



News from the Chief Executive

Regrettably the meeting with the IOG scheduled for July has had to be postponed until the middle of August due to Wimbledon commitments of two IOG representatives. This will inevitably put pressure on the original timescale and I will report to members on the outcome via the Association's website and in the September edition of GI.

We have once again witnessed a remarkable Open Championship. The course was in excellent condition and congratulations are well deserved to John Philp and his staff. The course was tough but fair - a true test of ability. Once again BIGGA had a marquee in the tented village, it was heartening to meet members and their guests. The BIGGA Support Team operated in a very professional manner and their work is valued by the R&A. Congratulations also go to David Coupland who, until as recently as April, was a greenkeeper at Boston GC. David battled his way through qualifying (actually winning his final qualifier at Monifieth GC) to compete in his first Open. I understand he has only been playing eight years and currently plays off +2. Time is on his side and this won't be his last Open.

Inside this copy of GI you should find details of the National Championship, sponsored by Kubota (UK) Ltd. The venues are excellent and we are due some better weather! If you wish to play please ensure that you return your entry form promptly as places are limited. There is a 'Trade' category and it would be encouraging to see some support from within our Trade and Associate membership. In July the launch of the long awaited Safety Management System (SMS) was completed. I would like to express my thanks to Exact and Ken Richardson who have worked extremely hard on this project. We are already receiving accolades for the comprehensiveness of the SMS and I believe that this demonstrates once again that BIGGA continues to work in the best interests of its members. Some greenkeeper members continue to question why the Association needs to get involved in commercial business matters. The reality of life is that BIGGA needs the income to provide benefits such as this. Were it not for the sponsorship of Ransomes Jacobsen then the SMS project would still be at the conceptual stage. Sponsorship is getting harder and harder to source and I take the opportunity to point out that in the case of the SMS the sponsorship covered the production cost however Exact were paid nothing and there was no recompense for staff costs in respect of either BIGGA or GCMA nor the members who assisted the development process. While on the subject of commercialism I can report that arrangements for Harrogate Week are progressing well. There is a full education programme planned with a particularly interesting event being organised for Monday night. You will have to wait for the programme to discover more details however I think that the evening will be highly entertaining, very educational and demand for seats will be high. Demand for exhibition space remains buoyant and with some careful planning it has been possible to reincorporate the major machinery manufacturers into Halls A,B,C and M. Having listened to members' comment regarding the BIGGA website I can confirm that programming has been started on a spell check and edit facility for the Bulletin Board.

Finally, I hope that none of you have been badly affected by the severe weather. I sympathise with those that have seen their homes and lives ruined by the flooding. While the Association does not have a formal benevolent fund it is never-the-less always prepared to consider help in cases of genuine hardship. Any contact should be with myself, in writing.

John Pemberton



SCOTLAND - AYRSHIRE

Hello all, just a few things to let y'all know about. Firstly to congratulate John Wilson (Irvine GC) on winning the third class division at the Scottish National Tournament last month.

A reminder to get Tuesday, September 25 highlighted in the calendar as that's the day I lift the Harry Diamond Jug over in Arran and I'd like as many of you there to celebrate with me as possible, unless of course you've got something you'd rather be doing?

Our trip to Northern Ireland will be fast approaching as you read this so those looking for a nice relaxing break across the water need not apply! We need fearless warriors and lad's who aren't afraid of getting a round in! Seriously though I 'm looking for names. We will be sailing the morning of Friday, October 5 and returning Sunday, 8. Two nights B&B is £50 pp while Big Brian will be sussing out a deal on the ferry for us. Any questions call me on: 07939 104701 or email: denis.t@hotmail.co.uk. Ta Ra for now then.

Denis Tweddell



SCOTLAND - CENTRAL

At this time of year the summer should be well underway and the monsoon season hopefully behind us. This spring has been one of the wettest I remember and I'm sure that it has created many challenges for us all. The hard work of the club competitions and Opens should be over and we may be starting to plan the winter programs for this year. If you have any projects or pictures you would like to share with others let us know and we'll post them on the website.

Welcome to the following new members: Thomas Adams, Kieran Coll, Graham Copland, Barry Currie, Gary Kilday, Scott MacFarlane, Raymond Perrins, Joseph Smith, and Craig Sword. I hope to meet you sometime this year at one of our golf outings or educational events.

By the time you read this John Philp and the team at Carnoustie will have hosted The Open Championship. I'm sure it will be a great event and that the players will have faced a stern test of their skills to find the Champion Golfer of 2007.

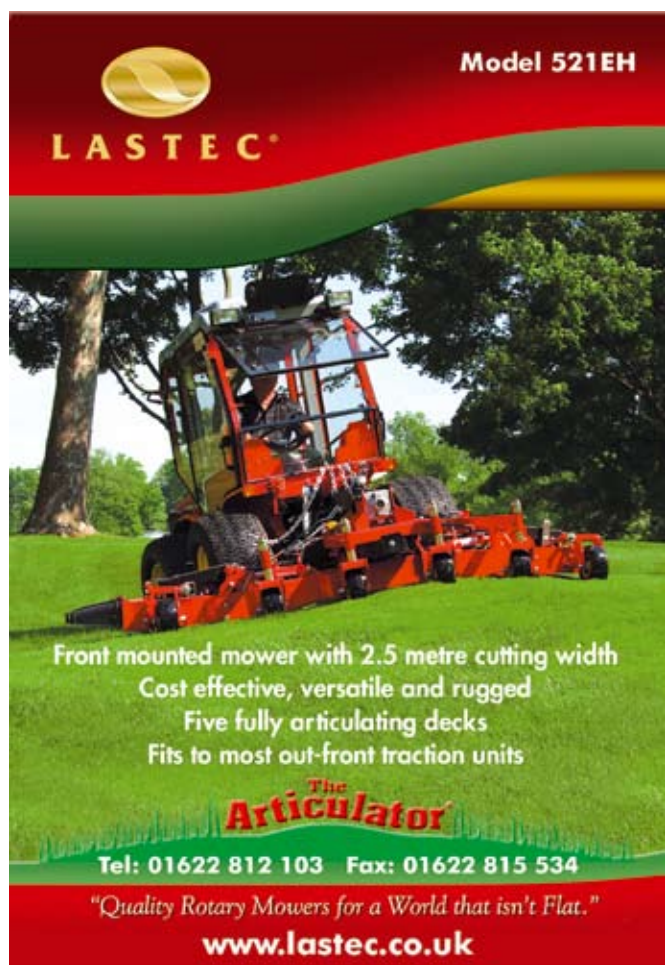
I have just returned from attending the Scottish Tournament which this year was held over the border in Northumberland for the first time and was played at Goswick golf course. It was a great day. Geordie Thompson and his team had the course looking great and playing great, a real test of golf for everyone. Many thanks on behalf of the Central Section to the golf club for their first class hospitality on the day, and also to Peter Boyd, our Regional Administrator, who once again organised a fantastic event for us all. I know from experience how much work it takes to organise these events, but Peter makes it all seem so easy. The Section was proud to have scratch winner, Kenny Stirling and the handicap winner, Dougie Barr, both playing on form. Well played guys.

Around the Green

The Section's next outing will be at the Dukes. Andy Campbell, Derek Robson and their team have done a great job growing in all the improvements and many new bunkers. We are in for a treat on September 20, so when you receive your application form return it quickly to make sure of a place.

I had the opportunity to play over in Ireland, on some great courses. The one that stands out for me is Castle Rock one of the best links courses I have played on. Tough, but enjoyable. They have some great competitions over there - certainly worth a visit. My next visit will be Wentworth and Royal Burgess, two more great courses. I do still work for a living, honest.

Finally, just to remind you that the National Championship, sponsored by Kubota is being held in Scotland this year on October 8 and 9 at Dundonald and Barrassie, two fantastic courses you don't want to miss. The Section is always well represented at BIGGA events and I'm confident we will have a good field entered on this occasion. If you need any information please get in touch. If there is enough interest from our Section it may be possible that transport could be arranged. There is plenty of accommodation in the area which is close to both courses. Please let the Section know if you're interested.



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The committee are working on a winter programme of courses and talks. Any areas you feel need attention then let us know.

www.biggacentralsection.org.uk 01334 658914

Chairman: Derek Scott

Secretary: Andy Mellon



SCOTLAND - EAST

As I write this report in early July the weather is appalling and the forecast for the week is predicting more rain. We have had a huge run on roller squeegees recently, proving there is always light at the end of the tunnel. Here's hoping a late summer heatwave is just round the corner.

On June 21 all roads led to Goswick for the Scottish National Tournament. As was to be expected, George and his team presented the course in excellent condition and drew fulsome praise from all in attendance. The East Section members who played had a very successful day and picked up a few trophies into the bargain. They were as follows: 1st class winner – Mark Pagan, Eyemouth; 2nd Class winner – Robbie Murdoch, Dundas Park; Best Assistant – Alan Russell, Archerfield; Retired Trophy – Jim Manuel, formerly Goswick.

All this good play resulted in the East Section picking up the St. Mungo's Cup (Team Award), a trophy they have not won for many years. Finally George would like to thank everyone for their kind comments on the day. NB For a full report on the national see Peter Boyd's report in the news.

The Section has recently been challenged to a football match by the West, which would probably be played on a home and away basis. With this in mind I would be grateful if all interested parties would contact Chris Yeaman on: 07919090526 for further information,

For the second year running Musselburgh GC hosted a pre-qualifier (open) event on Wednesday, July 4. Considering the course was closed on the Tuesday due to a tremendous thunderstorm, it was in excellent condition at commencement of play and was a credit to Tom Shepherd and his team. In the main, the weather was fair with play being suspended only for a short period. At the close of play 19 out of a field of 120 went forward to the final qualifier with two golfers scoring 66 on the day.

Finally Roz and I recently spent a few days visiting friends in Berlin. With the temperature hitting 32 degrees, sightseeing was a tiring business. A curious mixture of the old and new, we certainly found it well worth the trip. Until next month.

Mike Dooner



SCOTLAND - NORTH

Hello everybody, some weather we have had through June and early July. We are certainly getting our share of rain after that dry spell in April. Has anybody had any disasters with flooding on their course during the last few weeks?

Around the Green

Two of our members, Raymond Warrender and Kevin Strachan are going to put on a bus from Aberdeen to the Autumn Meeting at Fortrose. The bus will leave Aberdeen on Wednesday, September 19 at approximately 4pm and will head towards Inverness for an overnight stay. We would like to get as many as possible on the bus and can collect on route between Aberdeen and Inverness if needed. This is a kind gesture by Raymond and Kevin and one that should be supported as much as possible. If you wish to go on the bus get in touch with Raymond (07876441159) or Kevin (07801297070) or get in touch with me on: 07931 639548 to leave your name. I am sure we could have a good laugh and a few drams on the way.

Euan Rankin, from Murcar Links, and his girlfriend Dawn had a baby girl on July 3. She weighed in at a hefty 9lbs 6oz. Her name is Ellie Jane. Well done Euan hope everything goes well with the new addition to your family.

I don't have much more this month, except that already the days are getting shorter, where has the summer gone.

Robert Patterson



SCOTLAND - WEST

Well another great summer - just waiting for it to start. On the job front we have some movement, Steven Wilson, my Assistant at Renfrew, has moved to the Dukes Course in St Andrews. Gordon Kerr has moved to a new development, Marr Hall down on the shores of Erskine Beech, Gordon has been at Gledoch GC for the last 17 years, and Bryce Houston has moved from Lochgiolhead to Blair Athol GC in Perthshire, also Steven Fraser has moved from Prestwick St Cuthbert's to Erskine GC. I would like to wish all great success in their new employment.

I attended this year's Scottish National Tournament at Goswick GC in Berwick upon Tweed; it was good to see a good turn out from the West Section.

Congratulations to George and his team for the preparation of the course, everyone had a first class day. I played with one of George's Assistants on the day, so it was good to get some first class knowledge of the course, it didn't help as I had my usual NR.

Many thanks to Peter Boyd for arranging the day with help from Archie Dunn and Stuart Greenwood, our Scottish Chairman, well done it was another first class day.

Also congratulations to all the prize winners. It was a nice change to play our Scottish Championship in England.

Remember this year's annual night out is a change of venue, we will be going to the Glasgow Comedy Club. Tickets will be on sale over the next couple of months. Contact myself or Gavin Jarvis for information on the night.

We plan to have an educational seminar at the back end of the year as soon as we have dates, members will be notified by letter. Also the

Autumn outing is being held over the Vale of Leven GC September 20. I hope to see a good turn out as Davy McBride, the Course Manager, always has the course in first class condition.

Our Football Manager, Brian Hillan, would like to put a challenge out to any Section wishing to play us in a match. Brian has had some of the boys in training over the past month or two. Congratulations to Andy Peace, Greenkeeper at Port Glasgow GC, for winning the Club Championship at my own club Renfrew.

Well that's all for now, I hope the weather improves over the next month to add a bit more enjoyment to our jobs.

*Fraser Ross karen.ross@tesco.net
07970 3660 355*



NORTHERN - NORTH WEST

July 4 and the course is closed due to flooding, What is going on with the weather? I hope it's improved by the time you read this. The summer tournament took place at Denton GC with the winner being Peter Hogan, the guest prize went to Mark Prosser the owner of the Beacon GC. Well done to you both. As I said before the weather has been awful and for Denton GC to be in such excellent condition says a lot about the Head Greenkeeper and his team, so well done Alec Davies and all the lads. Many thanks to Bathgates for providing the Nearest the Pin and Longest Drive, and also to Danny Tomkins and Blade Amenity for the refreshments at the ninth hole, thanks also to all of the trade for the prize table, it was very much appreciated.

The Autumn Tournament at Silloth GC on October 2 raised a few eyebrows when it was announced, lots of people were saying they would love to play but it was too far to drive, despair not as Danny Thomkins from Blade Amenity has come up with a possible answer, he has suggested putting a coach on with a pick up point at say Haydock, if anyone is interested in this, please get in touch with me, not Billy or Bert as they have enough to do. If the numbers are sufficient we will put one on. I will need all the names by September 1, so please contact me if you wish to go. Please remember that this will be on a first come first served basis so be quick as this venue will be very popular.

The annual Stewards Match will be played at Disley GC in October and we will need a team to represent the North West Section, it's a sponsored day so it will not cost you a penny, if you fancy it please contact Bert Cross. Well that's all for now, if anyone needs any help or advice please contact the Secretary, Bert Cross on: 01517245412 or myself, Chris Sheehan on: 01512894625, my email is: jsheehan@blueyonder.co.uk

Chris Sheehan



NORTHERN

As I start this month's report the rain is just starting to come down again which only means more misery for greenkeepers across the country. In what has been the wettest June since records began, the forecast for



the start of July promising much of the same, it looks like more floods, course closures and more sitting around inside with cups of tea, I'm sorry I mean more being out in the driving rain pumping bunkers out in preparation of Ladies Captains Day!

Luckily the bad weather held off for most of June 28, which was the date of this years Presidents Day at Ripon City Golf Club. A massive thank you must go to Ripon Golf Club for hosting us this year and to Head Greenkeeper, Richard and his staff for producing a fantastic course in what has been testing times for us all. Thank you also to Adrian Holroyde and Bob Wild Grass Machinery for their sponsorship of the day.

The results on the day are as follows: Bill Mountain Trophy - Dennis Cockburn. 1.1 A Baxter; 1.2 D Collins; 1.3 T Gerrard. 2.1 A Speight; 2.2 F Stewart; 2.3 J Watts. 3.1 D Cockburn; 3.2. K Christie; 3.3 S Heaton. Trade - 1. E Carter; 2. T Arana.

While on the subject of golf days I have received a couple of complaints about the state some of the trophies are being brought back in. Please guys in future can you make sure if you do win a trophy you return it the year after in a clean condition!

Please don't forget this year's Invitation Day is on Tuesday, August 14 at Howley Hall Golf Club and the Autumn Tournament is on Thursday, September 27 at Fulford Golf club. I'm fairly certain that both days will be very popular so please get your names and payment in early to avoid disappointment due to the fact we have got limited availability at both events.

Please also try and get your names down early for the seminar at Moortown Golf club on Wednesday, September 5. This is a free seminar which is being sponsored by Rigby Taylor as is based upon the latest findings from the STRI with regard to their disturbance theory. The day will start around 9 to 9.30am and will include a buffet lunch.

If any body has any news regarding the Section and its members then please get in touch.

Adam Speight adam@speight1156.fslife.co.uk
07739 319060



CLEVELAND

Some members of the greenkeeping and groundsman fraternity visited Newcastle United's training centre in June. It was a very interesting night, with Head Groundsman, Michael Curran, giving an informative tour of the complex. The machinery shed was filled with excellent machinery and first class maintenance equipment. The pitches were in superb condition – these top footballers don't know they're born! Many thanks go to Micky for a great night.

Another summer social event is due to take place on Thursday, August 16, when the Annual Friendly Bowls Competition will be held at Durham City Bowling Club. Greenkeepers and Groundsmen along with friends and family are invited. A 6.30pm start is planned as the nights will be putting in a little by then. I urge you to attend, as the outlook is fantastic with the Cathedral and the Castle in the backdrop and a wonderful buffet

to look forward to. Please come along. In order to assist the club with numbers for catering, please book a place by ringing T.C. on: 07831 214879. There will be a small charge to cover the costs. Directions are available from me on the above mobile.

The Autumn Tournament will be held at City of Newcastle GC, Great North Road, Gosforth on Tuesday, October 2. The tee is booked from 10 – 11am. Please send your 'non-refundable' £5 deposit to Ian Pemberton, 6 Rosewood Court, Marton, Middlesbrough, TS7 8QR.

Any news to Terry "El Prez" Charlton on: 07831 214879



SHEFFIELD

On July 9, we held our summer Golf Day at Wortley GC. After the weather we had had the previous few weeks we were very lucky to be playing golf at all! Hope everybody is dry again now?

Our thanks go to Wortley GC for giving us courtesy of their golf course it was very much appreciated. Big thanks go to John Francis and his greenkeeping team for the excellent condition Wortley was in after all the adverse weather we had been getting, well done John! Our main sponsors for the day were Mansfield Sand who provided an excellent prize table once again. They are very good supporters of our Section and it is very much appreciated - our thanks go to Dave Smith and Russ Latham. Thanks also to all the other trade members who provided prizes. Finally on the thank you section, a very big one goes to the catering staff for providing a fantastic meal which was enjoyed by everyone and the feedback I got was that people thought it was the best meal we had for some time, thank you!

Their was some good golf played (apart from by myself!) and the eventual winner was Darren Coop who shot a gross 72, well done Darren. I would like to thank the Captain of Wortley GC, Gerry Brennan for presenting the prizes.

The results were as follows: 1. D Coop, 72pts (best gross); 2. R Atchison, 69pts (best nett); 3. D Turner, 70pts; 4. S Brown, 71pts; 5. J Shaw, 72pts. Guest prize winner was Gerry Brennan and Nearest the Pin was won by Stuart Clayton. Our next golf day is at Brough GC on September, 17 - 1pm tee off.

Before that we have a lecture at Rotherham GC on September 6 given by Henry Bechelet and Richard Windows from the STRI on The Disturbance Theory. This will be a very interesting lecture and hopefully it will be a good turn out from you all. It starts at 12, with a buffet provided before the lecture. Our Secretary, Chris Astle, has told us he wishes to resign as Secretary but he still wants to stay on the committee, Chris is staying in his position until the AGM in December so we will need to find a new Secretary by then so if anyone is interested in the position please let any of the committee know.

The Wembley trip is being finalised and we should know the date soon, then you will receive details in the post shortly afterwards.

Finally, on behalf of the Sheffield Section I would like to pass on our condolences to Dave Smith, who recently lost his wife Diane after a long

Around the Green

illness, all our thoughts are with you and your family Dave.

As usual, if you have any news please feel free to contact me on: 07793111845 or: jv.lax@tesco.net

John Lax



MIDLAND

Well what's going on then! Dry hot spring then cool wet summer (understatement or what). At least I've been able to practice my fly-fishing, on the greens no less. Talking of fishing, our annual angling event is to be held at our usual venue in Alvechurch/Hopwood by the grace of my father/Capability Landscapes and Mr R.Perks/Rubery Building Supplies. The dates for such have yet to be confirmed but will be either: 22, 29, or 30 of September, at 9am. I can assure you that the fishing is very good, and if numbers allow sponsorship will provide a good prize table. If interested in attending please let me know which date you prefer on: 07908 421 015.

It gives me great pleasure to welcome our new President Mr J.Hammond as our figure head. John has been an advocate of the Section for many years via his involvement as our very genuine Mr Starter. He is indeed a man whom wishes to take on the roll with passion and dedication. Looking forward to your learned council John.

Our summer tournament was held at Coventry GC and I am informed (I got lost, no not get) that the course was in excellent condition as prepared by C.M. K.Tregartha and his fine team, the Section's thanks to you all. Also thanks to Coventry GC for their very kind welcome and generous use of its lovely facilities. The results of the day were: Best gross, S.Scott 34pts; Nett: 1. A.Moss, 37pts; 2. S.Scott, 36pts; 3. N.Couchman, 34pts; 4. E.Stant; 5. M.Hughes, 33pts. Our thanks to Bathgate Leisure/J.Hamond for the main prize table. Longest drive: E.Stant. There were two Nearest the pins: S.Scott & A.Moss, sponsored by N.Tyler/Alpha Amenity. Drinks at halfway sponsored by K.Pugh/Turner Groundcare.

Our autumn event is to be played at Walsall GC on September 12, don't forget to get your entries to Gary ASAP. Also our AGM is to be held there at 6:30pm before the evening meal. Please attend the AGM, we really do need you thoughts and comments, good ones nice bad ones far more useful.

Education and Training: Two day 360 Excavator course, October 5 and 6, Fulford Heath GC, £360 Inc VAT. Irrigation Servicing, Repair and Fault Finding Workshop on October 30, The Belfry, price to be confirmed. Vibration and Noise Management Seminar, October 24, Gay Hill GC - price to be confirmed. For booking details or information contact Paul on: 07880 734 197. Further details are also on our website www.biggamidlandsection.com there is also information regarding our new criteria for handicaps. Such has been formulated to favour us infrequent plays, there is also a forum for comments, the progress of the Scotts Doubles, start times for event and a wealth of further information. Visit it and register - it will keep Leigh happy.

Just time to thank this month's calendar sponsor: Advanta/Matt Gresty-

amenity seed specialist. I see that my shoes and trousers had had a falling out. Soon be time to produce next year's calendar, so we need photos. Get clicking.

Sean McDade



BERKS/BUCKS AND OXON

The Summer Tournament, sponsored this year by Gem Professional, was held at a truly magnificent course near Reading in Berkshire. Sonning GC was designed and opened for play in 1911 by J.H.Taylor. He, of course, was the famous triumvirate of The Open winners - Braid, Taylor and Vardon. Also famously Max Faulkner was assistant professional at Sonning and won The Open in 1951 at Royal Portrush with a score of 285. So this parkland course had a great deal to offer with its holes of changing character which entice you through wooden belts and provided a great challenge to play.

A record turnout competed for the Gem Rosebowl and the results were as follows: 1. J Howard, Lambourne; 2. J Lee, Southfield; 3. G Glen Deanwood; 4. D Lyons Deanwood; Trade Prize - R Catlin; Nearest the Pin - M Weatherstone Lambourne; Straightest Drive - D Parrish Henley.

A big thank you to Matt Smith and his staff for preparing the course to a first class standard and to Secretary, Andrew Tanner, for arranging courtesy prior to the game and on the day. Sonning GC provided us all with excellent facilities and catering staff Amanda and Clive ensured that we got very well fed and watered.

To the sponsors for the day Clive Parnell and Gary Tait from Gem, thank you for all your support on a great 4th of July day.

The next event this year is The Autumn Invitational and this is to be held at Newbury & Cookham GC on September 26, later this year. Don't forget to pencil it in. Information can always be gleaned from the www.bbo-greenkeepers.co.uk website where you will be able to download your entry form and tee times when they are published.

With all this in mind our Section Secretary, Dean Jones, looks forward to your entries which, if on time, makes for a more organised and enjoyable day, so please try to get your entry forms in by the closing date.

News from around the green this month welcomes Neil Carter, from Kent, who has just started as the new Course Manager at Chipping Norton GC in Oxfordshire. We look forward to seeing you at our Section events throughout the year.

Perry Harvey, from Oakland Park GC, is uprooting and immigrating to a new life in Australia as, after many years in the Bucks area, the Harvey family have decided to start afresh on the other side of the world. We wish them the best of luck and good wishes for the future.

I am ending the Section report on a sad note after hearing about the death of Alex Millar at the age of 66. Alex started his career in 1959 at Erskine GC in the Glasgow area of Scotland where his father was the club professional and greenkeeper. In 1965 the keen Chelsea and Rangers supporter moved the family south to Moor Park GC in Hertfordshire and



four years later in 1969 took control of Denham GC in Buckinghamshire, where he remained until his retirement in 2002. Alex was an extraordinary individual and played an active part in greenkeeping circles and represented Hertfordshire and the BB&O at golf, winning the BB&O championship and was five times National Artisan Champion - Such were but a few of the golfing accolades that he achieved. Alex also played scratch golf for 27 years and his handicap never went above five even after his retirement. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family and a testament to a man who always left a sparkle wherever he went throughout the region.

Mark Day
mark.day@tacitgolf.com



SOUTH EAST - SURREY

*Grass, grass it's glorious and green
It's growing like crazy and greenstaff are seen
Cutting and trimming in sun and the rain
No sooner they've finished they're cutting again
The rough's getting rougher the captains perturbed
The club's losing members in the rough on the third
But don't worry chaps the answer is clearly
Work all weekends for the club you love dearly.*

This little ditty was sent in by a member who wishes to remain anonymous and who can blame him or her.

Cuddington GC, the venue for the National Qualifier, was in fantastic condition and with glorious views over London it was the ideal setting for this stroke play competition. Many thanks to Simon Osbourne and his team for preparing the course to such a high quality. Unfortunately the rain, thunder, lightning and hailstones did not appreciate the importance of Surrey Section's qualifier and most players abandoned play after 9 holes. The qualifier will now take place at our next event at Sunningdale GC on Monday, July 3. The winner of the shorter than expected Cuddington competition, sponsored by Seoul Nassau and presented by Ian Sellers, was Tony Bremer followed by Kevin Boxall, Paul Bacon, David Gibbs and Sean Whipp.

You will all know by now that our beloved Chairman, Anthony (Kojak) Freeman, has decided to resign from the committee. I know you will all want to join me in thanking Anthony for the many years of hard work he put into the job. It was only after the first month as Chairman that he realised it was an unpaid position not like being Chairman at a bank or a large company. This, however, did not deter him and like all men of vision, commitment and greed he put the disappointment behind him and got on with the job of shaping the Surrey Section into a shining example of a modern day dictatorship, one that has only been surpassed by the like of Tony Blair. All good things must come to an end and Anthony, unlike Blair, has not passed leadership to a foreigner, he has installed a good and gentle Dorking man to take the reins until the AGM in December. Tony Bremer is not only Secretary but is now also Sir. Tony would like to hear from members who would like the job of Sir to get their psychotherapist to contact him with proof of their insanity, for only someone who is not the full shilling would surely want to apply.

Derek Cunliffe, Course Manager at Old Thorns GC, is now fully experienced in the art of delivering babies. On June 9, his wife Lynda, decided not to wait until they got to hospital and at 3.10am gave birth, with only Derek's help, to their daughter Isabel (7lb 11ozs).

Tom Spurgeon, an Assistant Greenkeeper at Croham Hurst GC, is leaving in August to work in New Zealand for eight months. Roger Tydeman, Course Manager at Croham, wishes him bon voyage but advises him to leave his scissors at home or else he'll get kicked off the plane and his job at Croham has already been filled.

Now, on a more serious note, it has come to my attention via a very reliable source that one of our Course Managers has taken his responsibilities to his club and his course far beyond the call of duty. I have been asked not to name him but only to report his heroic story for you all to wander at. After having had vandals damage a green on his course a few weeks ago. John, I'll call him John for expediency, decided to keep watch one night and try to catch them red handed. Having erected his tent a short distance from the aforementioned green, out of view in a small copse of trees, he settled down to his lonely vigil. He carefully made his campfire and used his cooking skills, remembered from a previous career, to fry his sausage supper to perfection. After a few pints and a much needed visit to some convenient bushes, John decided that it was probably too early for his expected visitors to arrive, so a short nap in his one man tent was a sensible idea. It was at this stage his plans went wrong, who knows why, did he forget to remove his ear defenders? Was the tent material too thick? We may never know, for when he awoke his visitors had been and instead of being greeted by an outraged greenkeeper they were left in peace to perform their wheelies and handbrake turns. It may be for the better that John did not wake up for who knows how many vandals there may have been and that this brave hero is still here to tell the tale. Next time John, have a few friends with you, it might mean buying a BIGGA tent but the snoring is bound to keep you awake. Volunteers, please phone me and I will put you in touch with the man of mystery. Only those who live near Laleham should apply.

Brian Willmott



KENT

Hi guys. We had a great day at the delightfully quirky Westgate and Birchington GC a couple of weeks ago. If you weren't there, you missed a cracker, for those of us who were privileged enough to enjoy the course and the scenic views I would like to speak for all and thank everyone at the club for their hospitality. Thanks also to Avoncrop, Collier, Gem and Scotts for providing raffle prizes on the day. The results were as follows: 1. Sam Burton, 42pts; 2. Gary Sidders, 41pts; 3. Sam Fromage 40pts; Nearest the Pin was Michael Wigstone; Longest Drive was Ben Adams.

Our next event is a much-anticipated trip to the Wildernesse Club on September 27. The format on the day will be a three ball fun Texaco Scramble Team event. Entries for this popular venue are sure to be quick off the mark so watch out on the webpage for the entry forms and get them in quick! Teams will be drawn from all paid up entrants on the list prior to the event. Usual prices of £25 for Course Managers and £15 for assistants.



Around the Green



EAST ANGLIA

We are planning to organise a paintballing event in the very near future in the North Kent Region, this will probably be in October, please let us know via the webpage if you are interested in participating in this event.

One other thing, congratulations to my old mate Dan Waghorn and his long suffering girlfriend Kimberly, who have recently tied the knot. Not sure what happened to my invitation mate but good luck to you both for the future.

That's all for this month guys. Keep smiling and keep up with all the latest goings on at www.kentgreenkeepers.co.uk

Rob Holland



SUSSEX

Hello again, I hope everyone's enjoying this strange weather we are having. Not quite sure how much longer it will go on. It seems as soon as you have finished cutting the course you have to start again. Oh well it keeps us in a job!

On to the golf, we have just had our summer fixture at Cophorne GC. We got lucky with the weather and the course was in exceptional condition. A big thank you must go to the Course Manager, Mike Gould and his staff for all their hard work.

Also thanks go to Palmers and Andy Page for sponsoring the day. They also put up a hole in one prize, which was a gator but no one got near it. The competition was teams of three and the best two scores on every hole, the results are as follows: Nearest the Pin on the 7th - Adam Hartley; Longest Drive on the 18th - Peter Tarvey Jones. (I say drive, I think he may have used a rocket launcher.) 1st - Brian Wilmot, Rory Bremer, Ant Freeman, 79 pts; 2nd - Kieran Laverly, Peter T-Jones, Ian Evans, 75pts; 3rd - Dave Allen, Chris Ahier, Dan Beard, 74pts; 4th - P Bell, M Hind, R Webber, 70pts; 5th - Ian Beale (Gary O), Chris Allen, Peter Wines, 69pts; 6th - Mike Gould, AJ Pyne, J Stevens, 67pts; 7th - Glynn Pollard, Eric Green, Peter Saunders, 66pts; 8th - Tony Wooley, David Wellfare, John Shepherd, 64pts; 9th - Matt Crossley, Glen Scott, Paul Scott, 63pts; 10th - Andy Naismith, Joe Dorner, Gordon Bell, 63pts; 11th - Andy Paige, Martin Coles, Darren Mitchell, 62pts; 12th - John Hill, Richard May, Carl Whyborne, 59pts; 13th - Paul Dunbar, Simon Mccarthy, Rob Hudson, 58pts.

As you can see there was a great turn out for the event, it was great to see so many new faces. A big thankyou to everyone who attended and made the day a big success.

The next event is Sussex v Surrey some time in august, and the following event will be the autumn fixture at Cooden Beach on September, 13.

Again, any news that you would like me to include, any ideas on the running of the golf days, or if you would like to host a golf day, please let me know on: 07776223234 or email me: robert.hudson77@btinternet.com

Rob Hudson

Well, here we go again then, our second venue for our round East Anglia Tour. Stowmarket – What a lovely place. Unfortunately, it shares the same postcode as a nearby girls school, and, with the wonders of modern technology, namely the 'satellite navigational system' guess where we ended up! Coincidentally, the 'sat nav' belonged to my up and going young apprentice – well, he's only 20.

I digress (must be the 'sat nav'). Seriously, Stowmarket GC was in super condition thanks to Mat Gill and his team. There was not a blade out of place, even my Chairman was impressed, and so he should be. Nice one mate.

There must have been 60-70 of us playing. These are the few that actually practice: 0-9 – 1. Norman Fenwick, 39pts on countback; 2. Chris O'Dowd, 39pts; 3. Graham Hurren, 37pts. 10-18 – 1. Ian Willet, 37pts; 2. Niel Worger, 34pts; 3. Asa Barber, 33pts. 19-28 – 1. David Driver, 40pts, Overall winner; 2. Nevill Rowlandson, 30pts; 3. Ivan Hare, 27pts. Trade Prize was won by Mick Fance, 34pts; 2. Mark Keysell, 33pts. Guest Prize was won by Richard Hurn, 42pts (he got the sat nav going in the end!); 2. Club Captain, Vic French, 35pts. Longest Drive was Graham Hurren. Nearest the Pin was Mick Fance and the loo seat – now here is a story:

As you all know, Peter Howard and Steve Millard do a first rate job selling raffle tickets and to help them out they asked a Mr Niel Worger and others, to tear up the strips and put them in a box. You guessed it! Niel put his own tickets in as well! Every now and then we find one, don't we?

The day was sponsored by Tomlinson Groundcare and I don't think any of us left that course hungry. Brilliant hot dogs I must say.

Our other friends that helped make the day were: Tacit, Consultant Clarkson, Vitax, Aitkens, Sisis, Rigby Taylor, Bartram Mowers, Earnest Doe, Headland, Scotts and Textron.

Our thanks once again to Stowmarket GC for letting us play. The catering was excellent and so was the hospitality. Hopefully some of it will spread to Norfolk!

I must say a personal thank you to Vic French, the Captain for letting me in without a jacket and tie – I knew where it was (indoors). I don't usually go around looking like a Swan Vesta – do I?

Mick Lathrope



ESSEX

The summer medal tournament went off well with a fantastic day at Theydon Bois GC played on a fine day for golf although a bit on the windy side. The 51 starters enjoyed good playing conditions and a fine course, laid out by Course Manager John Barnard, and his team, our thanks go to him and the club for a very enjoyable day.



The day was sponsored by Tacit and our thanks go to Mark Day and Tim Webb of Tacit for the prizes.

Winners were as follows: Overall. Adam Millward, Orsett Golf Club, 67pts; Scratch. Nick Gates, Theydon Bois Golf Club. 73pts; Nearest the Pin. Steve Crossdale, Lords Rayleigh; Straightest Drive, Andy Toomey. The next event is the Autumn Stableford Tournament, at Colchester GC on August 5.

The entry is limited to 60 so make sure you get your entry in early. For those of you that have not received an entry form these can be downloaded from our website, www.essexbigga.co.uk and starting times will be posted on the web, two or three days prior to the event.

On the move front, Steve Crossdale has changed his position at Lords, although staying as Course Director he now has the title of Executive/ Course Director this because he has the General Manager's position as well as clubhouse responsibilities and looking after both Rayleigh and Notley GC's.

Paul Brown has joined Steve at Lords Rayleigh as Course Manager from Ballard's Gore, and Paul Millard is the new Course Manager at Five Lakes, we hope they all do well in their new positions and will know doubt see them at Colchester in the next event.

Sorry this month's news is a very light on the ground but information is a bit short in supply at the moment.

Anyone who has any news for inclusion in the ATG can email me at: highwoods.photographic@virgin.net or call me on: 01206852353

Arnold Phipps-Jones www.essexbigga.co.uk



SOUTH WEST & WALES

At Minchinhampton we bid a final tearful farewell to the Open Championship Regional Qualifying round. We were fortunate enough to be selected to stage this important event from 2002–2007. Marcus Fraser, who has had some success on the European Tour, won the first one back in 2002 with a gross 66. This score was bettered only once in the next five years. This year, the low score was 68 which was the only round under 70 all day. This was mainly due to a four-club breeze, which later turned into an all-out gale (and not helped by some fiendish pin positions from the R&A!) Ferndown GC in Dorset now take up the mantle for the next six years and we wish them all the very best. We certainly wish them some half-decent weather, and not thunderstorms, hailstones, and torrential rain. What was that about putting in 36 holes, irrigation and a lake last winter? We've needed the fire brigade on site almost constantly to prevent run-off from the lake headwaters from sweeping away local villages. Nevermind – there'll be enough water in stock if we ever do get around to irrigating ever again.

I've heard several horror stories about bunkers being completely swept away, clubhouses flooded, and Waynes rain-gauge breaking down. Oh no! I'm heading off to Italy now for a much needed break – so it'll probably start tanking down there as well. The real fun at Minch starts when I get

back from Italy, with a Constant Rate Pump Test on our two boreholes. This is to obtain a licence to abstract more water. The process started last Autumn with a Vulnerable Sources Survey during September when a specialist Surveyor Consultant came in and identified all the springs, wells, boreholes etc in the area, to deduce which ones were at risk from any increased abstraction. Two major springs and one well have been identified as at potential risk so the flows and levels have to be monitored while the boreholes are pumped. The monitoring starts off at five minute intervals, and backs off to four times a day, and finally twice a day for a month. The consultant wanted 20 grand to do the monitoring – so guess who's up for it now?! I can hardly wait – blundering around the district in the middle of the night measuring two boreholes, the well and the springs.

Congratulations to my elder son, Matt, who has graduated from Reading University with a first in Soil Science. Matt is joining the Minchinhampton greenstaff as Ecology Advisor, and one of his first jobs is going to be coordinating the pump test. Good Luck!

The next Section event is the match against the South Coast on September 13 at Farrington Gurney. This superb 27 hole complex, south of Bath, is managed by Nigel Pring, and this is the first ever visit of the Section. Wayne "McClaren" Vincent is desperate for a first point so please give him a call on: 07958630590 if you wish to be considered for the team. The AGM at Minchinhampton New Courses follows on Thursday, October 11.

Lets have some news for next month.

Paul Worster paul@mgcnew.co.uk



SOUTH COAST

I keep saying that we always seem to be very lucky with the weather at our Golf Days and our Summer Tournament, held at Andover GC on July 3, was no exception - bar one torrential downpour on Tony Gadd's tee shot at midday on the first tee and that was all we saw of the rain. We were made very welcome by Andover GC who celebrate their centenary this year. Graham Few, Amanda Cliffe and their staff catered for us extremely well (special thanks also to Wendy Rennison for drinks on the course). High recognition to Chris Sturgess, the Head Greenkeeper at Andover, and to his Assistant, Dave, for presenting the course in absolute superb condition. The general comment from players throughout the day was the high quality of the greens – well done Chris. Our sponsors for the day were Tacit, who we thank very much for their continued support and for providing, as usual, an excellent prize table. Thanks very much Tim Webb. Results for the day were: 4th – Chris Sturgess and Duncan Ginn, 43pts; 3rd on countback – David King and Andy Gogan, 44pts; 2nd – Peter Hamford and Colin Pardy, 44 pts; 1st – Nick Reynolds and R Miller, 46pts; Nearest the Pin – Gordon Payne; Longest Drive – Nick Reynolds. There were no winners of the Two's which means it's a rollover to North Hants GC in the autumn.

Nick Reynolds has played some great golf in our Section and is very dedicated travelling up from Weymouth. This Golf Tournament is to be his last with us, for now anyway, as he and his family are emigrating to Perth in Oz. Nick will be continuing greenkeeping in Australia and

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maybe he arrange a Golf Day for our Section in Oz (do the Australian Golf Clubs give us courtesy of the course?!) We all wish Nick, his wife and his two children all the very best for the future.

The annual golf meeting of the South Coast v Wessex Secretaries was played at Upavon GC on June 14. A win for the greenkeepers. The format was match play with a 3:2 win to us. This event is now equal pegging with five wins a piece. The food and catering was excellent. Thank you to Neil King for the presentation of the course and to Christine and June for the catering. The sponsors were Coursecare who have sponsored this event from the start – thank you Paul Dyter.

Our next Golf Day is the Autumn Tournament to be held at North Hants GC on October 23. If you want to attend this or any of our Golf Days please contact Chris Sturgess on: 0777 313 8409 or send a cheque to Chris direct at: 31 Bay Rd, Sholing, Southampton, SO19 8EZ. Have a good month and I'll speak to you again in September.

Joe Crawley
07721 389200



DEVON/CORNWALL

Our summer meeting was held at Trethorne GC in Cornwall on June 14. The course was an absolute picture and a credit to Course Manager, Justin Austin and his team. Justin has only been at Trethorne for 12 months but he has made a massive impact since his arrival. The winner of the golf was local cornish comedian " Whacko Jacko James", Head Greenkeeper at Killiow GC, with a zillion points, nevermind Jack your off scratch in the next competition. We were treated to a lovely BBQ to finish off the day, a big thank you to John Grainger for the use of the excellent facilities at Trethorne, to the catering team, to all of you who took time out to support the Section and last but not least our sponsors Martin and David Ward, of Symbio, who also sponsored the mini bus to BTME this year enabling the section to have a strong representation at the show.

Congratulations to Steve Harris, Course Manager at Ashbury Golf Courses, and his Deputy, Pete Gross, on winning the National Skills Award. Steve employs more than 40 greenkeepers maintaining five golf courses and still growing! All building work is carried out "in house" as is all greenkeeper training with the support of the Duchy College in Cornwall. No fewer than 12 greenkeepers achieved their NVQ level 2 this year.

A little birdie told me Pete Standen, Course Manager at Sidmouth GC, got married recently. Congratulations Pete, look forward to seeing you at our next meeting if you're allowed!

Your committee is working hard organising the fixtures and speakers for 2007/8 and as soon as the fixture cards are printed they will be sent out along with our annual newsletter.

Please let me have any relevant info for this monthly column. I can be contacted on: 01822 617671 or: stevnevans184@btinternet.com

Steve Evans

SOUTH WALES

Greetings Grasschoppers! I am back. Apologies for missing the last few months but I had a slight accident. Anyway on with the report. On June 27, 27 of Wales finest gathered at the Gower GC to do battle for the Tacit Summer Cup. The weather was kind to us after the down pours we had had earlier, our thanks must go to Mr Adrian Richards, owner of the Gower GC, for courtesy of the course and for the superb welcome we received. Thanks also to Mr Steve Mills, Course Manager and his team for all their hard work to get the course in such superb condition - well done lads. Thanks to our sponsors for the day, Tacit, for supplying us with such fantastic prizes - your support is very much appreciated by the Section. Thanks also to the catering staff for rounding off a great day with a truly great meal thank you one and all.

Now down to the lucky prize winners and in top spot was Mr Daryl Jones, Glynneath GC, 38pts. Daryl won the Tacit Cup plus a flat screen TV and is the first name to go on the new cup. 2nd place on count back over the last 3 holes was 36pts was Jamy (sorry) Jamie Probert, Pontardawe GC. Jamie won a drinks cooler (get the beer in), in 3rd place also on 36pts was our Chairman, Kerry Jones. Longest drive on the 5th winning a crate off beer was Kerry Jones (may I suggest you get together with Mr Probert and invite the Prez for a drink). Nearest the Pin on the 11th was Daryl Bray Morriston GC he won a bottle of J.D. Best Guest/trade Jim Openshaw (Greensman) he also wins a bottle off J.D.

Now to a member of my crew Dai .T (Dai Thomas) who won the Best Walk, well done Dai you can only get better! Well done to all the prize winners and thank you all for turning up. The more of you that turn up the better. A news flash from Garry Humphreys (Llanishan), a young man, name of Rhys Mcdonagh did an incredible thing while playing in a Charity Day at Parc GC. He hit a hole in one at the 16th and if that was not enough he did it again on the 18th – unbelievable. Congratulations! Did it cost you a lot of money? Well grasschoppers, that's it for now. I look forward to seeing you at the golf days. Always look on the bright side off life. If you wish to contact me, my new mob is: 07889792190 or email: henry@henrystead.wanadoo.co.uk

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