



News from the Chief Executive

The redevelopment of the office at BIGGA HOUSE is now complete and HQ staff are now located in one large open plan office on the ground floor. Already there is an improvement in communication and everyone's approach to the job. The office move was a classic example of how good teamwork can turn a difficult job into a smooth effective operation. The staff knew what had to be done, how it was planned to be done and what was expected of them. To their credit they simply got down to working together and putting the plan into action. As with any project the key components are the planning, the management of the task, the dissemination of information and the attitude of those taking part.

In the words of the famous 19th century industrialist Andrew Carnegie, "Teamwork is the ability to work together towards a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments towards organisational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results".

I wonder how many managers effectively organise and motivate their teams and how many leave much of the teamwork to chance. The Association recognises the skill gaps that exist at management and supervisory level and it will continue to try to address this through its national and local training programme. It is important that members get the support of their employer when it comes to Learning and Development, and BIGGA will be building on its working relationship with bodies such as the GTC, the GCMA and the Home Unions.

There is no doubt in my mind that testing times are ahead for golf clubs as the over supply of facilities and the under supply of golfers starts to compete with personal finance and lifestyle and time issues. Higher expectations of standards coupled with a tightening of budgets inevitably results in stress and sadly sometimes conflict between employer and employee and occasionally between employees.

For some the way forward is perceived only to be achievable by facing up to employers through the intervention of a Trade Union. With in excess of 2,500 separate employers in the UK, each with a greenkeeping staff numbering between two or three to 20, 30 or in some cases 40+, how is being a member of a trade union going to improve on being a member of BIGGA, and what about the extra cost?

BIGGA has chosen to work with employers through their national associations, and by direct contact with clubs, to try to resolve conflict at the earliest opportunity and has earned a great deal of respect for its professional approach. It does not see itself as a substitute trade union and never will.

The management structure at Headquarters has been strengthened by the recruitment of Tracey Maddison who will head up the Membership Department. Part of Tracey's brief is to develop the range of welfare services offered to members and put these on a much more formal basis. If you are prepared to offer help in this regard please contact Tracey or your Regional Administrator. I would hope that the concept of teamwork does not stop at the boundary of your golf club but extends to include fellow turf professionals no matter where employed.

John Pemberton
Chief Executive



SCOTTISH REGION – AYRSHIRE

Hello everybody. Hope you're all well and primed for the new season? I'm Writing this at the beginning of May and we've been out watering our newly turfed areas in earnest when not long ago it seemed the winter would never end!

After an early hail shower the sun shone on the 36 participants at the Spring Outing in mid-April held over the Portland course at Royal Troon. Judging by the excellent returns the good weather must have played its part. Our thanks to Royal Troon GC and the Captain for allowing us the day, Billy and John MacLachlan, and the Green Staff, for the superb condition of the course and to the bar and catering staff for the delicious beer and lovely food.

Results as follows: 1.1 Iain Barr, 39pts; 1.2 George Morrison, 37pts; 1.3 Duncan Gray, 35pts; 1.4 Kevin Kirkpatrick, 35pts; 2.1 Gary Ross, 37pts; 2.2 John Wilson, 30pts; 2.3 Kenny Gilroy, 29pts; 2.4 Will McGee, 29pts; Trade Prize - Alec Cruickshanks, 35pts.

Congratulations to all the winners, on what was a most enjoyable day. Oh! It would be remiss of me not to mention current Harry Diamond, Jug holder George Morrison's hole-in-one at the par 3 4th with a thinned 5-iron, only kidding it was a 4-iron? Well done pal!

That's all folks - except to remind you of the Scottish National Tournament at Irvine GC on Monday, June 23 - see ya there!

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CENTRAL

The Section had a wonderful day at Lundin Golf Club for the Spring Outing, with 60 players taking part. Willie Swann and his staff had the course in superb condition with a few testing pin placements. Those lucky enough to go out early probably had the best of the day, as there were a couple of heavy showers for the later starters. I won't bore you all with the prizewinners, you can find them on the website: www.biggacentralsection.org.uk. Our thanks once again for the support from our patrons and all those who helped on the day and to Stuart Clunie, Vice Captain at Lundin, for presenting the prizes.

We were saddened to hear at the outing, the death of Willie (Bill) Milton, a past Head Greenkeeper at Downfield Golf Club. Willie was a stalwart of the North and Midlands Section of SIGGA, serving as the treasurer for many years as well as being the Chairman of that Section. He was a tremendous help to myself, Iain MacLeod, and many others of our era when we first joined the SIGGA. His son, also Billy, currently works at Downfield where he is Deputy Head Greenkeeper and our thoughts are with him.

Around the Green

The Section wishes Alan Sharp all the best in his new position back in Essex. I know the Scotsraig members will miss him as he has done an excellent job there these past couple of years. The Section will also miss him as he was our Vice Chairman so your committee will be looking for someone to take over that post.

Someone who will be able to play even more golf than he does currently is our Chairman Derek Scott (hard to believe I know). This is because his great friend and golfing partner, Mike Dennis, from Rigby Taylor, is taking early retirement this month and therefore will be available to play at any time. Everyone in the Section, and I'm sure in other areas, will wish Mike all the best in his retirement. He has been a regular supporter of the Association over many years, starting with STS in 1983 before Rigby Taylor bought out the sales division in 1993. He followed his father into the industry as his father was Professional/Groundsman at Glenalmond and Mike also trained as a professional golfer, at one point working at Quaker Hill, in New York State, for two years, leaving before he was drafted into the US Army!

Finally, Gordon McKie, Graeme Taylor and myself were among over 120 delegates who recently attended a conference staged by the R&A in St Andrews, about the issues facing golf and the environment. There were a number of case studies given by representatives of some European Golf Federations and also two papers delivered by representatives from the WWF and the EU Commission, which instigated some very healthy debate and it was thought provoking to hear the perception of golf from people from outside our industry. I am hoping to invite one of those speakers, Gordon Shepherd, to address the Section one evening at Elmwood in the summer. Although he is based in Switzerland, he comes originally from Montrose and will be in Scotland on holiday. Watch the website for more details.

Gordon Moir



EAST

I write this report in early May, with warm weather having finally arrived and more on the way. Hopefully this will help everybody to produce good consistent surfaces.

On Monday, April 14 the annual match between BIGGA and the Golf Club Secretaries was held at West Linton Golf Club. The Greenkeeping team was led by Stuart Greenwood and also featured East members, Kenny Mail, Stuart Ferguson, Tom Murray, Robert Marshall, Chris Yeaman, Scott Ramsay, Robert Burns, Scott Corrigan and Mark Littlejohn. The end result was a resounding 8-2 victory for the BIGGA team. Our thanks go to West Linton Golf Club for granting us courtesy of the course and, to Chris and his team for presenting the course in excellent condition.

On the following day, after the Secretaries' Match, all roads led to East Lothian with the Section Spring Outing being held at Gullane No 2. The results were as follows; Scratch, Fraser Anderson, Gullane GC, 74pts; 1. A. J. Holmes, Seahouses GC, 70pts; R/U, T. Murray, Ratho Park GC, 71pts; 2. I. Watson, Gullane GC, 70pts; R/U, A. Sherwood, Glenrose GC, 73pts; 3. Paul Hay, Gullane GC, 78pts; Trade, D. Archibald, Sherriffs, 67pts; Veteran, Jimmy Coombe, Gifford GC, 75pts; Best Nett, Fraser Anderson, Gullane GC, 74pts.

After the prize giving a retirement presentation was made by our Chairman, Stuart Ferguson, to Jimmy Coombe (ex Gifford Golf Club) and Mike Dennis current Sales Manager (Scotland) of Rigby Taylor. They each received a pocket watch and a bottle of whisky. The absentee from this line-up was Robert T Bruce who is at present holidaying down under.

Our thanks go to Club Captain, Keith McColl, and Gullane Golf Club, for granting us courtesy of the course, to Wayne and the catering staff for keeping everybody well fed and watered, and last but certainly not least, Stuart Duff and the team for presenting the course in an excellent condition. I understand from Tom Murray that the greens were stimping at 10.5 on the day, which is no mean feat when you consider the lack of growth in April.

A few paragraphs ago, I mentioned Mike Dennis and retirement, although during our recent meeting he very much placed the emphasis on the word early! During our discussion I discovered that he had worked as an Asst Golf Club Professional in Nova Scotia in 1969 before moving to New York State for two seasons. Prior to moving to New York he was given the chance to move to British Columbia, (where I worked during the late 70's & early 80's) but turned it down. He joined the Fine Turf Industry in this country in 1983 working initially for Mike Eddington's, STS who were subsequently bought out by his current employers Rigby Taylor in 1994. During his working life Mike has always adopted a professional attitude both to customers and competitors alike. I am sure everyone in our industry will join me in wishing him a long and happy retirement.

Our congratulations this month go to Colin Noble (Head man at Peebles) on his appointment as this year's Peebles Cornet. Helping to guide him down the 'Fairway' of this year's Beltane and March Riding celebrations will be his lass (and wife) Kate. They'll celebrate their first wedding anniversary in August after a hectic summer.

I recently had a meeting with a very secretive Chris Yeaman, who informed me he was spending a few days in New York, but would not divulge the reason why. On his return he advised me that he was now engaged to a young lady called Dee Greaves. In true Sir Galahad fashion, Chris went down on one knee during a dinner cruise on the Hudson River. Fortunately for him the answer was in the affirmative.

Until Next Month
Mike Dooner



NORTH

Hello to you all, hope you are all in good health. I also hope that you all have managed to complete your winter programmes despite the bad weather we've had. I just wish it would make up its mind. Although as I am writing this, it is mild and the sun has been out most of the day, so we do seem to be heading in the right direction.

Having the Spring Outing a little earlier this month has enabled me to put the results in this edition of the magazine. We usually have to wait until next month to find out who has won the coveted sombrero or who has

Around the Green

made a complete dog's dinner of their round. The results are as follows: Longest Drive - 3. John Geddes; 2. Stewart McBain; 1. Steve Harrod (Guest); Nearest the Pin - John Hunter (Hunter Promotions) Must have had a kind bounce!; Sweep - 1. Gary Bryant (Guest); 2. Robert Patterson; 3. Muir Ross, Ballindalloch GC; 4. Jim McCombie (Guest); Guest Winner - Gary Bryant; Trade Winner - Raymond Warrender (Alpha Plus Groundcare); Veterans - 1. Brian Cocker, Alyth GC; 2. Hugh Maclatchie; Apprentice Trophy - Warren Beveridge, Peterculter GC; 3.1 Warren Beveridge, Peterculter GC; 3.2 Dale Robertson; 3.3 Mark Angus, Peterculter GC; 2.1 Paul Sharp, Peterculter GC; 2.2 Fraser Downie, Peterculter GC; 2.3 Me; Class 1 - Frews Cup 1. Muir Ross; 2. Derek Bond, Peterhead GC; 3. Kevin Fowler, Fortrose & Rosemarkie GC; Scratch - Bowen Trophy 1. Robert Patterson, Sombrero GC; 2. George Mitchell, Newmachar GC.

I must congratulate Robert Hardie, and his Staff at Craibstone, for presenting to us a tough challenge. It is not easy when 50 of us turn up on your doorstep to play your course. Whoever changed the hole on the 7th needs shooting. I think there were a few four putts that day - eh Niall Bruce, Course Manager of Montrose Links. I also hear that the Head Greenkeeper took an 11 on his own course. Work it out guys!

Well done to all those that won prizes and commiserations to those that didn't. I bet you won't lose any sleep although there was a lot of competition to see who won the most raffle prizes. It was good to see the usual faces and some new ones. I think it's the first time I've seen the entire Peterculter squad at an outing, so well done, your support is much appreciated although at the next outing at Kirriemuir there will be a demonstration on 'How to tie a tie' given to us by one of lads, mentioning no names eh Warren.

A lot of you were keen to come down to Kirriemuir so let's just hope that the enthusiasm is still there in September and that we get a good crowd down there. If you can manage it would be great to see you there.

Changing the subject now, one guy who is on the move, making the long trip down the A90 from Fraserburgh to Peterhead is Bond, Derek Bond that is. Enjoy your time working at Peterhead although I have heard that Mr Maclatchie is a hard task master so good luck!

That's it for this month so hopefully I will have more news next month otherwise there will be just a blank space for the North Section. Thanks for your time.

Ben Brookes
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WEST

Welcome to this month's report. It's great to see some nice weather after the wet start to the season - long may it continue.

On the education front, the Level 3 students from GOSTA training attended a course walk at Marr Hall; this is the new course being built on the grounds of the Erskine Hospital. Gordon Kerr, the Course Manager, and John McTeer,

the Professional, kindly gave up their time to talk the students through the construction process of the course and also to give them a guided tour. Many thanks to Gordon and John for their efforts, I'm sure we wish them all the best in future and look forward to seeing the course when it opens.

On the job front, Scott Ballantyne has moved from Cowglen to take on a new post of Course Manager at Haggis Castle Golf Club while Jack Stedward has moved from the Carrick to become Head Greenkeeper at Blairbeth.

This year's Spring Meeting was held over the East Renfrewshire Golf Club, it turned out to be a nice day after light rain in the morning. Many thanks to Jim Gilmore and his team for having the course in first class condition after a very wet winter. Many thanks to the captain Gordon Young and his Committee for the use of your fine course and to the hospitality given throughout the day.

The scores on the day were: Scratch Alistair Read Williamwood 73; 1.1 Calum Morron; 1.2 Alan Syme; 1.3 Stuart Taylor. 2.1 John Barr; 2.2 Christian Carvel; 2.3 Gary Burns. 3.1 James Mclean; 3.2 Brain Bolland jnr; 3.3 Stephen Sheehan. Visitor's prize went to Gordon Young Captain East Renfrewshire, Accurate Drive Alistair Read, Nearest the Pin Gordon Young,

Remember to put in your diary Monday, June 23 for the Scottish National Tournament at Irvine Bogside, come along for a good day's golf and meet up with some old friends.

We will be returning to the Comedy Club for our annual night out during late November. Tickets will be on sale soon so get in touch and book your place.

On a lighter note Gordon Howat, of Souters Sports, has been involved in running several marathons throughout Europe in aid of charity, I hope to do a full report on this next month.

Football wise anyone interested in a game please get in touch.

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NORTHERN REGION - NORTH EAST

On April 16, we held our Spring Competition at Dunstanburgh Castle GC, having set off on our hour long journey we were not relishing the idea of playing in the rain as we headed off but good luck was with us as soon as we seen the sea it had stopped and a lovely sunny day was has by all - mind you we had a gentle breeze to contend with as most of us were unable to conquer.

On speaking on behalf of the players credit must go to Simon Oliver and his staff as it was remarked by everyone on the condition of the course and especially the greens - they were tremendous, the best anyone had seen or played on considering the weather we have had over the winter and early Spring. Not a bad turnout this year, 18 people played and I would like to thank the two lads who travelled up from Crook GC - now that's a canny journey (A.Miller and G.Morgan) not to worry lads the Autumn Competition is about



a 30 minute shorter drive. The leading scores are as follows: Best Gross, D. Hair, Wearside GC, 73pts; Best Nett, A.Miller, Crook GC, 85-14=71pts; Best Nett, J.Storey, Alnmouth GC; K.Shotten, Alnmouth GC; M. Linsley, Alnmouth GC; A. Harrison, Garesfield GC. Thanks to all the sponsors as once again they did us proud Turf Specialist Ltd, Greenlay,Rigby Taylor, Aitkens, Tacit, Rickerbys, Sheriff Amenity plus it was good to see Alan Morton and Dave Common, Glen Baxter there representing their companies and thanks to Paul Foston who was unable to stay on.

After we had the prize giving I was flabbergasted at what was about to happen next, as Alan Morton was asked to say a few words on behalf of the Section Committee and the members, on thanking myself for having been Secretary for the past 25 years and presented me with an engraved decanter and glasses - this came as a complete shock to me, so I'm now thanking ALL Section members for that gift but I will not be carrying on for the next 25 years.

Other news around the Section, David Cuthbertson, of Rockcliffe Hall, tells me that work on building new sheds is about to start on May 6 - maybe by the time this is printed it will be nearly finished - plus a mechanic will be starting shortly having been working in Holland.

Well that's all the news this month, I could do with some more as I find that the summer months are a little bit on the shy side.

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NORTH WEST

Firstly, I would just like to say what a great tribute to Bert Cross that so many greenkeepers and friends attended the funeral for Bert. I am sure Marie, Peter and Anthony were so proud to see how highly people thought of Bert. Colleagues and friends of Bert have asked me for the details of the orphanage that Marie requested donations to be sent to, well here it is:

Sister Mariola, Kasisi Orphanage, PO. Box 33441 Lusaka, Zambia.
Website: kasisi@zamnet.zm

The spring tournament took place at Heaton Moor Golf Club and the committee would like me to say a big thank you to the Captain and his committee for allowing us to play their course - which was in fine condition considering all the rain we had in the previous weeks. Also many thanks to the caterer for such a splendid meal. The Best Gross was won by Billy Merritt, Best Nett was won by myself, jammy Chris Sheehan. The strange thing was that the first name on the trophy was my brother Mike Sheehan who won it exactly 20 years ago. The vets was won by Brian Turner, well done Brian. Many thanks go to Bathgates for kindly sponsoring the Nearest the Pin and Longest Drive competition and indeed all of the trade who supplied prizes.

Chris Sheehan



CLEVELAND

The cricket season starts and it rains – a racing certainty. My middle stump is always warped during these wet Springs! The Spring Tournament was held at Blackwell Grange Golf Club, Darlington on Tuesday, April 15 on a terribly wet day. At the time everyone was getting thoroughly soaked I was on a tropical beach in Thailand sipping a Chang beer! Please don't tell the wife as I told her I was in Milton Keynes!

A very good turnout saw 30 greenkeepers tested to the limit. Terry Harrison and his staff must have been 'sick as the proverbial parrots' attempting to prepare the course for their colleagues in such trying conditions. Thanks for all your efforts, lads.

The Stableford competition was hit very badly by torrential rain and the competition was decided over 7 – 9 holes depending on tee off time.

The results were as follows: 0 - 9 Handicap played over 9 holes: 1. Martin Woods, Bedlington GC, 19pts on back 3; 2. Martin McCrick, South Shields GC, 19pts; 3. Alan Shaw, Crook GC, 18pts. 10 - 18 Handicap played over 7 holes: 1. James Parker, Blackwell Grange GC, 15pts; 2. Marc Kerr, Marc Kerr Ltd, 12pts on back 1; 3. Peter Hipkiss, Blackwell Grange GC, 12pts. 19 - 28 Handicap played over 7 holes: 1. Steve Russell, Blackwell Grange GC, 16pts; 2. Ian Pemberton, Cleveland GC, 14pts; 3. Richard Pybus, Blackwell Grange GC, 12pts; Best Par 3 score – Jamie Applegarth, of Rigby Taylor. Booby Prize - this was won by Les Hunt, of Cleveland GC. I hope he has a wonderful time 'painting his own plate'. Knowing Les for many years and the standard of his work I think he'll probably do it with a 2 inch brush! LES – NO! As Harry Enfield would say.

Finally thanks go to Stan Shotton and Ian Holoran for looking after the scorecards and working out the winners. Did you use the renowned Duckworth Lewis method like the cricketers?

Many thanks must also go to Blackwell Grange for the courtesy of the course, wonderful food and a great effort by the greens staff.

Secondly the Section would like to thank Toro and Kubota, in conjunction with Lloyds Ltd. for sponsoring the day. Graham Main, the Lloyds Dealer Principal, Alistair Whitby, Groundcare Manager for Lloyds were accompanied by Jeff Anguige of Toro.

The range of prizes supplied by Toro and other trade members was fantastic. Our thanks go to Toro, Aitkens, Rigby Taylor, Tacit and Turfcare Specialists. Thank you all.

Baz Walkers Quiz night in February went very well yet again. Our thanks go to Baz and Allie for all their hard work and also to Teesside Golf Club for their hospitality. It was a close fought contest with Martin Woods 'Sons of the Desert' team winning by a single point. Well done lads.

Terry 'El Prez' Charlton



Around the Green



NORTH WALES

June already, I'm sure these months are turning into long weeks, half the year gone and mid-summer is here again.

Firstly, we need to thank Llanymynech Golf Club for hosting our Spring Tournament on May 14, full results and write up in next months column. The North Wales/North West match will take place on June 10 at The Vale of Llangollen Golf Club (I120 7pr), I'm sure all the players will compete knowing their Section supports them 100 percent.

Our sympathies go to John and Roger Kerry, of Royal St David's Golf Club and their families, for the loss of their mother in late April.

Only a short write up this month if you have news you would like to pass on to the Section please feel free to get in touch, contact details below.

All the best until next month!

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MIDLAND REGION – EAST MIDLANDS

Our Spring Tournament took place on Thursday, April 24 at Notts Golf Club (Hollinwell) and was sponsored by Mansfield Sand. The field was split into two divisions 0 - 10 and 11 +. The results of the day were: Division 0 - 10. 1. Mark Blacknell, 36pts; 2. Jeff Dickinson, 35pts; 3. Paul Frith, 33 pts. Division 11+. 1. Stuart Raybold, 32pts; 2. Tim Bloodworth, 31pts; 3. Andy De Wet, 28pts, trade; Simon Banks, 28pts. Our thanks for the day go to David Smith, of Mansfield Sand, for the sponsorship of the event and the Course Manager for presenting the course in excellent condition for the time of the year. Just to remind everybody that this year's Summer Tournament takes place at Mickleover Golf Club, Derby, on Thursday, July 24.

Dan Rodgers
Secretary



MIDLAND

Hello! Assuming at least one person reads this, or am I being too bold? Answers on a post card to B.Shakespeare.

We were blessed to be able to hold our spring event at Kidderminster Golf

Club. The course was in a superb standard, very tidy, pretty, and great condition to play on. Our thanks to Kidderminster, and congratulations to R. Hunter and his fine team, you should all be very proud of the standards produced so early in the year. Thank you gentlemen - Rod don't forget those mushrooms mate. Results of the day: Best Gross. S. Scott. Nett: 1. E. Stant; 2. S. Scott; 3. G. Turner; 4. D. Fellows; 5. R. Beacham; 6. N. Couchman. Our thanks to Vitax for sponsoring our excellent main prize table. N.P: E. Stant. L.D: R. Thwaites. Thanks to Alpha Amenity and also to Turners. Don't forget to get your entries in for our summer event to be held at Stourbridge GC (Mr. Chip Monster, get those mowers sharpened) on July 4. Don't forget that the entry fee has been reduced to the astonishing amount of £20 with at start time of 2pm. No excuses, please support the Section.

As you will be more than aware, via our many kind sponsors, our Section produces an excellent, high quality calendar each year at no cost to the members of our Section. Would you like to see your course featured next year? If so please send your photos to R. Beacham at: www.rich71@btconnect.com. Please send something folks. This month's calendar page is kindly sponsored by our old friends A.L.S. Their fertiliser and chemical services can be found at: www.amenity.co.uk

Good luck to all that have entered the Scotts Doubles, the draw and rules are on our website. However, just a reminder, the home team is to contact the away team with three different dates in three different weeks. Such must also be played by the appropriate round's date; any failures will mean disqualification of the offending team. Looking forward to meeting you at the final. Dream on Sean!

And finally, it is my sad duty to report the news that Albert Cross has passed away. I was fortunate enough to have met Bert on many occasions and always found him to be a warm, knowledgeable, and kind gentleman. His counsel and efforts over his many years at golf clubs, the North West Section's Committee, and indeed BIGGA's Board of Management, made Bert's medium stature into the giant he humbly was. The Midland Section's condolences to all who knew Bert. Our industry is a lesser place without him, but greater because of him. Good night Sir.

See you at Stourbridge.

Sean McDade



EAST OF ENGLAND

Hopefully the arrival of June finds everybody out in the sunshine cutting grass and generally making their golf courses look good. I don't want to tempt fate, but a month a great deal drier than June '07 would be very nice. I don't know how everyone else's years are comparing but we have had the exact opposite to 2007 so far. Just compare rainfall for March and April in the last two years; 2007 39mm, 2008 181mm. This time last year we were watering to stop areas drying out and now we are pumping water off the course, I don't know which of these is down to global warming and which is just the crazy British weather. Anyway, it keeps us on our toes and means we have to plan for all eventualities.



The first Section golf day of the year was held at Pottergate on Wednesday, April 16. Nearly 30 people turned up to play, I am not sure how many of them got lost on the way there or if there is anyone still out there driving the country lanes of Lincoln still trying to find the place! The club has changed a lot since our last trip there in 2005 with the addition of a brand new clubhouse. I was not able to attend myself, but I am told that the course was in very good condition and the clubhouse staff looked after everyone very well. Many thanks to all at Pottergate for their hospitality, also to Rigby Taylor for sponsoring the day. The results were as follows: 1. James Sharp, 42pts; 2. Will Yarham, 41pts; 3. Chris Wilkinson, 40pts (back 9); 4. Steve Hopkins, 40pts; 5. Ron Bingham, 37pts; Trade - Ian Benn, 41pts (beating Gary Cooper on his home turf by 1 point!); Longest Drive - Robin Portess; Nearest the Pin - Ian Mawer.

Our next event is a trip to the seaside on Thursday, June 12 at Cleethorpes Golf Club. Tee off is at 1:30 but get there early for coffee and bacon rolls. I am also informed that we will be dining on the famous Cleethorpes fish and chips afterwards. Letters about this event should be out by now but for more information contact Rob Welford.

Many thanks

Steve Beverly
Immingham Golf Club



BERKS/BUCKS AND OXON

Golf! A record turnout! As the best of the BBO took on a pure delight in the heart of Buckinghamshire and a challenging venue to start the season at Chiltern Forest GC, which was host to the Spring National Qualifier Competition on April 23.

Golf was played on the Chilterns over 100 years ago, when most of the Halton area was owned by Alfred de Rothschild and at this time the course was just six holes.

During the Second World War while stationed at RAF Halton, Henry Cotton designed a further three holes and added other improvements to the course. In 1984 with additional land from the forestry commission and land donated by a generous neighbouring farmer enabled the club to become an 18 hole course.

This beautiful course has wildlife in abundance with Muntjac Deer and pheasant that frequently roam the links, many areas of the course are left wild at certain times of the year to provide havens for the Pink Orchid and other rare wild flowers. The course provided a stiff test and challenging holes with some of the finest views in Buckinghamshire nestled in the Chiltern Hills on the edge of Wendover Woods.

The results were as follows and winner of The Claret Jug: 1. Matt Pennock, Rye Hill GC; 2. Jake Snyman, Radley College GC; 3. Scott Saunders, Chiltern Forest GC; 4. Adam King, Radley College GC; 5. Ian Robins, Ellesborough GC; 6. Dan Lightfoot, Bearwood Lakes GC; 7. Paul Hedger, Radley College GC. Matt Smith of Sonning GC picked up The Long Drive and Graham Down Nearest the Pin. The Longest Walk, and with the most blisters, went to Nick Carrisi, Hennerton GC. Clive Parnell, Gem Professional, donning a large sombrero,

took the trade prize with a 74. The John Deere putting green competition was won by Jon Ryan, from Browns, who was quite adamant he has finally converted to the green machine. The highlight of the day went to Adam King, from Radley College GC, for a tremendous effort, after playing well all day he was rewarded with a hole-in-one on the 15th, and later presented with a giant cask of wine by Club Captain, Alistair Summers. Well done Adam.

To our main sponsor of the day, Tim Webb, from Tacit, and all the other trade, we thank you for support in our first event of the year. To Jon Beck our official photographer and Barbecue Chef, thanks for organising the halfway hut.

A big thank you to Chiltern Forest GC for the courtesy of the course and Diane and Andy Shaw from the catering department for their gastronomic delights, which were well received, and to Course Manager, Steve Horwood and his staff for ensuring the course was fantastic and prepared to a first class standard. Also thanks to Managing Secretary, Bob Clift, for arranging and co-ordinating the day, which proved to be a great success.

Our next event is on June 24 at Lambourne GC. Make a note of it in the diary before you forget.

The Annual Rigby Taylor Match play knockout will now be well underway and the organizer Gareth Acteson will always be on hand to see that things run smoothly with results of the early rounds to be published in next month's report. Gareth can be contacted on: 07734 856 924.

On April 13 I ran the Flora London Marathon and would like to thank all my supporters over the South East and fellow colleagues who sponsored me very generously for this event, although I did not threaten the Kenyan runners at any stage, I did manage to finish, even after being overtaken by Batman and Robin, Ron the Rhino and all of Noah's Ark, after running into something called the wall. Thank you all for your generosity.

Section news has slowly been dribbling in from far and wide over the three counties and if any member has any news or views they would like to share, or would like more information about the Section and forthcoming events you only have to contact us through www.bbo-greenkeepers.co.uk

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SOUTH EAST REGION - SURREY

Thursday, May 8. I'm writing this in a lay-by in Fleet, Hampshire. The time is 7.30am and I'm on my way to visit Mark Openshaw, at North Hants GC. My journey started by crossing Epsom GC, where today, Mark Harvey's team are putting the final touches to his course in preparation for his club's Pro Am. Robert Summers was busy cutting the 5th green as the sun was just spreading its warm rays over the North Downs. Yesterday I played golf at Sundridge Park GC with Dan McGrath and Duncan Kelso, both from Kent golf clubs, but apart from that, very good company.

Laleham GC was the venue for Surrey's first golf day, a team event and



Around the Green

unfortunately one I missed because I was on holiday - sorry Ron, in Studland Bay, Dorset. I only mention this again so that anyone, who did not read last month's edition, can keep track of my movements. The result at Laleham, given to me by sources that I cannot completely guarantee was as follows: 1st team Hankley Common; 2nd team Guildford; 3rd team Sunningdale; Nearest Pin, Kevin Boxall; Longest Drive, Barry West. The result of the National Qualifier at West Surrey GC on May 13 will appear in the July edition.

Surrey welcomes Les Howkins, from Cotgrave Place GC, who has taken over as Course Manager at Richmond GC. Also congratulations to Dave Langheim who has moved to Wimbledon Park GC as Course Manager. Graham Roberts, Hankley Common GC, is going to Pinehurst GC, in North Carolina, to continue his greenkeeping career and anyone needing accommodation should contact his dad, Gareth, who has a room to let.

Brian Willmott



KENT

On the occasion of Kent Section's second golf day of the year a massive turnout of greenkeepers from all corners of the county were welcomed at Sundridge Park Golf Club by a magnificent course and glorious sunshine. It seems a few of our group didn't spot the deliberate error of our chairman who issued scorecards for the West course rather than the East, hopefully you will all be more aware next time! Plenty of cold refreshments were the order of the day as the sun turned many of us as red as beetroots. The halfway house providing welcome respite for many who were starting to flag in the heat.

The course played, and was presented, perfectly. The fact that there weren't too many high scores testament to the fact that Paul Rudkin and his team had provided a stiff challenge to the assembled throng. Many thanks to all staff at Sundridge involved in making another great day for Kent Greenkeepers and to all who attended the day for contributing to it's success.

Places as follows: 1. Paul Rudkin, 36pts; 2. Richard Larkin, 35pts; 3. Gary Branchett, 33pts; Nearest the Pin - Lee Company and I must give a special mention to Darren Burton who won the Longest Drive, WOW! When we stood on the 18th tee and could barely see the marker way in the distance, we thought it must be a longest drive in two shots competition! That was some shot mate, well done.

Our next event is to be held at Canterbury Golf Club, on July 10. Please see our website for entry forms (I won't be doing a mail out) and details of this event and other items of interest.

We've got a superb Section here in Kent now with a strong turnout of great people coming to every event all of whom are happy to share their greenkeeping experiences, a funny story, a dodgy cigar or just a beer and a laugh with their fellow professionals from across the region. This is what being in this association is all about, long may it continue.

Best of British

Rob Holland
kentgreenkeepers.co.uk



EAST ANGLIA

Our large band of brothers (no Claire?) assembled at Ufford Park - 64 in all - on April 30. A bit blustery from all accounts. Unfortunately, I was not there, but am reliably informed that the course was presented well by Adrian Hollins and his team.

Looking at the scores I see Robert Ransome and Bob Chesham had a truly forgettable day! I won't tell you the scores. Oh why not. 15 and 7 respectfully or not respectfully as the case may be. Results; 0 - 9 handicappers, 1. Mark Henderson, 32pts; 2. G Hurren, 31pts; 3. Mike Virley, 31pts. 10 - 18 Handicap: 1. Chris Gurton, 31pts; Karl Harvey, 30pts; 3. Asa Barber, 28pts. 19 - 28 Handicap: 1. Adrian Goode, 30pts; Martin Mison, 26pts; 3. John Morley-Smith, 23pts. G & T: 1. Terry Upton; 2. Eddie Jack; Longest Drive - Joe Simpson; Nearest the Pin - Rob Boyce.

The loo seat has been adopted by Steve Millard. Apparently it took him three shots to get to the ladies tee on the 2nd. All prizes were presented by the Club Captain, Roy Banes. The main sponsors for the day were Bartram Mowers. Nearest the Pin and Longest Drive were sponsored by Bailey's of Norfolk.

Other sponsors were: Sisis, Atkins, Collier Turf Care, Textron, Advanta, Monro, Rigby Taylor, Ben Burgess, Sherriff, CMW and Tomlinson Ground Care - Thanks again, Ufford Park, for a super day.

How are the new Chairs of the Greens settling in then? Only a couple more months then they will realise that the best greenkeeper is the greenkeeper!

Mick Lathrope



ESSEX

There's not that much to report this month, but if you want the most up to date news visit our Section website: www.essexbigga.co.uk

April has been a hard time for us all and many courses in the area have had problems, due to the immense amount of rain we have encountered. I recorded over two inches at Three Rivers in April. Last year we had none.

Rumours are abounding that an old friend from these parts is to make his return, more on that next month.

We held a committee meeting at the end of April and have updated the rules of the competitions (see the site for more information), and we also decided to send eight players to the National Championship at East Sussex National later this year. Winners of the Spring, Summer and Autumn tournaments along with the two winners of last year's Knockout Cup will make the trip.



For our tournaments this year we have a change of format. A banner will be placed on the 1st tee and then moved to the 18th green, with details of our Section sponsors. We also have a new backdrop to our prize table. The new look competitions this year are sponsored by the following companies: Advanta, Avoncrop Amenity Products, Bailey's of Norfolk Ltd, Banks Amenity Products Ltd, Blade Amenity, CMW Equipment Ltd, Collier Turf Care, Ernest Doe & Sons Ltd, GM Amenity, Grassform Ltd, Headland Amenity Products, LiquiTec, Prime Irrigation Ltd, Ransomes Jacobsen, Rain Bird, Rigby Taylor Ltd, Scotts, Syngenta, P. Tuckwell Ltd (John Deere), Vitax, Writtle College - We are very grateful for their support. Details and links to all our sponsors can be found on the website along with links to other interesting sites.

Education: We have some good offers, so please get in touch with Paul O'Kane if you need anything to do with staff training. He can get you some good deals and we have a wide variety of courses to choose from.

Next month, I will have the results of our first event the Spring Stableford at Upminster Golf Club.

Don't forget to enter the next event as early as possible it is at Warley Park Golf Club, on Wednesday, June 25. Details of how to get there and starting times will be posted on the website, soon after the closing date.

I have updated the website and will continue to do so, but still need photos and information from you guys, so any news please call or email me. Contact me at essexbigga@talktalk.net or: 01206-852.353/07764862337.

Arnold Phipps-Jones
Press Officer



SOUTH WEST AND SOUTH WALES REGION - SOUTH COAST

Congratulations and well done to Graham Bungay, of Wellow GC; Rob Crouch, of New Forest Farm Machinery, and Ian Noble, of Moors Valley GC. All three were successful in completing the London Marathon - speaking to Ian at our first golf tournament he completed his run in four hours two mins and 36 secs and ran for the Prostate Cancer Charity raising over £700. A fabulous performance guys! If you know of anyone else in the Section who's had a great achievement or has good information for Around the Green especially in educational matters then please contact me on the number below.

Our first golf meeting was held at Arlesford GC, on May 1. This was our Spring Tournament and also a qualifier for the National Championship. The Spring Tournament is also our memorial event for Colin White, who passed away just over three years ago. As usual it was a pleasure to welcome as guests, Colin's mother, Jill Francis and Gilly Francis (Colin's Stepfather), also Colin's brother, Robert White, and his wife Louise. We always remember Colin as a very cheerful and helpful personality. Without fail when we talk about Colin and recall the stories we end up with a smile. We will always remember Colin.

We had a good turn out for the day, with 40 for golf and evening dinner. The weather did deal some showers but overall the conditions were good and the day's golf was completed with blue skies above. The Section and the Committee offer great thanks to Arlesford GC for courtesy of the golf course and their kind hospitality. Much respect goes to Course Manager, Steve Privett, and his team for presenting and producing excellent greens and a good looking golf course. The feedback from the players was very positive. It was great to see Steve's team playing in the tournament after a good morning's work in preparation of the course.

The sponsors for the day were Avoncrop Amenity Products and Vitax Ltd. Thank you to both companies, your support is very much appreciated by the Section. Both companies produced a very high standard prize table.

After dinner, within the presentations, Chris Briggs, made an excellent speech in remembrance of Colin. Chris mentioned that he has recently made contact with greenkeepers within the Section and was very pleased to hear that Colin is still remembered.

The results were as follows: Division 1.1 Brian Forder, 50 pts; 1.2 Tony Gadd, 47 pts. Division 2.1 Brian Pitman, 52pts (countback); 2.2 Chris Bitten, 52 pts. Division 3.1 Ben Goodyear, 57 pts; 3.2 Adam Brimson, 47 pts. Nearest The Pin - Brian Pitman, Longest Drive - Ryan Griffin. Also a special mention for Derek Cunliffe, who made a great score but could not win the main prize as he is now working for Rigby Taylor, so cannot qualify (welcome to the Club Derek). The overall winner was a very happy Ben Goodyear and Jill Francis presented the Chalky White Trophy to Ben and then thanked us for inviting them and remembering Colin. Jill also made a presentation to Steve Privett in thanks for the presentation and preparation of the golf course. Jill recalls Colin always saying that when a sportsman lost they blamed the course/ground conditions and when they won they praised themselves and the grounds managers were never thanked. To complete an excellent day, Gilly Francis thanked all of us for inviting them as guests and also did a bit of stand up comedy, which was received very well. He finished by saying that people being together is essential especially in this day and age of TV and home entertainment and that it is a credit that the section regularly gets together.

The next event is the Summer Tournament, at Burley GC, on July 10. This is an invitation where a guest/golfer from your golf club can join in. The cost is £21, please send your cheques to Kevan Glass at the following address: Apartment 1, Forge Side Court, Lepe Road, Langley, Southampton SO45 1SS (mobile 07859 053054: email: glassy2003@hotmail.com).

Joe Crawley 0781 684 9942
joe.crawley@vitax.co.uk



DEVON AND CORNWALL

Not much to report this month, April was a bit cold down in the South West with several nights' frost and then an easterly wind which has made things a bit late down here, but things are picking up nicely now.

Some good news to report, Keith Kemp W. Cornwall and his family whose



Around the Green

baby son, Jack, had been unwell recently has now recovered. Congratulations to Mark Downing who not so long ago passed NVQ Level 2.

Our summer meeting is going to be held at Lanhydrock on Wednesday, July 23, where I understand there will be a match between Devon & Cornwall which I suspect will be fiercely contested! There will be Captains appointed for each team who will have a big say in who plays, so looking forward to that. Our winter meeting venues have pretty much been sorted for the coming winter, I will let you know them next month.

Well that's it for this month. As usual any news you wish me to pass on email me at Greenwayjrc@aol.com or phone 07764 224582.

Jerry Cole



SOUTH WEST

Just back from hols in France so apologies for a short bulletin with mainly rubbish points – pretty much as usual then.

The course at Clevedon was in its normal good order for our Spring Tournament, and well done to all those who turned out at this busy time. Yet again, I managed to be double-booked with my holiday so couldn't actually play, but it was nice to get down there and see everyone tee-off. Okay there were some pretty rubbish shots actually, but I'm far too polite to mention any names! Thanks very much to Clevedon for their hospitality and to Barry Reeves and the team for preparing the course. Congratulations to Tim Morgan for the best score of the day playing off 6.

The full result: 1. Tim Morgan, Defence Academy, Shrivensham, 36pts; 2. John Batchelor, Long Ashton, 34 pts; 3. Roger Neale (The Ravishing One), 33pts. Worthy of a mention – Tom Wright, Long Ashton, 34 pts, but not eligible for the prizes.

Grateful thanks to Peter Hampton, of Bernhards, for rounding off the day with a fascinating insight into the ins and outs of reel grinding, and what happens if you don't. And finally thanks to Adam Matthews for helping with the cards and the starting.

Latest news from the Region – The November seminar is confirmed as November 20 at Cannington College, and will feature the "Disturbance Theory".

Some employers may not be aware of the Government's "Train to Gain" initiative. In a nutshell, this is aimed at assisting unqualified workers to gain qualifications (most commonly NVQ 2 in their chosen profession) by sponsoring all of the costs. More detail available on the gov.uk website.

The Section STRI Information Day as mentioned last month is confirmed for June 18 at Chippenham Golf Club. Starting at 2pm, John Lockyer and Andy Cole will lead delegates out onto the course, and give presentations on such subjects as the introduction of finer grasses, use of wetting agents, growing in new greens, general maintenance etc – in short, something for

everyone. The day should finish around 6pm and afternoon tea is provided. An invitation to greenstaff and club officials should have been received by your secretary via email, but check out the Education Board on the BIGGA website for any last-minute info. This day is completely free of charge, but please book your place to assist with the catering and organisation.

I should mention and thank our Patronage Partners for their sponsorship, which, among other things, keeps the costs of the meetings to a minimum. I recently gave a talk on the environment to South Wales BIGGA and IOG at Chepstow racecourse. Chepstow has a very undulating track and is unusual for having a dead straight mile. I know this because I made the mistake of parking near the four furlong marker, and had a bloody long walk to the pavilion with my computer and projector. The race jumps are made of birch, and are refitted every year with about 5000 bundles of birch twigs. (The old bundles incidentally, are sold on second-hand to other smaller racecourses.) Spare a thought for the hard-pressed grounds-team - if one jump has to be moved for any reason – they all do, in order to maintain the correct stride. The maintenance consists of vertidrain aeration and overseeding with dwarf rye. The "going" is no longer determined by a couple of elderly bowler-hatted gentlemen strolling around, but by a high-tech compactionometer which measures the hardness of the ground and the shear factor of the turf. Unfortunately it didn't quite work properly while we were there, so we had to rely on the managers' word.

We had a very interesting tour of the complex and facilities including the weighing room, the medical centre, and the jockeys changing rooms and baths. I say baths – this consisted of a couple of huge hydrotherapy type hot-tubs capable of holding an entire rugby team and you could easily imagine Frankie Dettori being held under by half a dozen burly rivals until he submitted. There is a doctor and medical team on call throughout the race-meeting, and the medical facilities included an operating theatre which could cope with pretty well anything, including dealing with injuries and accidents etc, (and quite possibly in-growing toenails and giving birth).

I was interested to note that the Stewards and Clerk of the Course are in session for the entire race meeting. If any jockey is found to have transgressed the rules in any way – he is instantly banned from taking any further part. I really enjoyed the talk, and thanks to all those who turned up to support it.

It was very disappointing to have to cancel the Greenkeeper Amateur due to poor uptake. Minchinhampton Old Course is happy to rearrange at another time, and offer to host again next year. If anyone has any thoughts on alternative timings, please give me a call. The committee is considering a radical overhaul of the fixtures to reflect the changes in the industry. Any thoughts would be most welcome – this is, after all, your Section.

Finally, Wayne Vincent and Paul Garland would appreciate contact from anyone interested in playing for the Section team regardless of handicap or job status. A round of golf in good company followed by a meal, and all for a tenner is good value in anyone's book, and with St Pierre - August 6, and Remedy Oak – August 27 coming up, the courses certainly measure up too. So give Wayne a call on 07958630590.

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