



News from the Chief Executive

I was saddened to learn of the sudden death of Don Hunt who was an Associate member and a staunch supporter of BIGGA in the Devon and Cornwall Section. I had the privilege of knowing Don for a number of years and his enthusiasm and gentlemanly nature will be a sad loss. Our condolences go to his wife and family.

My condolences also go to the families of Peter Richmond and Matthew Folka both of whom died recently.

There seems to be much rumour and speculation regarding BIGGA's talks with the IOG regarding a possible merger. The two organisations put out a joint Press Release to the media following a recent meeting of representatives from both Boards of Management.

This was also reproduced in full on our own website within the 'News' section of the Members' area. Talks to date have centred round identifying prime aims and key issues, how discussions and a review will operate and how and when consultation with members will take place. As I have stated in earlier writings the talks are merely at an investigative stage and members will be consulted when there is something to be consulted about. I am in danger of repeating myself however it is important that members of both organisations understand that the membership will ALWAYS have the final say and that no agreement will be entered into unless the majority of members are in favour. It is inevitable that there will be mixed opinion and I would ask that everyone reserves judgement until the outcome of talks are communicated. The BIGGA Board of Management will be looking at the consultation process at their next meeting in June, coupled with this serious thought needs to be given to the voting process to ensure that all members have the chance to decide upon the Association's future. I am assured by Geoff Webb, IOG's Chief Executive, that the views expressed by the editor of The Groundsman, Trevor Ledger, in his column of the May issue are not the views of the IOG. The steering group that has been appointed by the Boards of BIGGA and the IOG is due to meet again in early July following which I will post a report on our web site as well as an update in the August edition of Greenkeeper International.

By the time that you read this two major tournaments will have taken place, the Welsh Open at the Celtic Manor and the BMW/PGA Tournament at Wentworth. I hope that the weather was kind to both sets of organisers and that Jim McKenzie and Chris Kennedy and their teams had a successful event.

John Pemberton



SCOTLAND – AYRSHIRE

Hello all! Hope you're all in good health and have started the season on the front foot. That unseasonably warm and dry weather in April gave us an early wake up call at Turnberry as we rushed out the hoses to our newly turfed areas. All major construction work in preparation for The Open in 2009 has been completed. This included (over the past two winters) 12 Championship tees, 21 fairway bunkers, the complete lifting, shifting, landscaping and re-laying of the 16th fairway alongside other nips and tucks here and there. Added length, hole re-shaping and strategic bunker placements were a must if the Ailsa course was to test the best in the game and I have no doubt that this will be the case, and it could get really ugly if the wind blows!

Lochgreen was the venue for the Spring Outing on Wednesday, April 25. Weather on the day was good with a stiff breeze proving a test over the opening six holes.

Our thanks to my pal Billy Fletcher and South Ayrshire Council for allowing us the times and use of the facilities and it was well commented on how fairly the course played, but I know that as Lochgreen is where I have played most of my golf over the past few years. Some had the cheek to say this was a major factor in the results! Our gratitude also to the chef's and friendly waitresses who provided excellent food and lovely beer.

The results were as follows: 1.1 D. Tweddell (Get In!), 37pts; 2.1. MacDonald (Unlucky!), 36pts; 2.3 G. Morrison (Lucky!), 36pts; 2.4 R. Macbeth (Alas!), 34pts. 2.1 M. Lothian (No comment!), 38pts; 2.2 R. Bunting (Robbed!), 38pts; 2.3 D. Jeffrey (Tough school!), 34pts; 2.4 G. Ross (Ya dancer!), 34pts. Trade Prize – D. Duthie (As usual!)

There were 45 members in attendance which is a great turnout. Thanks largely to a good number travelling from the Dumfries area and coming over from Arran - Thanks lads for helping to make it such an enjoyable day.

The Dundonald GC and Barrassie GC are hosting the BIGGA National Championship on October 8 and 9, so hopefully we can get some numbers in the competition and take some of the silverware. Our rematch against the Northern Irish lads has been scheduled for Friday, October 5. If there are any of you who played in last year's massacre who are unable to go over, good! I mean can you please let me know. Likewise if there are any brave souls interested in coming aboard please get in touch. More details will appear soon.

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Denis Tweddell



SCOTLAND – EAST

I start this month's report with a plea to all East Section members to attend the Scottish National Tournament at Berwick Golf Club, on Thursday, June 21. With the event on your doorstep this year, the usual excuse