



## News from the Chief Executive

**I would like to start my column by paying tribute to the late Alex Millar, whose funeral Billy McMillan and I attended last month. Alex was a retired groundsman and Chairman of the IOG at the time of his death.**

I had the pleasure of first meeting Alex during the talks in 2007 between BIGGA and the IOG and his passion for the grounds care industry was immediately obvious. He was astute, likeable and a role model for others and anyone who spent time with him quickly appreciated being in his company. Alex was someone for whom I had the highest regard and he was the perfect gentleman who will be sadly missed by his friends and colleagues in greenkeeping and groundsmanship.

On a lighter note at last there are signs of spring being just around the corner, the daffodils are coming into bloom, the crows are nesting and the daylight hours are slowly increasing in length. As we emerge from a more traditional winter all our hopes are pinned on it being a better summer than experienced over the last couple of years. I sympathise with greenkeepers everywhere who annually suffer from the Augusta syndrome, how the industry can get the golfer to appreciate that not all clubs have the ability (or budget) to create Augusta like conditions remains one of our most difficult challenges.

Who knows, perhaps a weaker pound may help the UK holiday industry, a bit more sun may encourage golfers out onto the golf course a little more often and some good weather should help greenkeepers in their quest to produce better playing conditions, despite the budget constraints that we are all experiencing.

There is no doubt that the current world economic crisis will do golf, both as a sport and as an industry, no good. The major tournaments are coming under scrutiny from sponsors who are having to make soul searching commercial decisions, possibly for the first time in many years. BIGGA is no exception and the downturn in advertising revenue in particular is having an adverse impact in our profitability, requiring some close scrutiny of our overheads. It's not all bad news though. Stand bookings for our own exhibition in Harrogate next year are coming in steadily and Halls A, B, C and M are filling up. Once fully booked we have several options for expansion including Halls Q and D but it's too early to commit at the moment.

Plans are well under way in the restructuring of BIGGA into a company limited by guarantee and the intention is to have the new company in place so as to enable trading with effect from July 1. In due course members will receive formal notification of the changes but in the meanwhile anyone requiring further information should contact HQ.

During the coming months I and some of my colleagues at BIGGA HOUSE will be attending some of the Section and Region events around the country and we look forward to meeting members. Please take full advantage of the opportunity to discuss Association matters, we welcome your views!

**John Pemberton**  
Chief Executive



### SCOTTISH REGION - CENTRAL

Over 50 Course Managers, Greenkeepers, Golf Club Committees and members from some trade organisations attended a seminar at The Castle Course - organised by STRI and supported by The Scotts Company. Entitled "The Art of Objective Greenkeeping" those present heard some excellent deliveries from Richard Windows, Henry Bechelet, Andy Cole, Alistair Beggs, Lee Penrose and Kelly Harmar. As well as a brief course walk at the end of the day there was also a demonstration and explanation of a few new tools which will shortly be available to help put objective figures to turf firmness and surface smoothness.

The next event we have planned is an evening seminar from Stan Zontek, of the USGA Greens Section, John Kaminski, of Penn State, and Lane Tredway, of North Carolina State Uni. They are over in the UK on a fact finding study tour (it involves beer and golf) and have kindly agreed to come along to the training room at Elmwood College at 7pm on April 23. These three have a wealth of knowledge in research and experience and some of the subjects they hope to cover would be how putting green management influences disease activity, how management has changed over the past 20 years and the effect climate change is having on our greens. This should be a great night with plenty of opportunity for questions.

You should shortly receive our annual newsletter (if you haven't already done so) along with the entry form for the Spring Outing at Scotsraig. The Committee would again ask you reply quickly if you plan to attend the outing and please send your cheque with your entry form as we will not accept money on the day, no pay = no play!

Finally, we have a number of events lined up for the autumn. On October 26, on the morning of the AGM, we have a training course on disciplinary procedures, how to structure them and follow the correct procedure. On 17 and 18 November we plan a two day Ecology Course with assistance from STRI, and on December 2 a half day course on carrying out staff appraisals. We are hoping to secure some funding for some of these but most of all we need your support.

More details can be found on: [www.biggacentralsection.org.uk](http://www.biggacentralsection.org.uk)

Gordon Moir

#### Section Notes

Please email your notes to [melissa@bigga.co.uk](mailto:melissa@bigga.co.uk), or [scott@bigga.co.uk](mailto:scott@bigga.co.uk) by the 5th of the month.

Suggested word guide: 500



## EAST

Spring is in the air, the grass is waking up...we hope.

Our Section were very fortunate to be invited along on February 17 to a new development of two Donald Ross Memorial Championship courses that are presently being constructed at Whitburn near to the old Polkemet colliery site in the west Lothian area.

The site that the courses are being built on are actually old mining's, meaning that the coal waste, shale is being graded and used largely to build and construct the two new championship golf courses along with other materials that are handily available on site.

Alex Muirhead, Site Engineer and Consultant, tells me that the courses should be completed by 2012 and at an approximate cost of £12 million for the two championship courses. The area is reputed to be the biggest global land move site in Europe.

We must thank Jim Davidson and Graham Miller, from Henderson's Grass Machinery for sponsoring the excellent afternoon that we had at the Heartlands Site.

Our two Patron Award winner's, Joe Robertson and Adam Sherwood, were true to their word, thanks lads. They have produced a written report of how their experience at Harrogate went. There report can be accessed on the Regional pages on our BIGGA website.

I attended Oatridge College Greenkeeping Advisory meeting on Friday, February 20. The purpose of the meeting was to put forward proposals of changes to SVQ levels 2/3. Revalidated NCG and possibly add further short courses for the future.

People on the move are Bruce Cruickshank's, presently Course Manager at "The Roxburghe" Golf Course Kelso, who is moving to pastures new in the spring time. Bruce will take over at Hamilton Golf Course as Course Manager. Ronnie Frame (Rigby Taylor), has now has taken up the post at Sherriff Amenity - we wish them both all the best in their new jobs.

Our spring meeting is almost upon us, I hope the weather is kind to us when we are playing golf down at Eyemouth, it can be a bit open to the elements there and there aren't many hiding places, but I am sure that Mark Pagan, Head Greenkeeper, will have organised the sunshine for us. A full report of how the scoring went will be recorded for the May issue of our Section news. So play well...fore!

Ross Prowse, formerly of Marriott Dalmahoy, is now working at Muckhart GC. We are delighted to announce that Ross's wife Lynn gave birth to a baby girl, Rebecca, on Saturday, March 7 and the both of them are well.

Ross is a bit of a runner so that will come in handy when Lynn needs him to run and get things for Rebecca - that will keep you fit Ross.

Until next month

Tom Murray  
tom.murray@rathoparkgolfclub.co.uk



## NORTH

The season is just around the corner now and your respective councils/committees will be pacing up and down wondering whether or not the course is going to be ready for the first competition of the year. Hopefully most of us are nearing the end of the winter work but in all honesty it never ends does it? We all seem to be finding other little jobs that could be done, 5 minute ones as one of my mates would say. It just seems to be never ending, you think that you're there then the Greens Conveynor pops in and says, "Can you just do that for me please?"

The 200 Club cards have all been sent out to you by Robert Hardie. Can you make his life a little easier by returning any unwanted cards. This enables him to get them punted out to other members and to get the maximum amount of monies possible.

Ben Brookes  
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## NORTHERN REGION - NORTH EAST

Well, I'm looking out of the window - what do I see, more snow - here's me thinking summer was just around the corner. I've seen no rain for a couple weeks and that blasted white stuff is back again - I will be glad when this winter is out of the way, it seems that it's been here for six months.

Having recently heard from a rep. then getting confirmation through the local newspaper - Close House will not only be starting work on their new clubhouse but also starting on the construction of the new 18 holes



# Around the Green

championship course, the starting date I'm unsure about.

Dates for the Section golf competitions are as follows: Wednesday, April 22 at Whitley Bay GC, Wearside GC on October 14 - again on a Wednesday members will be notified. If anyone has any news, just give me a ring.

Jimmy Richardson



## NORTH WEST

Hello everyone, we have the Spring Seminar coming up on Friday on April 24 at Birchwood Golf Club on the disturbance theory and objective greenkeeping. This seminar will have four experts from the STRI - Henry Bechelet, Richard Windows, Andy Cole and Alistair Beggs.

It will last from 9.15am until 3.15pm and will cover the subjects of formulating your ideal, fundamentals of the disturbance theory, greenkeeping through the phases, organic matter testing and performance measurement and development - a very interesting seminar. The cost will be £20 for members and £25 for non-members. Forms are available from Nick Gray, of Bathgates, and Phil Dewhurst, of Rigby Taylor, or you can contact me for details and forms. The cost also includes lunch.

The re-arranged Bert Cross Memorial Trophy has been played and the first winner of this magnificent trophy, kindly sponsored by Richard Campey, was Peter Hogan - well done Peter. Our thanks go out to Bathgates who kindly sponsored the Nearest the Pin and Longest Drive. The day went really well and the hospitality of the Captain of Wilmslow Golf Club was magnificent - as he very kindly supplied the wine for the meal. The course was up to its usual, very high standard and the new caterers provided us with a meal fit for a king.

The Spring Tournament this year will be played at the West Lancashire Golf Club, on Monday, May 18. The Summer Tournament will be at The Warrington Golf Club on Friday, July 3, and the Autumn Tournament will be at Mere Golf and Country Club on a date to be arranged. The annual match against the North Wales Section will be on Wednesday, June 10 at Bolton (Lostock Hall) Golf Club. I will require a team of 12 for this event which will be sponsored so the day will cost nothing, all as you have to do is get there and win.

Please contact me if you wish to play - if you wish to play in any of the tournaments please send a cheque payable to BIGGA, North West Section for £20 to Bill Merritt, The Lodge, Beacon Park Golf Club, Beacon Lane, Dalton, Wigan, WN8 7RU. Billy can be contacted on mobile number: 07985175825. I can be contacted on: 01512894625 or my email is: jsheehan@blueyonder.co.uk

Chris Sheehan



## NORTHERN

Well I hope by now we have seen the last of the winter weather and all your courses are looking well for the start of the season.

There is little to report this month but can I remind you all that the first event of the golfing calendar in 2009 is the Spring Tournament at Pannal Golf Club on April 29 and is a 10am tee off. Can I also remind you that all names and payments must be received at least seven days prior to the event.

Just one other thing this month, you should all have received a copy of this years fixture list by now but if you haven't received yours then please let me know on the number below.

We are currently in the process of looking into setting up a Facebook page for the Northern Section so I will hopefully bring you more details of this next month.

Adam Speight  
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## SHEFFIELD

Hello again everyone. I am sure as you read this article you will either be at work or just finished work and you will have experienced a glorious early April day. It should be true, according to very early weather predictions, that we are going to have a 'great' summer. I hope this is true as I think we deserve a good summer after the past couple we have had.

I hope those of you that attended the spring lecture enjoyed the day - I must thank Geoffrey Davison for giving up his time and coming to Rotherham and giving us the lecture. I am in the process of organising lectures for the back end of the year, if anyone has any suggestions as to what they would like to see please feel free to contact me.

I am sure now that the Weather is getting better that you are all dusting the golf clubs off and are raring to go for the new season. You will all be sent invitations to the first golf match which is on May 19, at Hallowes GC - we





hope to see as many of you there as possible. You will also be sent 2009 fixture cards with this invitation.

The Section website is still ongoing - I am trying to ensure that the site that we end up with is the best possible, so the research into it is taking a little longer than expected. I am trying to get this done as quickly as possible and get the site launched.

That is all from me for now, I hope April goes well and speak to you all in May.

James Stevens  
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## NORTH WALES

Spring should be starting to kick in now, lovely warmer weather and a bank holiday weekend to boot! The season truly starts here.

Sherriff Amenity ran a training course on the use of aluminium phosphide (phostoxin or talunex) at Northop Golf Club, on March 24, anyone who wants to use these as part of their mole or rabbit control must now be certified to be able to buy them. Anyone interested in enrolling on future courses please get in touch with Terry Adamson.

The annual North West/North Wales Spring Seminar will take place on Friday, April 24 at Birchwood Golf Club, Warrington. The subject of this year's seminar is Disturbance Theory and Objective Greenkeeping, the seminar is being given by STRI agronomists and should be exceedingly interesting.

The Spring Tournament is going to be held this year at Rhyl Golf Club, an intimate course just up past the Sun Centre on the Prestatyn road, as always on these days we always have a good time, so dig out your entry forms and make sure you get your tee booked.

In local news Johnny Evans and his wife, Tina, both of Carden Park, took receipt of a baby boy in March, named Dylan James he bounded into this world weighing a bonny 7lb 5oz.

I'm afraid that's all the local news I have for this month but I'm here for any news you want to pass on contact details below.  
All the best until next month.

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Johnny Evans  
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## MIDLAND REGION - MIDLANDS

I dare say that at the moment we are all far too busy to be trying to workout my usual nonsense. So let's keep it short and to the point for once, hopefully like our Graminae.

The Section would like to give a huge thank you to James Doyle, of New Holland, for stepping in at the eleventh hour to sponsor our spring event at the De Vere Wychwood Park GC. Entry forms for such and all our other events can be downloaded from the Section's website, or by emailing Gary on: gc.tpgc@hotmail.co.uk Also the start sheets can be found close to the date on the website.

The Scotts Doubles shall also be drawn at the spring venue, however please be aware that the final's date has had to be altered to the 14th September and being played at The Oxfordshire GC. Our thanks to Scotts for their continued sponsorship of this long running and successful competition.

Also, the autumn event has had to be altered to October 23, and the AGM will be held at 6pm there. Our thanks to Burton GC and to Gavin Robson.

I'm hoping that we don't have too many April showers, and that we get a summer for a change. Well, one can live in hope!

Sean McDade



## EAST OF ENGLAND

Hello all. April is finally here, although winter this year seems to have flown by, probably a result of the variety of different weather conditions we have experienced in the past few months. We have just taken on some late winter bunker and drainage work and that, coupled with tree work still outstanding, will keep us busy until the grass really starts growing.

It is that time of year now that everyone is able to set off hollow coring and topdressing their greens and bringing them up to scratch for the rapidly approaching golf season. It is also the time of year when budgets are approved and generally memberships are up for renewal. Everyone knows this is difficult any time of year, however this one may be the hardest yet. What we all need is a nice warm dry summer to get all the golfers flocking back to our courses.



# Around the Green

Wednesday, February 18, was our East of England Section Winter Seminar at Newark Golf Club. The day included talks from Neil Pettican and Jane Leyland, from Barenbrug, on grass seed production, breeding and future advances in grass seed. We were also pleased to welcome back Henry Bechelet, from the STRI, accompanied by Andrew Cole, who turned up with a variety of gadgets aimed at testing the ball roll and firmness of the greens. All talks were very interesting and informative, unfortunately the weather cut short the course walk, but we were taken on to the 18th green where various tests were carried out. All the results showed that the green was in fantastic condition so well done Graham, or is that just your staff ha ha! Many thanks to everyone involved in organising and speaking on the day and also to Newark for hosting us and providing their famous "cow pie" for lunch.

Our first golf day of the season is just around the corner. Everybody should have received a fixture booklet which has been very kindly produced by Aitkens this year. Our first event is at Toft Golf Club on Wednesday, April 22 - tee off at 1.30pm. Please arrive early for coffee, bacon rolls and the usual banter. All names of people playing to Bruce Hicks of Boston Golf Club as soon as possible please. Hopefully we will see some new faces this year.

On a personal note, I would like to wish Happy First Birthday to my son, Archie, for March 22. How time flies, it doesn't seem like a year since he was born, yet he is now taking his first steps. He is getting nearer and nearer to being handed a bunker rake!

Many thanks Steve Beverly, Immingham Golf Club



## SOUTH EAST REGION - SURREY

Saturday, March 7. I hope I'm not too late with this month's jottings as the deadline is normally the 5th of the month but as the Gentleman's Dinner was on March 6, I wanted to report on what turned out to be an excellent day's golf.

Golfers from the South Eastern Region teed off from three tees and my group did so from the 8th. We followed a four ball that included Mike Gould, Copthorne GC, and Anthony Freeman, Roehampton Club, and knowing from old that they could both hit a long drive I pointed this out to my companions and watched them with anticipation. Mike hit an excellent shot and then Anthony teed up. The ball rose almost vertically to a height of about six feet then dropped and stopped about 10 feet behind the ladies' tee. Anthony offered to do what is expected on these occasions but as it was still quite chilly his playing partners declined, preferring to let him buy the first round back in the clubhouse. The 8th hole is a par 5 and much to his credit, Anthony, even with his initial lack of concentration, ended with a par. The Longest Drive was on the 18th and just getting past the signature sign with my third shot, I read the name and then realised that Anthony Freeman had achieved that most unusual feat of winning both the longest as well as the shortest drive.

The best score of 41pts was Derek Cunliffe, Rigby Taylor, who won the guest prize. Ron Christie, the defending winner from 2008 came second this year with the winner of the Ray Day Memorial Trophy being Jason Hunt - one of Ron's greenkeeping team at Addington Palace GC. Jason, well done, I hope you will enjoy your year and remember that bunker raking and strimming every day is not only character building but also a reminder not to try so hard next year. Thanks go to Ian McMillan and his staff for presenting Walton Heath GC in such excellent condition and thanks to whoever was responsible for the weather. With no water hazards Garry Ogilvie retained his dignity much to the disappointment of his playing partners and the day finished with a delicious meal and again no raffle prize for yours truly.

Martyn Gray, Deputy at Bramley GC, and his wife, Lynne, are still celebrating the birth of, Lewes, born on December 17, 2008 who weighed in at 7lb. Congratulations to you both and remember that a football team can consist of five players so you won't have to go for the full 11.

There is little else to report on a slow news month, especially since I have not been on holiday or visited the Isle of Wight since Christmas. I thought it was most spiteful of Ron Christie in his year's report to complain that it was all I ever wrote about - just because I turned down his two chapters on the life and death of the Addington Palace dung beetle. My use of the word dung is more suitable for this monthly magazine than in Ron's original title. If there are any more budding columnists out there with ideas of making it as a writer please send your articles to someone else.

Brian Willmott



## KENT

Hi guys. Just a brief report this month in honour of the companies who have chosen to sponsor and support us this year. Their contribution to the Section funds is vital and is also the reason that we have been able to reduce the entry fee to all of our events this year to £25 for Course Managers, Head Greenkeepers and Trade and just £20 for Deputies and Assistants. We know times are tough but hopefully as many of you as possible will now be more able to afford to get away from it all for a few events with us. We would like to thank the following companies for their support: Avoncrop Amenity, Banks Amenity, Bourmes, Clearwater, Ernest Doe's, Godfreys Headland, John Shaw Machinery, MAB Groundscare, Rigby Taylor, Scotts, Sherriffs and T. Parker & Sons.

I hope you had a good day at Walmer and Kingsdown. Report to follow next month. Thanks to Clive Osgood for organising a great Annual Gentlemen's Dinner at Walton Heath Golf Club and thanks to Ian McMillan for presenting such a superb course steeped in traditional values.

Until next month, Best of British

Rob Holland



## LONDON

An excellent turnout of over 70 delegates attended the Irrigation Workshop held at Ealing Golf Club in North West London.

Independent irrigation consultants, Irritech Ltd, lead by Roger Davey and his team split us into three groups and covered a comprehensive and wide range of situations regarding correct and efficient water usage. This included the installation maintenance and repairs of irrigation systems, diagnostics of electric and controller problems and the correct layout and spacing of sprinkler heads using the latest GPS positioning system. There was also time to answer any queries regarding individual problems, some regarding future regulation changes that could possibly affect our own watering programmes.

Our thanks go to Greg Evans, and Ealing Golf Club, for looking after us so well, and to Irritech Ltd for a very informative day.

For more information or if you have any ideas for future London Section Events don't forget to check us out on the website: [www.biggalondonsection.co.uk](http://www.biggalondonsection.co.uk)

Clive Osgood



## ESSEX

Wow! The Section seminar was a truly fantastic success with 43 attending (a report on this can be found on the news pages of this magazine).

Let's hope that the seminar we are planning for next year will be even better attended, congratulations to Paul for arranging such a good day and thanks to all of you that attended.

Remember that Paul O'Kane still wants to hear from you if you need any training. You name it and he'll try to run it, that's if he has enough people to make it feasible. Training is important and sometimes your club does not have the resources to do the particular training need, so I'm sure we can help. Plus Paul can, on occasions, arrange subsidies to help with the costs. Send him an email: [greenkeeperpaul@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:greenkeeperpaul@yahoo.co.uk)

The new website is now up running and is attracting a lot of attention. In the first month of the restructure, we had over 500 visits from 85 different visitors (big brother, that's how I know). Keep looking, and if you have time, please send me any news or something you feel would be of interest to put on the site.

The first golf day is nearly with us at, Colne Valley Golf Club and the date for your diary is Wednesday, May 13. Keep a look out for the entry form in the post, or download one from the site.

The same goes for the Knockout Trophy, download an entry form and get your team in; the reward is a free entry to the BIGGA National Tournament in 2010 if you win.

Any information for inclusion on this page or on our website should be sent to me at [essexbigga@talktalk.net](mailto:essexbigga@talktalk.net) or on 07764-862.337. Also look us up at: [www.essexbigga.co.uk](http://www.essexbigga.co.uk)

Arnold Phipps-Jones  
Press Officer



## SOUTH WEST & WALES REGION - SOUTH WEST

At last – some half-decent weather. All those little construction jobs coming to a close, and looking forward to getting the mowing machines out again. At Minch we've taken some machines on operators lease. This is a five-year programme, (and the red machines have a five year warranty). At the end of the period, we either make a final purchase, or hand back and renew the machine. Never taken machines on these terms before so it should be interesting to see how it works.

Each total annual payment is actually less than we'd normally spend on outright purchasing in a year, so on paper it looks a good deal as we get all the machines straight away, the Treasurer knows how much he's spending, and repair bills should tumble. Watch this space I guess.

Well done to all those who turned out for the Waste Legislation Seminar at Chipping Sodbury on March 5. Jon Bird from the SWEA (Severn-Wye Energy Agency) told us all we'd ever need to know about low energy bulbs and also explained how it is possible to make savings without spending any money at all. He has advised us at Minch, plus several other local clubs, and he now has a pretty good picture of how golf clubs work. All too often – there is no one in absolute charge of "energy" in all departments. What is needed, is someone to take a little time walking around the various parts of the club and examine what is actually happening.

For example – do the beer coolers need to be running all night when no one drinks beer? Is there air conditioning, and if so, does it get into a situation





# Around the Green

where it is trying to cool the air when the heating system is trying to heat it? Do the urinals need to flush at night, or can this be turned off? When one or more light bulbs have blown – this is the time to convert to a run of low-energy, as low and normal energy bulbs don't mix on the same run. Jon also dispelled a certain myth about fluorescent tubes taking more power to turn on and off rather than to run continuously. This is complete myth – when a light is on, it is consuming power. If it's not in use – turn it off!

Kelly Harmar and Richard Studdart, of the STRI, then gave us a very positive and enthusiastic run-down of the latest in environmental legislation. It is important to regard legislation in a positive light. It does give protection to employees, protection to users of the facility, and protection to our environment. We looked into ways of conserving water, energy, and re-using or recycling waste.

It was very nice to welcome Colin Webber, and Paul Woodham, who are from outside of our area. Colin, who owns and manages his own course near Barnstaple, gave a great deal of insight into his own methods which include harvesting rainwater from roads and roofs and storing this water for irrigation on the course, and flushing toilets in the clubhouse. Paul Woodham, Course Manager at Gay Hill Golf Club, Birmingham, also gave us a good deal of input by chairing one of the work-groups in the latter part of the session. Many thanks to both – and indeed to all who attended.

I'm sure you'd all join me in offering our sincere condolences to Chris Sealey on the recent loss of his mother. Even with all the arrangements to deal with, Chris still took the time to wish everyone well for the Seminar. I would just add my personal thanks to Chris – he chairs both Section and Region, and will be taking a seat on the National Board before long.

Please continue to canvas other clubs for new members – if you can spare a few minutes to visit other local greenkeepers and talk to them about BIGGA, and all there is on offer – it will be an immensely positive image for our Association. Times are difficult, there is no question, and we all need to input as much as possible to see us through.

Seven members contacted me to express an interest in Chainsaw Training. We are working with Tim Bendle, a local Lantra instructor, who teaches a four-day "Occasional Users" chainsaw course, which is ideal for greenkeepers. It is not CS30 or 31, but a full users' version nonetheless. You could not use it to become a Tree Surgeon, for example, but it does licence a greenkeeper to use a chainsaw to fell small to medium trees at his place of employment.

The first four to enrol, are part way through completing the four days at Cumberwell Park, and our grateful thanks to Mark Haring for the use of the facility. There are a further three people waiting for a second course – another person is required, and this could then be arranged. The cost is £425 for the four days – please let me know any interest. Also – we will run another seminar in the autumn if there is demand – please let me know any subjects you would like to see covered.

I have application forms for the 2010 Ryder Cup Support Team that can be emailed directly to you – please let me know if you're interested.

Finally, Chipping Sodbury are hosting the English County Finals in September. John Keenaghan is interested in having some volunteer assistance on standby for help on the course, and particularly in case of bad weather etc. Please let John know direct, or drop me a mail and I'll forward it, if

you're interested and available. It is a chance to see the course set-up for a major amateur event.

In the meantime – please let me know any other Section news or events, and I'll look forward to seeing you at one of our golf events in the later part of the year. The matches will commence with the Section taking on the Secretaries at Cirencester Golf Club in early June. Please contact Wayne Vincent if you're interested in representing the Section in this match.

Paul Worster  
paulw@mgcnew.co.uk



## SOUTH COAST

This month's report will be quite short. The only news worthy event was the seminar held at Canford Magna Golf Club - which was very well attended, I really enjoyed all the speakers and found it very informative. Tony Gadd is recovering from an operation so will have to tell us his life in golf another time. So that is about it. I need your input please - phone me with anything on: 07773138409 or email me.

Till next month,  
Chris Sturgess



## DEVON & CORNWALL

Our February meeting was held at Thurlestone Golf Club on the 10th. Thank You to DGM and Scotts - our sponsors for the day. Unfortunately I was not able to attend due to illness so bare with me as my informants for the day I guess had too much sun or was it something else!

The competition for the day was individual Stableford, which was won by Andrew Prowse, from Porthpean, second was Tony James, from Killiow Park, and unfortunately nobody could remember who was third - so apologies to whomever it was and well played. Nearest the Pin again was Andrew Prowse and the Longest Drive was by Andy Powell.

Our thanks go to Vic Dyer, the Head Greenkeeper, for the course walk, and to him and his team for a course in lovely condition. Thanks also to Thurlestone Golf Club for the use of their course for the day and their hospitality, also thanks to the caterers for the meal that I understand was very nice.



Steve Gingell, from STRI, gave a very good talk on 'When and Where to Aerate'. Thanks, once again, to Steve for giving up his time for free.

A couple of items to include that I meant to have mentioned last month! Congratulations to Scott 'Scotty' Gibson who is the new Course Manager at St Enodoc Golf Club. Scotty has been at St Enodoc for many years and I'm sure will do a great job. Good luck Scotty from us all.

To Andy Parker who parted company with Crediton Golf Club recently - all the best for the future Andy from everyone in the Devon and Cornwall Section. Finally, best wishes to Terry Clarke, who is now in charge at Crediton. Good luck Knobby.

Jerry Cole  
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## SOUTH WALES

Hello Everyone/Sut Mae?

Spring is upon us (well, the time of year that used to be called spring but has now been replaced by winter then summer, but you know what I mean) and that means the Annual Spring Seminar at Royal Porthcawl GC, on Thursday, April 23.

This year, your Section Secretary, Steve Chappell, has arranged for a trio of top Course Managers, from some markedly different golf courses, to come along to this event and give a presentation on their experiences at their courses. The Schedule is as follows: 9am - 9.45am registration. There will then be presentations by the following: Richard Blizzard and Mark Atkins, from Soil Harmony (the sponsors for the day), 'The Life Beneath Your Feet'; Lee Strutt MG, of The West Development, Perthshire, 'The Growing Pains Of Growing In'; Allan Patterson, Castle Course St Andrews, 'The Story So Far'; Greg Evans, Ealing GC, Surrey, 'Short Cut To Better Greens'; Richard Blizzard and Mark Atkins 'Finding The Balance Between Soil Health, Golfing Demands And Healthy Turfgrass'.

There will also be a demonstration of Top Dressers, Overseeders and Aerators organised by Charterhouse Turf Machinery. 4pm Finish. The cost of the day is £17.50 (members) and £20 (non-members.) This includes tea/coffee and biscuits and a two course buffet lunch (which, from the benefit of experience I can heartily recommend!) Booking forms should be with you by now, if not please contact Steve Chappell on: 07970980899.

Thanks to all that attended the Parc Y Scarlets talk in February. An informative tour of the new stadium was given by Head Groundsman, Dean Gilasbey, then it was over to Machynys Peninsular Golf Club for an informative presentation by Derek Smith, from DLF Trifolium, on DLF's products and,

among other things, the pro's and con's of the new Annual Ryegrass mixtures. Thanks to Dean and Derek and also to Marcus Weaver, Head Greenkeeper at Machynys, for arranging for us to use his club's facilities, and thanks again to Countrywide for sponsoring the evening.

Also a big thank you to the 40 or so people who attended Avoncrop Amenity Drainage seminar at Whitchurch GC. It proved to be a very informative day, brightened only by the rain that turned up just after we had all ventured out to watch the Blec Sandmaster in action on the 1st fairway. Thanks go out to the speakers from Sportsturf Contractors Ltd, Scotts, Terralift, Ruffords and Aquadyne and to Whitchurch GC for agreeing to stage the event there. I would also like to thank the delegation from Llanwern GC for making sure that there were no bacon rolls left over!

Belated Happy Retirement wishes go to David (Dai) Williams at Tredegar Park GC. Dai retired just before Christmas but I forgot to mention it. Sorry Dai! Happy Retirement! Maybe you can go visit Ray Burrows and pinch his cake and sandwiches like he used to pinch yours!

Also, while reading the Devon and Cornwall Section notes, I read that Stuart Dymond, at St Enodoc, is retiring. I used to call on Stuart years ago and remember that I always received a warm welcome. A true Cornishman and therefore very much like the Welsh. Happy Retirement Stuart.

Thanks for all the information you have sent in (none!) If you do have anything you want mentioned then please contact me on the number below. See you soon.

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