambulance got there, Maddison arrived with the help of Jez in the form of hot water and towels - well if one baby girl has not been able to curtail his golf, I am sure two will, or is that three women in the Hughes that will be directing the way? It's all shopping and horse riding now for Jez, so get them irons on Ebay, but seriously... well done guy's.

A couple of week's back I went over to our cotton flag manufacturers in Chester and asked if Jed was in. I was told he had gone for cotton, so I said I would call back on Wednesday, I did and was told Jed was not in again and he had gone for cotton, so I called in again the following week and asked if Jed was in, they told me Jed had died and that they had buried him on Monday across at Mostyn cemetery so on my way back I called in the graveyard to pay my respects, upon the gravestone it had an inscription 'Jed, gone, but not for cotton'.

On to the Section and what a great day for the autumn tournament down on the costal link's of Nefyn and district. It has been a while since we were last at Nefyn and the sun shone for most of the October day.

A fine testing golf course awaited and with playing the headland part of the 27 hole complex up to the 'lighthouse' we had a treat in store for many of the 54 players who had never played the course before.

Prepared by Patrick McAteer and the team, the greens were quite deceptive as they looked to be slow to the eye but once the ball left the putter head this was not the case, as shown by the winning score in the greenkeeper being 2 over par. So to the scores: 1. Tim Combes, 34pts; 2. Ian Farrell, also 34pts; 3. Paul Gater, 33pts; 4. Alun Lewis, 32pts and 5. Andy Peel with 32pts - The guest prizes went to 1. Steve Davies (unsure whether this was interesting or not) and 2. John Currie - The two nearest the pin prizes on 14th went to Alan Kelsall @ 600mm and on 16th by John Humphries @ 1,800mm (see we have gone all European in Wales, it's not 2 foot anymore!) Finally the trade prize went to Jim Openshaw from Mid Lube.

We would just like to express our thanks from the Section to Nefyn, for the courtesy of the course and to the caterers for a fine carvery meal that left everyone full as an egg on the way home.

Our next tournament will be the Christmas competition on the Link's of Conwy (Caernafonshire GC) on December 5, so get your entries to Jez asap as we may have to restrict the number of entries as we get well over 100 players for this one and with tee times and light closing in etc?

Just on the note of courses for the Section tournaments, we have 2 - 3 confirmed for 2007 but if you would like to put your course forward for consideration we would be more than pleased to discuss it with you. The fact that North Wales covers a vast area, it is good to be seen to be geographically correct in decisions of top middle bottom left right and central of the region and not just bias to one particular part - this only comes from courses who put their selves forward as hosts.

And finally just prior to the Dunhill, I had the greatest pleasure of walking the fairways up at St Andrews and talking with Sir Michael Bonallack, one of the great ambassadors in the game of golf, 'just where were those photographers when you need them!'

See you next month.

Mesen Cymru

Andrew Acorn

MIDLAND REGION

Midland

Well, thanks for the rest from last month's notes (nothing reported to me), yet there is a multitude for this month. To ease you having to speak to me with any news, you can now email me: sean.mcdade@homecall.co.uk

On September 11 our autumn event was held at Handsworth GC. The course was in lovely condition as presented by Course Manager, J. Hughes and his fine team, our thanks to you all. Also a huge thank you to Handsworth GC for their courtesy and very fine welcome. Handsworth GC has been an active supporter of our Section for well over 50 years, and long may such continue. Our respects HGC. The results were: Best Gross: A. Jones. Nett: 1. B. Boucher; 2. H. Middlebrook; 3. S. Mucklow; 4. D. Ganning; 5. R. Rossen. Our thanks to Campeys for the main prize table, Turners for drinks, and our very fine starter J. Hammond. Our AGM was also held and thoughts on such shall be left to a future publication.



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Imagine working at a golf course with the Mountains of Mourne and the English sea as a backdrop, and then the beauty of a course which is, without doubt, one of the best in the world, coupled with the wonderful charm and welcome of the Irish. If my grandparents had not moved then I might be. I am of course talking about Royal County Down GC. The Section's committee were invited by Course Manager, Alan Strachan, to play the annual committee cup at RCD GC. What a course and what a welcome, I'm afraid my words fail me, I am no James Joyce. Winner on the day: All, best golfer E. Stant. Once again our thanks to RCD GC, Alan and his Deputy Eamonn Crawford. Please, please, please, next year?

It gives me great pleasure to congratulate Dave Devon on becoming the newly-appointed Course Manager at Overstone Park GC. Also a very warm welcome to Wayne Oseman of Robin Hood GC, as a new member.

You will hopefully be aware by now that the Midland region seminar will be held at Gay Hill GC on Thursday, November 16. The theme of the day will be health and safety orientated. The workshop will include some unique activities that will assist everyone. Don't forget that all attendees will be eligible for cpd points.

There is still one place available for Chainsaw maintenance and crosscutting on November 6 and 7, and places available on 'Communicating with Committees' with Frank Newberry on December 5 and 6. For those who haven't experienced Frank, you don't know what you are missing! Your batteries will certainly be recharged. Contact Paul for further details on: 07880 734197.

Don't forget to get your entries in for the Christmas event at Broadway 8/12 Sean McDade

East of England

As I sit here writing this report at the beginning of October, pondering on another season gone by, my mind is wandering back to the Ryder Cup and The Open, could we have had two more opposite courses and conditions? Credit has to be given to the respective course managers for turning out such fantastic playing surfaces under such conditions - such is the diversity of our jobs. Well done boys.

Not much news again this month, well, apart from another glorious victory for the Greenkeepers against the Secretaries, I can't remember the last time we lost! Is there anyone out there who can give us a game? Our thanks go to Norwood Park for granting us courtesy and for looking after us so well.

Allan Walker

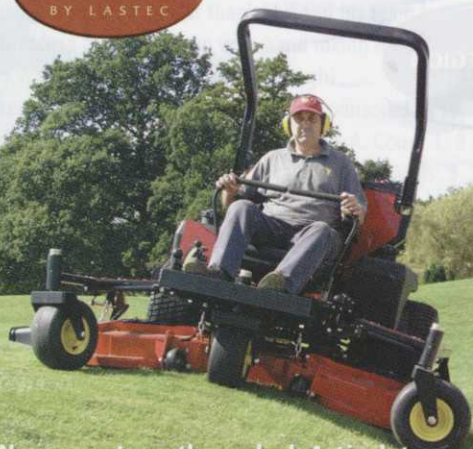
BB&O

Easy Ryder! As the rain came down over Kildare in Ireland there were no treats for the American team this year as Woosie's team and some wild cards swept their illustrious opponents aside, to romp to victory by a convincing margin at the K Club. The USA is always renowned for its strength in the final day's singles matches but this time they just wilted in the face of a European onslaught, even Tiger Woods' 9-iron disappeared into the murky depths of the lake fronting the 7th green, probably never to be seen again, unless you're the member of the local diving club. I think the real winner at the K Club was the game of golf after Paul McGinley's gracious gesture on the last, conceding J.J Henry's

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Tel: 01454 270850

putt to halve the match proving that the spirit of the game will never be in question.

November! I am sure you don't need reminding about your extra hour in bed as the clocks have now fallen back, but just a quick and important reminder about BTME Harrogate week. Not long now, it's just around the corner and the questions you may ask: have I booked? Should I go? Why? If? But? And how? With more than a dozen speakers offering a wealth of learning opportunities for you to take back to your golf course, this is a chance to be able to hear papers presented by a wide range of professionals that are of relevance to everyone that works either at a golf club, or in turf management. With subjects from Golf Course Design to Financial Management, all delegates will be able to find a workshop to suit them in the much extended Workshop Programme, not forgetting the camaraderie that comes alive in Yorkshire with the chance of meeting new and old friends.

Guy Jenkins, from Denham GC, had his work cut out unexpectedly, as a twin six seater aircraft crash-landed in the woodland area adjacent to the 13th hole. Luckily all the passengers survived their ordeal and it was business as usual for Guy and his team - except for the eight fire engines that attended the 13th green leaving an uneven putting surface and a headache for the greenstaff.

Freddie Surgey has arrived, proud father Rob has officially joined the first time dad brigade and is rapidly becoming an expert in the art of feeding, burping and pooh. Just think this time next year the little Everton Supporter will be kicking a ball and making sandcastles in the bunkers of Wycombe Heights GC. Congratulations from all over the Section.

The Turkey Trot and AGM is on the horizon, so we look forward to seeing a few old and new faces at this event. Entry forms and agenda are in the capable hands of John Scoones, for further details he can be contacted on: 07880 550 380.

Mark Day
mark@day.fm

Mid Anglia

I hope everyone had a good summer, and that you all got through the drought ok. I am personally looking forward to this autumn because we are having a new irrigation system installed. We have had to make the most of the old system, like repairing bursts weekly, replacing the old impact sprinklers and constantly keeping an eye on the pressure. A big breath of fresh air and hopefully a new season of burst free irrigating.

The Christmas competition this year is going to be held at Mentmore Golf and

Country Club on Thursday, December 7. As usual it will be a Texas Scramble format and must include at least two greenkeeper members. Please can you make sure entries are in nice and early to Richard Saunders, as he has a lot of work to do organising this event.

I will put the results of the autumn competition in the December issue and also anything of interest that comes from the AGM.

If anyone would like to add anything in this article, (maybe any course improvement, people moving to pastures new, etc) we would like to hear from you.

Goodbye for now and hope to see you at Mentmore.
Steve Mason

SOUTH EAST

Surrey

Sunday, September 24. The Ryder cup has just been retained by Europe. The American team, although unhappy at the result, took some consolation in the fact that President Bush's threat to send them to Guantanamo Bay, if they lost, turned out to be a hoax. President Bush later denied any knowledge of the threat, Guantanamo Bay or the Ryder cup.

Laleham GC have reported an unusual something in the air. The Deputy, Bobbie Rogers and Assistant, Andrew Dennis, were both affected although the Course Manager John Ross appeared to be immune. On further investigation and nine months later that unusual, something in the air has resulted in the birth of Bobbie and Patti's son Owen David 11lb 12ozs (takes after his dad?) and Andrew and Helen's daughter Harley-Mai, both born within days of each other. John Ross explained his apparent immunity was possibly due to an operation he had had on the balls of his feet but as I was not near enough to hear clearly it may have been the other way around.

Another member's wife not immune to a little something is Tracy Bremer. Tony and Tracy have just been blessed with the birth of their second son Oliver Lewis 7lb 13ozs.

Congratulations to Matthew Lawrence, Course Manager at Guildford GC and his bride Telina who were married in Cortona in Tuscany on September 6. They will honeymoon in Thailand in November.

Steve Holmes, Course Manager at Hindhead GC, had an albatross hole-in-one on the 303yd par-4 at Farnham GC in Surrey Section's Autumn Tournament on

Thursday, September 21. Steve was delighted and celebrated by allowing all who played an opportunity to take a snifter from a large miniature bottle of brandy he bought especially for the occasion. Sorry a slip of the keyboard for snifter read sniff and any remarks about Scottish generosity will not be reported by me. Thanks though from us all Steve who did buy as all a proper drink at the bar.

The autumn tournament at Farnham GC was a great success and we must thank Peter McMorrin and his staff for a course that was a pleasure to play. We must also congratulate Peter for he has just graduated from Myerscough College with a foundation degree in turf science after an enormous amount of study, on line over three years. John Shaw sponsored the day and the prizes were presented by Barry West to Rupert Lawrence, Farnham GC, Nearest the Pin; Gareth Roberts, Hankley Common GC, Longest Drive. 1. Gary Rowe, Banstead GC; 2. Steve Holmes; 3. Darren Woodward, West Surrey GC.

Darren Woodward now receives another mention for he has been successful in obtaining the post of Head Greenkeeper at Tylney Park GC in Hampshire. Will he join the South Coast Section or remain with us?

Will all footballers wishing to play for Surrey Section please contact David (Beckham) Langhiem on: 07921 267501. Only players with a grudge against Gary Ogilvie will be considered.

The Surrey AGM will take place on Thursday, November 16 after our winter tournament at Addington Court GC. All information has been mailed to all members but if you have not received them please let a committee member know.

If you have any news for the magazine, please contact me on my mobile: 07879 474038 or my new email brian.willmott@hotmail.co.uk
Brian Willmott.

Kent

Firstly, sorry there was no report last month but if you don't give me any news then I can't write about it!

Secondly, very many congratulations to Mike Emptage, of St. Augustine's GC, who won Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year 2006. Well done Mike, from everyone in the Kent Section for doing us all proud. Enjoy your trip to the States!

Kent Section had a great day out for our autumn extravaganza recently. A multitude of us descended on the magnificent countryside in the heart of the county to enjoy the hospitality heaped on us in abundance by the Weald of Kent GC. Despite heavy recent rainfall the course played really well presenting all of Men of Kent with a stout challenge. Many thanks to Chris Self and his small team of dedicated staff on the condition of the course and to the Director of Golf at the club, Keith Brown, for giving us the opportunity to play there. We all had a fantastic day.

Results as follows: 1. Sam Burton, 37 points; 2. Michael Wigstone, 36 points; 3. Ian Rawlings, 33 points. Longest Drive was won by Michael Wigstone and Nearest the Pin by Andrew Wood.

A big thank you to Avoncrop Amenity, Gem Professional and Vitax for providing prizes on the day.

Our educational programme will be starting on the 14th of this month at the excellent facilities offered by Hadlow College. Our first seminar will be presented by Frank Newberry who I defy anyone to get bored listening to. Our seminars shall run each month at Hadlow and for a full breakdown on the topics and dates please visit our website.

Lastly, please don't forget about our fast approaching Turkey Trot to be held at Birchwood Park on November 23. Entry forms can be found at our website: kentgreenkeepers.co.uk Our AGM will follow immediately after your first Christmas dinner of the year, where you will have an opportunity to tell us how to run the Section properly! Seriously, a great day is planned so get your forms in quick to David.

I'll be back!

Rob Holland

SOUTH WEST & SOUTH WALES

South West

Where has the year gone? By the time this hits the shelves it'll be mid November, we'll be thinking about the Regional Seminar at Cannington, the run-up to Christmas, and even BTME will be not that far away. I may not even be Press Secretary by then, so if I've been voted off, thanks for reading, sorry to all those who have had their legs pulled, and sorry about all the ramblings. It's been fun. On the other hand, there might be more of the same for another year. Watch this space.

I had to give my apologies to the Section AGM - another speaking engagement, this time for one of the EGU Roadshows - the proper greenkeeper couldn't make it, so they asked me instead.

I have, at times, thanked our Patronage Partners for their sponsorship over the course of this year. You know who they are, but I'll just remind everyone - Messers M.J. Abbott, Amenity Technology, B.S. Mowers, Bredy Irrigation, Tower Chemicals, Irritech, Rigby Taylor, Symbio, Rufford, Avoncrop Amenity, and Countrywide Farmers. People sometimes ask what we do with the sponsorship. It partly helps run the golf days, it sponsors 10 places to the Cannington Seminar, two places on the Harrogate excursion to BTME, and a place at the National Tournament, every year. In short, it is a very valuable

and much appreciated contribution to the local industry. Do remember these companies when making purchase decisions.

To be considered for one of the ten free places at Cannington, just drop Nobby Knight a line: nobbyknight384@hotmail.com or 17 St Marys Gardens, Hilperton Marsh, Towbridge, Wilts BA14 7PG. Should you wish to be considered for one of the places to BTME you'll also need to write to Nobby and make a case for attending by explaining the benefits and the importance of attending what is the Associations' flagship event.

Fixtures, my other hat, are virtually in place for next year. Many thanks to all the greenkeepers who have helped with the arrangements, and thanks to all the clubs who have agreed to host our golf events. I keep trying to stress the importance of the Section events.

We greenkeepers are far too isolated and don't get together often enough. We can pick up so much from talking things through. The golf events are an ideal opportunity to do just that. I always try and find out a little about the course we have played. Height of cut, fertiliser used, staff, machines, how the club runs. If someone's looking stressed or hassled, and believe you me it happens, I try to talk to them about that. If I'm still doing press next year, I'll try and expand on course notes event by event. We are also looking at running talks and presentations alongside some of the events next year, and as well as the established race-night, there will be a quiz evening so watch out for those as well.

Back at Minchinhampton, M.J. Abbott are just commencing replacing our ageing irrigation system. Roger Davey, of Irritech, is acting as consultant and designer, so by the next time you see me I'll either have hot and cold running water everywhere, or I'll have shot myself. I'll let you know how it goes (and how to deal with stress!).

Let me know how your autumns going - projects, extensions, new greens, tees, bunkers etc. This is your column after all - let's use it.

Paul Worster

01453 837355. paulw@mgcnew.co.uk

South Coast

Congratulations to all the Sections greenkeepers this year on getting through, what I think most of you will agree, has been a very tough season. I write this as September is fading and looking back thank goodness August was not as hot as July and the Met Office was wrong in its predictions!

The annual golf match between the South Coast and South West Sections was held at Knighton Heath GC on Thursday, September 7. The result was a win for the South West. But, guys, take heart, it's like the University Boat Race with the current trend of Oxford winning every year and at the moment the pendulum swings towards the South West. The score was South West 4.5 points and South Coast 1.5 points. Many thanks to our team pairs who were as follows: Tony Gadd and Fred Deamen, Ed McCabe and Kevin Glass, Phil Wentworth and Joe Cooper, Alan McGee and Stephen Christopher, Shaun White and Chris Bland and particular praise for Chris Bitten and Ade Archer who had no opposition and kindly played a round against each other. The course was in excellent condition. Well done and thank you to Course Manager, Roger Myatt and his team. I also had very good reports about the hospitality and food at the Club. Thank you to all at Knighton Heath GC. The highlight of the day was reported to be the lady cleaning her car behind the 16th green. I am informed that this car cleaning took a very long time and due to revealing clothing so did the shots on the 16th green! We obviously can't go into too much detail but those who have viewed the film "Cool Hand Luke" with Paul Newman will know the type of entertainment provided!

The next Golf Day is the Turkey Trot, which will be held at Weybrook Park GC on Wednesday, December 6. We look forward to seeing you there for what we are sure will be a great day's golf and feasting. As a Basingstoke

"Lad" I'm really pleased the meeting is at Weybrook as Richard and his Team do a great job on the course plus living locally if I can get my wife to give me a lift, I'll be able to have a drink for a change. Please contact Chris Sturgess on: 07773 138409 to book your place.

And finally I say it every month but please if you have any information e.g. achievement, good or bad news, or anything interesting please let me know on: 07721 389200 - it's your Section, use it.

Joe Crawley

Devon & Cornwall

It is with deep regret that I have to commence the report on a very sad note. Many of you will remember Roy Battishill who passed away suddenly in the first week of October. Roy was the Head Greenkeeper at the St Mellion Golf Course.

Roy joined St Mellion in 1976 just before the now called 'Old Course' was opened, and within a couple years Jim Rowland, then the Head Greenkeeper, retired and Roy took over.

It was in the early 1980's that the Bond Brothers, who then owned the club, decided to construct a Championship Course, and had no hesitation in contacting the great Jack Nicklaus to design the new lay out.

The construction commenced in 1984 and was completed in 1986. During this period Jack Nicklaus sent Roy to the States to learn the American way of greenkeeping, as all the greens were being constructed to the USGA Specification, Roy spent time at the Murrifield Village Course, and then later worked the Bare creek course in California.

The new, now famous Jack Nicklaus course, opened in 1987 and has since held many major competitions, including The Benson and Hedges from 1990 to 1995. In 1987 the Ladies Weetabix Championship was held there. Also, the St Mellion Cup, which was a competition between Nick Faldo and Sandy Lyle against Jack Nicolas and Tom Watson. All these major tournaments Roy took in his stride, and always with a smile on his face, even more important, with a sense of humour.

I, myself, was very fortunate and privileged to know such a lovely person.

At Roy's funeral there was a large contingent of greenkeepers, both old and young, which shows that all held him in high regard. Incidentally Roy retired in 1995.

On a happier note we would all like to congratulate one of our members i.e. Katherine Walls, who has recently completed a Foundation Degree in Sports Science at Myerscough College and won the Ernest Jones Award (First Prize). Katherine is now continuing her studies to Honours Degree level on the BSc Sportsturf course at the College - we all wish her well.

Not to be out done, congratulations must also go to Abi Crosswood, from Newquay GC, who recently became runner up at Toro Student of the year, and is about to follow in Katherine's footsteps by studying for the Foundation Degree in Sportsturf. Well done Abi, we all wish you well and success.

Don Hunt

South Wales

The South Wales AGM was held at the Alice Springs GC on Friday, October 13 with 29 people in attendance. Our Vice Chairman, Kerry Jones, was elected to position of Chairman. The Section would like to wish him all the best for his two years in office - don't worry Kerry the time flies by. It is a great Section run by passionate people who are only too willing to offer you help and support. We would like to thank Alice Springs for allowing us the use of one of their suites.

Nice to see our Regional administrator at our AGM, Jane Jones, since taken up the post she has attended many of our Section events; she updated the members present to Regional and HQ news.

Committee members for 2006-2007: Chairman: Kerry Jones, Garnett Parc; President: Henry Stead, The Grove; Vice-Chairman: No position; Secretary: Peter Lacey, Pennard; Regional board representative: Angus Macleod, Newport; Regional Board representative: Julian Bartlett Jones, Dinas Powys; Officers: David Ward, Royal Porthcawl; Steve Chappell, Neath; Match Captain: Andy Roach, Haverford West; Trade representative: No Position.

We have broken through the 200 barrier for members to the Section, currently at 207 members. Shame only 10% on average turn up to our golf days.

Our President, Henry Stead, has informed us that his wife is battling health problems and our sincere best wishes go out to them. Even though she is poorly she is doing a sponsored walk in aid of Cancer Research and any donations from Section members would be greatly appreciated. I believe there was a lot of money raised on the day of our autumn competition.

The autumn competition was held at the Alice Springs GC, playing for the Jacobson cup, very good turn-out, the feed back, was that the course was in fine condition and the hospitality and catering excellent, the Section would like to pass on our thanks to everyone involved at the club, for an enjoyable day out. Our thanks also to the sponsors of the day, John and Ben Morgan from Morgan mowers, I hear they were kept very busy, all afternoon keeping our members well lubricated.

Results: Winner: Colin Thomas, The Grove, 39 points, Jacobsen Cup Grove; Runner-up: Paul Handy, Newport, 37 points Keith Morgan Shield; 3rd: Stuart, Cradoc, 33 points; Trade Prize: Peter Holmstrom, Countrywide.

Dates for your diary, the Bigga South West And South Wales Regional Seminar at Cannington College on November 21 - continuing the theme from Harrogate, a Sustainable Future for Golf, great line-up, not to be missed - hopefully, people wishing to attend have booked in early to avoid disappointment. This annual education seminar keeps getting better and better. Contact Jane Jones (Regional Administrator).

Angus Macleod

BIGGA South West and South Wales Regional Seminar

The date for this year's South West and South Wales Regional Seminar is Tuesday, November 21. It will be held, once again, at the Cannington Centre for Land Based Studies. The theme for this year is "A Sustainable Future For Golf?"

BIGGA South West and South Wales Region will present the day in association with the R&A. The speakers will give presentations on the different aspects of sustainability in relation to the golf course and how to promote the message to the golf club and its members.

Presentations will be made by: Steve Isaac, Assistant Director - Golf Course Management, The R&A; Dr Keith Weatherhead, Senior Lecturer in Soil and Water Engineering, Institute of Water and Environment, Cranfield University;

Howard Swan, Golf Course Architect and member of EIGCA; Keith Adderley, Secretary Temple Golf Club and member of the Association of Golf Club Secretaries; Richard Whyman, BIGGA Chairman and Course Manager at Burnham and Berrow Golf Club; Phil Weaver, PGA Chairman and Club Professional/Course Manager at Coventry Golf Club; Billy McMillan, BIGGA Vice Chairman and Course Manager at Tyrells Wood Golf Club.

This excellent line up of speakers makes this a day not to be missed so make sure you book early, as places will be limited. Booking details and information will be sent to all Head Greenkeepers/Course Managers in the region. Any further information can be obtained by contacting Jane Jones, Regional Administrator on Tel: 01454 270850 or mobile: 07841 948110.

Harrogate Week 2007

The South West and South Wales region are once again offering members a three-night bed and breakfast package to Harrogate, staying at The Cairn Hotel, arriving on Monday, January 22, departing Thursday, January 25. The cost for this package to BIGGA members is: Single room, £216 per person; Twin room for single occupancy, £240 per person; Numbers are limited and places should be reserved before sending your booking form and payment.

The Region is also offering a package for the Educational Seminars taking place. Members can book all seven seminars at a cost of £105 - this being a total saving of 40%. This saving can only be obtained by booking through me. Should you wish to book individual seminars, this must be done through Sami Collins at Headquarters and the cost will be discounted on a scale according to the number booked.

All bookings both for accommodation and seminars, must be made and confirmed with payment by Friday, December 15.

Booking forms and details will be sent to Head Greenkeepers/Course Managers in October. Should anyone not receiving this information and wishing to book, please contact me on Tel: 01454 270850 or mobile: 07841 948110.

Jane Jones
Regional Administrator

Finally, thanks again to Malone GC and their bar and catering staff that provided us with meals of the highest quality.

Well that's about all my news for this month, I would just like to welcome two new members: Tim Butler and Darra Hudner, to the NI Section.

Ken Henderson

CHECK OUT THE EVENTS PAGE ON THE BIGGA WEBSITE FOR AN UP TO DATE LIST OF ALL THE HAPPENINGS IN YOUR SECTION AND REGION.

From Tournaments to Seminars, AGM's to Dinners it's all covered at www.bigga.org.uk.

If you have a BIGGA event that you wish to place on the Events Page contact Melissa at BIGGA HOUSE on melissa@bigga.co.uk or 01347 833800

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.

NORTHERN IRELAND

The Section's final golf competition for this season, took place at Malone GC on September 21. The course, which is located on the outskirts of Belfast, was in superb condition even after weeks of unsettled weather.

Course Manager, Mike Norman, and his greenkeeping team deserve worthy praise indeed for all their hard work.

The competition was our National Championship Qualifier, with two members going forward to compete in the finals in England. We also played a Stableford competition alongside the stroke qualifier. Gary Crawford, Royal CoDown GC and Warren Burnside, Malone GC, came through on the day with 69 netts to claim the two places over to the National Championship. Special mention must go to Warren's great round, which included numerous long putts. His driving and approach play was exceptional.

The Stableford competition was as follows: 1. Eamonn Crawford, RCD, 37pts; 2. Michael McCarron, Malone GC, 36pts; 3. Garth Abernethy, Bangor GC, 34pts. Visitors Prize, non-member greenkeeper, went to M. Kennedy, Royal Co Down GC. Nearest the Pin and Longest Drive went to Garth Abernethy, from Bangor GC.

Many thanks to our generous sponsor, Coburns of Bambridge, who provided great prizes and have also sponsored the two qualifiers airfares to the National Championship. I would like to thank company reps, David Eager and William Cartmill for their support once again.

In the Shed ANSWERS

CROSSWORD

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ANAGRAM

A SAGA LAY ART
Answer: Galatasaray

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE



A QUICK NINE HOLES

1. Ally McCoist
2. Tottenham Hotspur
3. Champagne
4. John McEnroe
5. Darren Ambrose
6. Golf
7. Sergio Garcia
8. Paul Grayson
9. Danny Williams