

Section Notes

Please email your notes to
melissa@bigga.co.uk
by the 5th
of the month

All the latest news from your Section

Around The Green



Scottish Region



Ayrshire

West Kilbride Golf Club was the venue for the Spring Outing on the last day of April. As the day approached so did the rain!

On arrival we resigned ourselves to a wet afternoons golf, but somehow after the first few groups played a few holes with umbrellas the rain stopped and we had a great bit of weather for the remainder of the day!

All 38 participants had an enjoyable time and our thanks go to the Club Captain and committee for allowing us the course and facilities on the day.

The catering team were excellent and really looked after us.

A big thanks also to Jim Paton and Mick Byrne and the lads for all their hard work in having the links so well presented, especially with the recent inclement weather.

Results were as follows:

1.1. S. Higgins, Ardeer GC, 41pts; 1.2. W. McMeikan, Turnberry GC, 39pts; 1.3. G. Morrison, Largs GC, 38pts; 2.1. G. Wilson, Western Gailes GC, 37pts; 2.2. S. Sharkey, Irvine GC, 34pts; 2.3. P. Tulloch, Irvine GC, 31pts. Trade Prize - A. Cruickshanks, Daval GC, 33pts.

Greenkeepers from all Sections are invited to a walk of the Ailsa Course on July 1.

We plan to set off at 5pm, so see y'all there!

Adios amigos!

Denis Tweddell
denis.t@hotmail.co.uk



Central

The Section held a very enjoyable Spring Outing at Scotsraig Golf Club on April 30 and wishes to thank Scotsraig for allowing us to be their guests for the day and congratulate Course Manager, George Pendrich, for having the course in such fine condition. A total of 48 players competed including four retired greenkeepers from Sweden who happened to be in the area for the week and came along as guests.

The principal prizewinners were: Scratch, Archie Dunn, Auchterarder GC, 74pts; Best handicap, Iain Sinclair, St Andrews GC, 75-8=67. Caterory 1 hcp winner, Gordon Moir, St Andrews, 77-4-73 and category 2 hcp winner, Gordon McKie, St Andrews, 89-16-73. Messrs Sinclair and McKie won the best two combined scores from the same club and Quentin Allardice, from TIS Scotland, won the trade prize. The full results can be found on our website www.biggacentralsection.org.uk

Finally, a special thanks to Siobhan Allardice for helping get the players off the 1st tee and for collecting the cards at the finish.

The Section has a couple of educational events planned for the autumn where we really require the support of the members. First up is a half day disciplinary training course for Course Managers, Head Greenkeepers or Deputies and this will take place at Elmwood, on October 26, prior to the AGM. It will take you through the process of investigating an incident and determining if disciplinary action is required and how to follow the correct procedure.

The trainers, Pitchblue Int, offer practical, easy to follow and essential advice, vital skills to those managing staff. Then in November we plan to stage a two-day ecology management course run by Bob Taylor and other staff from the Ecology Unit of the STRI. This will be on exactly the same lines as the courses they run at Bingley every year which would cost an attendee something in the region of £700 to attend by the time they pay course fees, travel and accommodation. If we can get 20 to 25 people to commit, we would hope to run it for a cost of around £150. Graeme Taylor, Course Manager of the Jubilee course was an attendee last year and found it to be one of the best training courses he had been on with a lot of practical examples which he has been able to transfer onto his golf course. More details of both courses will appear on the website shortly.

Gordon Moir



East

I start this month's report on a sad note by announcing the passing of Dick Dugan after a long illness. A retired Head Greenkeeper of Glencorse Golf Course, Penicuik, Edinburgh and Life Member of BIGGA, Dick was a great supporter of all the golf events in our Section.

Dick was a great character in the profession and I am sure all that knew Dick had a funny story to tell - he will be sadly missed by many, our thoughts go out to Dick's family.

Our Spring Meeting was held at Eyemouth golf course on Tuesday, April 14 courtesy of Bob Wortley and his committee.

We were very fortunate to have good weather on the East coast and the golf course was in great condition. A special thank you must go to Mark Pagan, Head Greenkeeper, and his staff for the way the course was presented for us on the day.

Looking down through the prize list, the Eyemouth boys did a good job on the cleaning up of the prizes. My question is when do they get time to practise their golf, or are they just natural born sportsmen.

I was fortunate with the draw in playing with the local greenkeeper, Dougie, who clubbed me for most of the round. Managing to win the sweep money from the Rigby Taylor boy's Big Gary and Jim - cheers guys I am sure you both will put in for expenses for that day.

Nice to see Graham Wood and his wife, Helen, at the meal, presentation of prizes and raffle, thanks Stuart for bringing both along. Our grand raffle! I think just about everybody went home with something. A big thank you to the trade who kindly donate the prizes for our raffle on the day.

We hope to see more faces at our Summer Outing - The Willie Woods Trophy - where members can invite a guest along as a partner - the venue for this is Kingsknowe GC.

Our tireless Secretary, Stuart Ferguson, will keep you all posted with this event.

All the winners: Spring Meeting at Eyemouth GC; Scratch Winner, 78pts, Benn McLeod, Gullane GC. 1st Class Winner 80-7-73; Tom Murray, Ratho Park GC; R/up 85-5-78; Mark Pagan, Eyemouth GC; 2nd Class Winner, 83-9-78; Douglas Greenshields, Eyemouth GC; R/up 88-13-75; Ian Watson, Gullane GC; 3rd Class Winner (92-19-73), Bob Wortley, Eyemouth GC; Veteran Winner, 79-5-74; Alistair Holmes, Seahouses GC; Patrons' Winner 83-13-72; Stewart Clayton, Greensman

Ltd; Novelty winners: Nearest The Pin - Douglas Greenshields; Longest Drive - Marl Pagan, Both Eyemouth GC.

Until next month.
Tom Murray



North

Hi there, hope you are all well and that your respective courses are busy. Most of you will be gearing up to your clubs championships. Remember, nothing less than perfect will do for the members, you know what they're like!

I have just sat down in front of the computer to write and I can still feel the wind whistling through my hair and ears. How windy was that! Just standing up to hit the ball was proving difficult for most of us. That seemed to be the most common excuse on the day. I think that you'll all agree that the course was in great condition and that Neil Sadler and his squad presented it perfectly. We couldn't blame that so what other excuses were made. One of the guys I was playing with took six shots to get out of one of the bunkers, mentioning no names, Stuart Robertson, from Craighiehill GC, in Perth. Despite the windy conditions it was a fine day and we all made it round dry. Maybe it was the fine smell coming from the back of the 3rd tee, who knows? We had a good turn out of 53 guys so thank you for that.

The results are as follows: Nearest the Pin - 5th - Jim McCormack, 8th - Robert Hardie and 12th - Kevin Spowart. Sweep - 4th Gary McCandless, 3rd Kev Spowart, 2nd Geo Mitchell and 1st Stew Brown. Apprentice Trophy - Greg Paterson, Trade - Gar McCandless, Guest - Terry Kennedy (Portlethen Club Captain), Committee Trophy - Ben Brookes, Veterans Trophy - 1st James McCormack, 2nd Hugh McClatchie. Class 3 - 14-28 Handicap: 1st Dave Robertson, 2nd Hugh McClatchie, 3rd Greg Paterson. Class 2 - 7-13 Handicap: 1st Stewart Brown, 2nd Kev Spowart, 3rd Paul Sharp. Class 1 - 0-6 Handicap: 1st Geo

Mitchell, 2nd Patrick Wood, 3rd Derek Geen. Scratch - 1st Gary Tough, 2nd Neil Sadler.

A big thank you to everyone that turned up. It was good to see everyone and also to see some new faces, long may it continue. The next outing we have for the North Section is at Alyth GC on September 17. You should all have received your forms in the envelope that Dale sent out at the beginning of April. In the meantime there is the little matter of the Scottish at Cathkin Braes in June. Anyone wishing to play in that should contact Peter Boyd on: 07776242120.

This year the greenkeepers have managed to put two teams into the local trades competition at Hazelhead GC, in Aberdeen. The second team of pairs made up of Derek Green, Royal Aberdeen, and Robert Hardie, Craibstone, with Dicky Pirie, Newmachar, and Ryan Stott, Craibstone, making up the other pair.

Unfortunately the first pairing got beaten by 1 hole and the second pair got thumped by 10 holes. Out of the last 11 holes they lost 9 of them. Hard luck lads we can always rely on the first team or can we. We'll have to find out next month.

Two young lads on the move are Ryan Stott and Scott Davidson. Ryan has made the move from Newmachar across to join Robert at Craibstone. Good Luck Ryan. Scott has joined Royal Aberdeen after a somewhat world tour from America to Australia to the council bowling greens of Aberdeen. He started by working on the Ohio State Uni programme and in that internship worked at Sea Island Golf in Georgia.

He then spent six months working in Australia and the highlight for him was working at the Australian Masters. He then came back to sunny Aberdeen (why?) and worked for the council on their bowling greens until a greenkeeping position became available that suited. Good luck Scott.

That's all for this month people, hopefully if we can get half the amount of info for future articles then we'll be winning. Thanks for your time.

Ben Brookes
Murcar Links
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Northern Region



North East

On April 22, we held our Spring Competition at Whitley Bay GC. I believe that's our first visit, or maybe we have been there for another competition a while ago because the last time I was there the trees were not that big and there was hardly any gorse.

Anyway, everyone seemed to enjoy themselves, although there were one or two regulars who couldn't make it due to work commitments, but at least the weather was good as were the course and the meal. Thanks to Head Greekeeper, Graham Smith, and the committee for giving us courtesy of their course.

Thanks also to the following sponsors: T.S.L. represented by Terry Charlton and Alan Morton; Greenlay of Cramlington; Simon Holmes of Lloyds of Throckley; Aitkens, Shorts of Whitburn and thanks also to John Moutrie for the wine.

Results: Best Gross - Jordan Gibson, The Northumberland GC, 75pts; Best Nett - Kevin Dinsdale, The Northumberland GC, 71pts; Alan Ingles, Newcastle Utd GC, 72pts; Peter Anderson, Newcastle Utd GC, 72pts; James Storey, Alnmouth GC, 73pts.

One other thing that needs mentioning - people who have won the top prizes in previous years have not returned the silverware, please could they get them back to me somehow - maybe through a rep, I'm sure they wouldn't mind collecting them. For this competition I was two trophies short, the people responsible will be getting a letter shortly.

As you are aware a new championship course is being built at Close House, work had started at the end of April and the course is being designed by Turner Macpherson Golf Design. It is to be created in the style of English Golf course architect, Harry Colt, who was responsible for the likes of Wentworth, Royal Portrush and Sunningdale to

name but a few. Measuring at 6841 yards from the championship tees, the new course will consist of 11 par 4's, four par 3's, three par 5's and is a par 71.

The course is expected to open in spring 2011 and aptly named The Colt. Visitors will get to appreciate the many historic features of the site including the stone walls, ancient monuments, the woodlands and the ice lake and I can tell you that it's well worth a visit.

Jimmy Richardson



Northern

As I sit writing this month's report, while simultaneously reviewing the results of the recent Spring Tournament at Pannal, I can't believe my eyes. Alan Baxter in Division 2, and Ken Christie won Nearest the Pin! I'm wondering now if these results are a wind up!

The Spring Tournament took place on April 29 at Pannal, with a very good turn out of 40 members playing the fantastic course. The results on the day were: 1.1. Rob Bradley; 1.2. Rob Turner; 1.3. Stuart Mason; 2. 1. Alastair Holroyde; 2.2. Alan "I should be in Division 1" Baxter; 2.3. Frank Stewart; 3.1. Andy Scaman; 3.2. Dennis "President" Cockburn; 3.3. Mike Bussey; Trade - 1. Tito Arana; 2. Adrian Holroyde. Nearest the Pin - 10th Ken "Tiger" Christie and 17th Stuart Mason.

A huge thank you to both Bayer and Sherriff Amenity for their sponsorship of the day, and a massive thank you also to all the staff at Pannal for producing a fantastic course and looking after us in the clubhouse.

The next event on the golfing calendar is President's Day, which is to be held at Branshaw Golf Club on July 1. As with Pannal, I will require names and payment at least one week before the event.

This year's match against the Sheffield Section is to take place on July 21, at Abbeydale Golf Club. This is a free day out which is kindly sponsored by Rigby Taylor, if you wish to be in the 12 man team which beats

Sheffield, please get in touch ASAP.

I will finish this month by mentioning that the date for this year's Golf Management Trophy has been moved slightly and will now take place on Wednesday, August 12. Invitations will be sent to golf clubs nearer the time.

Adam Speight
Tel 07739 319060



Cleveland

Hello everyone, sorry for not getting any news in the magazine last month, there wasn't any to report and by the time we had our spring golf tournament, it was too late.

I am sure everyone enjoyed the warmish weather in April and hopefully everyone got their spring maintenance carried out ready for the on-slought of grass cutting, and busy fixtures.

The spring golf tournament was held on Tuesday, April 7, at Blackwell Grange Golf Club, Darlington. It was a fantastic day, with reasonable weather and one of the best-attended golf days in recent years.

There was just over 30 people taking part and for only £14 a round of golf and a meal, you can't grumble for that. The day was very kindly sponsored by Toro and Kubota, in conjunction with Lloyd Limited of Bishop Auckland. Thanks Alistair and Simon for your continued support.

The course was in great condition and it was clear to see that Terry and his staff had worked hard in preparing the course for us so thank you Terry. Thankfully the weather was ok, and we managed to complete all 18 holes this time around, unlike last year when the weather was foul.

A big thank you must also go to Blackwell Grange for allowing us courtesy of the course and the use of their facilities. Also, thank you to the catering staff for a great meal

The results are as follows: Overall winner on the Day: Dave Cuthbertson; 1. D. Cuthbertson 36pts; R. Hood 32pts; M.

McCarrick 32pts; 2. S. Russel 35pts; O. Shepard 34pts; R. Pybus 34pts (decided on back 9); 3. Terry (Hasselhoff) Harrison S. Price. K. Scarce; Nearest the Pin - D. Simpson; Longest drive - M. McCarrick. The trade prize was won by Spuggy, from Sunderland.

ThemuchsoughtafterAntand Dec Trophy was fiercely battled out between two notorious rivals over 18 grueling holes, finally the winner was declared and the victorious Jamie Applegarth spared no time in celebrating his victory over Alister Whitby.

Thanks also to the following companies for providing prizes: Tacit, Sheriff Amenity, Turfcare, Rigby Taylor, Scotts, Border Sports and Boxer Chemicals. Sorry if I have missed any out.

We were also kindly joined by Peter Larter, from BIGGA, who made the journey up from Lincolnshire to share a few words with members and enjoy a round of golf.

Finally, a bit of news. Richie Hood is looking forward to his new appointment as Course Manager at Sharpley Springs Golf Club. Richie has been Head Greenkeeper at Mount Oswald for many years and we wish him all the best for the future at his new course.

The autumn tournament is taking place at Durham City Golf Club, on Wednesday, October 7. Details will follow but if there is as much interest in the autumn tournament as the spring one then you will need to get your name down quick.

A seminar is being held at Redcar Golf Club on Thursday, July 9, and it will be on the subject of "Sustainability".

The event is being run in conjunction with the R&A and the GTC. It is a hot topic at the moment and I am sure it will be a very interesting day.

There are very limited places so if you are interested please contact Ian Pemberton on: 07791695768.

Finally, thanks to David Snowdon for holding the talk on the 'Use and Abuse of Wetting Agents' back in February.

The evening went very well and was very informative.

Any news, please contact:
Kevin Scarce
07921817857
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Sheffield

Hello again everyone. Firstly I would like to give a big congratulations to Steve Hume and his wife, Liz, on the birth of their first child, Megan. Steve was once a member of the Sheffield Section and worked at Wortley GC and he currently works at Murrayfield GC. Once again, congratulations to Steve and family from everyone in the Sheffield Section.

On the Section front I would like to thank everyone who played at Hallowes in our spring competition - I'm sure everyone who played will have had a good day. I will give a full list of the results in next month's magazine.

The BIGGA Regional Management Trophy event will this year be held at Renishaw GC on August 12. Course Managers will all be sent invitations in the near future.

Finally, I'm sure as you read this we will be in a major heat-wave, it seems that whenever I pick up a paper or turn on the TV and I am constantly reminded that we are in for a 'glorious' Summer.

I hope this becomes true because I believe that we deserve a good one after the past couple of years.

I hope everything is going well on all your courses and I will speak to you all next month.

James Stevens



North Wales

Hello again. God my back's a little achy. We had the Graden deepscarifier in at the end of April to do all our greens - two to three tons of kiln dried sand in and two to three tons of sun-baked, rain hammered sub structure out of every green, three days and a lot of greenkeepers (and I must admit some volunteer help) hours later and the results are showing already.

The spring tournament took place at Rhyl Golf Club on May 20, a full run down of results and the day will be posted in next month's column.

Anyone sending in their CPD claims must do so by the end of this month for them to count for this year's certificate.

The annual North Wales/North West match takes place at Bolton Golf Club, on June 10, best of sporting luck to both teams (but come on North Wales!).

In local news Pat McAteer, of Nefyn Golf Club, celebrated 25 years on the greenstaff recently and in appreciation of his hard work and loyalty the club presented him with a Tag Heuer watch. Very nice!

Also at Porthmadog Golf Club, Gareth (Bronco) Williams celebrated 25 years in green-keeping but as far as I know he wasn't given a flashy watch, but I may be wrong! If any of you are celebrating a special anniversary or your club has a centennial coming up let us know and we'll share it with the rest of the Section as good news is made to be shared.

All the best until next month
Pete Maybury
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Johnny Evans
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Midland Region



Midland

Well here I am again desperately trying to think of something to write about for our notes. Yes, our notes! Come on now, some information of who and what is happening in your area would make our notes far easier to compose and of greater interest. You don't have to even speak to me, just email me: sean.mcdade@homecall.co.uk. I shan't hold my breath.

And now for the news, our spring event was held at Wychwood Golf Club, our gratitude to the club for their very fine and welcoming hospitality. What a fantastic test of golf in such beautiful surroundings, and

such high standards of playing quality and presentation. A huge thank you to Jonathon Falmer (Golf Director) for arranging the day. Also a "respect" to Ashley Oaks, Head Greenkeeper, and his obviously excellent team for preparing the course to such a high standard, superb guys.

Now for the results: Division one (Gross): G. Turner. Division two (Nett): 1. G. Cunningham. 2. G. Turner. 3. R. Thomas. 4. S. Scott. 5. Brougham. 6. J. Ganley. Division Three (Trade): T. Cheese. Division four (Longest Drive & Nearest the Pin): A. Moss and S. Scott respectively.

The Premier Division title must go to the day's main sponsors: Graham Glead & New Holland - they were the saviours of our spring event as they stepped in at the eleventh hour to sponsor the event.

Also, thanks very much to Whitemoss/Mike Whitehouse and Andy Law for providing us with our ever perused new score boards. Sustenance and refreshments around the course, coupled with the ever enjoyable banter was kindly delivered by those two lovably rogues Kevin and Rob of Turner Groundscare.

Our thanks to Nigel Tyler/Sherriff Amenity for sponsoring Longest Drive & Nearest the Pin. And finally thanks to our ever suffering Mr. Starter, Mr. President, alias Sir John Hammond.

Our next event is to be held at one of my old haunts, Harborne Golf Club on Wednesday, July 8. I can assure you it is a lovely track, so get your entries in to Gary as soon as possible. The demand, I'm sure will be great. Jim, best be getting that whip out mate.

And finally, a monumental thank you to this month's calendar page sponsor; Turner Groundscare: www.turnergroundscare.co.uk

Please consider them for your machinery requirements by calling one of the boys: Kev Pugh, David Shepherd or Rob page (please don't throw your dolly out of the pram Rob).

Well that's all folks
Sean McDade

Section Notes

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East of England

Hello all. Summer is well and truly here and brings with it the usual headaches we all have grown to expect. April was a strange month with 13mm of rain in total and temperatures ranging from 0 to 20 degrees. At least all these fluctuations have slowed down the usual spring flush of growth, the rough is only growing at half an inch per day instead of one!" The dry spell hasn't helped fantastic quick recovery from mid-April greens renovation work, but everything is slowly coming along thanks to the help of "artificial rain!"

"The hottest driest summer on record beckons" I hear you all say. I leave you with this thought, in 2007 we had 5mm of rain in April, followed by 331mm in June, don't get too excited just yet! Our first Section golf day of the year was held on April 22 at Toft Golf Club. A good turnout enjoyed good weather and an excellently presented course. The winning greenkeeper on the day was Rob Bemment with 38 points and the winning trade member was Gary Cooper, also with 38 points. Longest Drive was won by Rob Bemment and Nearest the Pin was won by Tim Harris. Congratulations to all. Many thanks go to all at Toft Golf Club for making us feel so welcome and providing excellent facilities throughout the day. Thanks also go to Gavin Merrierson and Colliers for sponsoring the day.

Our June golf day is at Kenwick Park Golf Club on Thursday, June 25. Tee off is 1:30 but arrive early for coffee and bacon rolls. Full details will be sent to you soon.

Many thanks Steve Beverly, Immingham Golf Club stevimmingham@aol.com www.eastofenglandbigga.com

Berks/Bucks & Oxon

Golf! A full house! As the best of the BBO took on a pure delight in the heart of the Cotswolds and a fantastic venue to start the season at Burford GC, which was host to the Spring National Qualifier

Competition on April 30. Burford GC, designed by J.H. Turner, the then professional at Frilford Heath GC, opened for play in May of 1936 and since then has many a fascinating tale of history to date.

The course found instant success but with the outbreak of the Second World War saw part of the course ploughed up for cereal production to aid the war effort and was eventually restored in 1949. The farmer who had cultivated and reaped the harvest during that time presented the club with Harvest Cup, which is competed for annually, and I can re assure you all that cornflake production has certainly ended at Burford.

This beautiful course masked by trees that lined the fairways with astute bunkering around some of the greens offered us a challenging start to the golfing season, on perfectly manicured surfaces that provided us with a stiff challenge which was reflected in our scorecards.

The results were as follows: winner of The Claret Jug in 1. Ross Cook, Blue Mountain GC; 2. Shaw Engling, Blue Mountain GC; 3. David Jones, Tadmarton Heath GC; 4. Nick Carrissi, Hennerton GC; 5. Barry Holt, Burford GC, 6. Mike Johnson, Henley GC, and Steve Austen, winning on countback with 106 on his card for the Longest Walk.

Barry Holt has qualified for the National Championship with a gross score of 75 - well done Barry!

Richard Fortmuller took the trade prize with a fantastic one under gross to show us all how it could be done even with the Pink Lady balls which he borrowed from Adam King.

To our main sponsor of the day, Tim Webb, from Tacit, and all the other trade which included Greensman, ETT, Sport Equipment, Terralift, Gem, Rigby Taylor and Jon Beck for organising the halfway hut with his usual flair.

A big thank you to Burford GC for the courtesy of the course and Jonathan and Jose from the catering department for their gastronomic delights, which were well received, and to Course Manager, Barry Holt, and his staff for ensuring the course was as ever prepared and manicured to a first class standard.

Managing Secretary, Robin Thompson, for arranging courtesy and co-ordinating the day, which proved to be a great success.

Our next event is the summer tournament on June 18 at Oakland Park GC, where you will have the chance to meet John Pemberton, Chief Executive of BIGGA, who will be making his way down from head office in Yorkshire to attend the day, please make a date in your calendar for this event and check: bbogreenkeepers.co.uk for all the latest updates.

The Annual Rigby Taylor Match play knockout will now be well underway and the organiser, 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.

Adam King, the Section Secretary, has worked hard to ensure that events run smoothly and are organised to a high standard, so please show your appreciation by sending in your cheques on time for the next golf day, news, as ever, has slowly been dribbling in from far and wide over the three counties and if any member has any views they would like to share, or would like more information about the section and forthcoming events, please contact Adam King at: bbogreenkeepers.co.uk

Mark Day
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Mid-Anglia

As I write this report it is well and truly springtime and personally, I can't think of anywhere else I would rather be at this time of year. The cold, wet, dark days of winter are long gone, there has already been some nice weather, the evenings are staying lighter and the golf courses are literally bursting into life. And there is always the anticipation that, this year, summer is going to be glorious.

It always amazes me how so many golfers have such short memories about what conditions in spring can be like and

I hope sincerely that not too many of you have had the usual annual discussions/ moans about uneven growth and the dreaded "Augusta" factor. By the time you have read this it will no doubt have been long forgotten, until spring next year.

Our spring competition and annual qualifier for the National Championship was held at Hatfield London Club and spring had most definitely sprung there too. The weather was absolutely fantastic for the healthy contingent of Mid-Anglian golfers and the presentation of the golf course positively surpassed the weather. Congratulations to Craig Gibson and his small, dedicated team for presenting us with a truly superb course.

The day was generously sponsored by Darren Mugford of Rigby Taylor who was sidelined through injury, hang those boots up mate! It was also Darren's first day back to work after taking some paternity leave for the birth of the second of his two children, James. Many congratulations to you and your family.

Onto the results, in first place with 39 pts was Steve "Gringo" Mason, of Stocks GC; Gerald Bruce, from Berkhamsted GC, was second with 36 pts and in third on 35 pts was Ollie Browning, also from Stocks GC. Longest Drive went to Rob Catlin, from Pareto, and Nearest the Pin went to Woburn GC's Pete Rutt. Yours truly won the trade prize, even a blind dog stumbles across a bone every now and then.

Very many thanks to Hatfield London Club for hosting us, not only was the golf course excellent, but the hospitality and generosity afforded to us was equally admirable. The sauna and Japanese baths are not to be missed.

Thanks also to the usual trade suspects for supporting the day, it is very much appreciated.

The next meeting is yet to be confirmed but is likely to be at Knebworth GC in July/ August. Mid-Herts GC host us in the autumn on October 7 and we go to John O'Gaunt GC in December for the Turkey Trot. If you or your staff are interested in participating in any courses or training programs, please contact Gerald @ Berkhamsted GC to enquire further. There is quite often funding available and if not already catered for,

special training/ courses can be arranged.

Craig Spooner

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South East Region



Surrey

Sunday May 3. I am once again using my conservatory as an office in which to write this month's communiqué and the rain, although not expected according to the weather forecast, is pounding on the polycarbonate roof, interrupting my train of thought and will, if I'm not careful, turn my usual words of wisdom into rubbish.

So what's new? I hear you ask after reading my previous attempts at satire and humour. Well, I'll tell you what's new and you will all appreciate the predicament in which I now find myself. I have been appointed, by her indoors, to investigate, choose and book this year's holiday. I may have brought this on myself, by not in the past, fully appreciating the difficulties involved in choosing a holiday and by making the smallest of complaints about the resort, the food, the room and the weather. I am now well and truly in it up to my neck. Initially I accepted the responsibility with open arms expecting some bright and new ideas to flood to my assistance. I have kept reading weekly travel articles in the Saturday papers hoping to find that holiday of a lifetime but nothing has stirred my loins until Mexico. So it's not difficult, with all the latest about swine flu, to understand why its back, this coming week, to the good old Isle of Wight. Full details will follow next month.

Did you know that the Mini is 50 years old on May 8 2009. The first production model came off the line at Cowley, Oxfordshire in 1959 and had the registration number 621 AOK. I was seventeen when I had my first car, a Mini, reg no 9814 PF. It was light blue and rocketed with its 850cc engine from 0 to 60mph eventually. Happy birthday Mini and any greenkeeper who has the same birthday will win a

surprise birthday present if they text me with the details.

It's now 5.45pm and time to close this month's copy but please remember that I only have pity for those who have managed to finish this article and only respect for those who didn't start it.

Brian Willmott

07879474038



Kent

Hi Guys. I haven't got any news for you this month unfortunately so this is going to be very brief!

By now, with summer in full swing and hoards of golfers adorning our pristine fairways, we have all, hopefully, put all thoughts of the long, wet winter behind us. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of the economic climate and I know some courses are struggling for revenue. I hope you are all able to ride out the storm soon and be back stronger as a result.

As a slight diversification from the norm, at Birchwood we have instigated an environmental plan to try and encourage some more indigenous species to breed and flourish in specially created habitats. Not only does this benefit the golfers as they get to see more of a natural environment, it also raises the profile of the course within the community. Being environmentally friendly (and having evidence to back up any such claim) is essential, especially at this time of year when we are perceived to be the devil incarnate as we lavish copious amounts of water onto our courses. Anything we can do to promote our roles as professional custodians of the land being prudent with the natural resources could prove to be an invaluable tool when times get tough. After all, less than 10 percent of the population plays golf so the non-golfing majority has a right to know that a golf course will be a good neighbour.

Anyway, as I said earlier I haven't got any news for you this month but I look forward to seeing you all in a couple of weeks at Lullingstone Park. Results to follow next month.

Thanks to Tacit and Turfcare Solutions for recently coming on board as sponsors for our section. Please call me with any info you want included in this column.

Enjoy the summer while it lasts!

Best of British

Rob Holland

07843 410755

kentgreenkeepers.co.uk



Essex

The Committee wishes to inform the Section that Don Clark has decided to stand down from the position of Chairman. His hard work was very much appreciated and we wish to thank him for all he did for the Section, over his years as Chairman. The position will be up for nomination at the next AGM in December. We have decided that as a committee we will continue over the next months up until the AGM, when all officers will be up for re-election.

Hot news in Essex at the moment is, that there has been a spate of break-ins at local clubs. The equipment being taken seems on the whole to be small hand machinery, but losing half a dozen or so of those can cost you £3-5,000. Clubs that have been hit include, The Essex, Gosfield Lake, Maldon and Three Rivers. Maldon Golf Club having been hit twice in one month, Police investigations continue.

The Essex Spring Trophy Golf Day was held at Colne Valley Golf Club, on Wednesday, May 13. We would like to thank Tom Smith and his Mother for the great day that they put on for us. Although we could have done without Gods watering system, coming on over the whole course for most of the time we were out playing. The most annoying thing is that only a mile or so, south of us, they had none at all. C'est la vie.

Thanks to Tom and his green-keeping staff for presenting the course in such a fine state, (the greens were very deceptive) and to the catering staff for the fine spread that was put on after the golf. The Vice Captain, Mr Tony

Around The Green

Beadle, presented the prizes, for which we were very grateful. He also joined us out on the course and played a mean round of golf I'm told.

Overall winner of the Spring Trophy plus entrance to the BIGGA National Championship - Adam Millward, Orsett Golf Club 34 points. 1.1 Tom Smith, Colne Valley Golf Club, 33 pts; 1.2 Antony Kirwan, Lexden Wood Golf Club, 32 pts; 2.1 Ian Wood, Romford Golf Club, 33 pts; 2.2 Simon Cairns, Lexden Wood Golf Club, 32 pts. Guest Prize, Paul Holloway, 39 pts. Trade Prize, Neil Peachey, P Tuckwell Ltd, 38 pts. Nearest the Pin went to Mark Stopps on the 11th and Tom Smith on the 17th.

Your next golf day is Tuesday, June 23, at Burnham-on-Crouch Golf Club, and is nearly due. This is the summer trophy, so look out for the entry forms, they are on the website and we will also be sending them both by post and email. I have said it before but we would prefer to send them by email, as the cost of postage to the Section is astronomical, so please could you send me your e-mail addresses as soon as possible.

We have some new sponsors in our section for 2009: Golf Mats UK - Grasshopper Horticultural - Limagrain UK and Tey Farm Systems, full details are on the website. They join the following sponsors from last year: Avoncrop Amenity Products, Bailey's of Norfolk Ltd, Banks Amenity Products Ltd, Blade Amenity Ltd, CMW Equipment Company Ltd, Collier Turf Care, Ernest Doe, GM Amenity, Headland Amenity Products, LiquiTec™-Fieldfare Amenity, Prime Irrigation Ltd, Rigby Taylor, Scotts, P, Tuckwell Ltd, Vitax and Writtle College.

We would like to welcome the new sponsors and old ones alike to our Section and thank them for their support.

We have all the up to date news on our website, keep watching the site. It's a great way of finding out what's happening around the section.

The new picture gallery shows what a great day we had at Colne Valley and we will continue to keep the gallery's updated throughout the year.

Any information for inclusion on this page or on our website should be sent to me at essexbigga@talktalk.net or on 07764-

862.337. Also look us up. www.essexbigga.co.uk

Arnold Phipps-Jones
Press Officer

South West & Wales



South West

I have to start this month's report with a double-dose of bad news, by reporting on two unfortunate accidents recently suffered by Section members. Alistair Turner, Deputy Course Manager at Thornbury Golf Centre suffered a broken leg and Roger Neale, Deputy Course Manager at Taunton & Pickering has broken a metatarsal. Both are likely to be out of action for a little while, and we wish them a speedy and complete recovery.

I was recently involved in a "Sustainable Golf Day" at Cannington College where I joined Richard Whyman, Paul Lowe, Stuart Yarwood, Jane Leyland (Barenbrug Seeds) and Laurence Pithie in talking to students about our various different approaches to managing the golf course in today's economic conditions. It was very nice to meet Laurence Gale, from Pitchcare, who covered the day for the his magazine.

From Cannington, it was a quick dash over the bridge to Royal Porthcawl for the South Wales spring seminar. Steve Chappell put together a really good day with speakers such as Greg Evans, Ealing GC; Lee Strutt, G-West Development; Graham Roberts, Hankley Common, and Alan Patterson, from the Castle Course, St Andrews. It was really fascinating to listen to Alan and understand how the demand for a seventh course at "The Home of Golf" was met with this superb new development. For example - anyone living within the St Andrews Town has playing rights on the golf courses, and for £160 per year has access to all seven.

Here in the Section - Laurence Pithie has now retired from Crown Golf to start on his own as a consultant and trainer in

the industry. Laurence has a huge experience gained from running over 50 golf courses, and can help with staff training, safety, budgets etc. as well as agronomy and trouble-shooting. He is available on email at turfmasterone@aol.com and is ready to give advice as required. Crown Golf gave him a royal send-off with a lunch at Wentworth, and presented him with a useful prism gauge (with which he's keeping a close check on my heights of cut!)

Entry forms for the summer tournament at Kingsdown, on June 24, should now be with you - please let me know if you haven't received one. This will be a great day on a perfectly prepared golf course so please do make every effort to attend. Remember, it gives one player the opportunity to qualify for National Championship, which this year is in our Section at Burnham & Berrow in early October. The Scotts Management Trophy will follow, on July 15, at Filton, so keep a likewise sharp lookout for entry forms in the post shortly.

Meanwhile back at Minch, it has been a frustratingly slow start to the season - not short of daisies, greens still not at their best, member's very patient (mostly). Important not to lose the faith and try to push things on too far. I've recently had the pleasure of speaking to our members with a PowerPoint show about recent works and developments on the course. It went reasonably well with only a couple of thinly-veiled complaints at the end. Still important to go through the exercise and meet the members - 60-odd people turned up and had supper afterwards so also got some extra revenue through the club. If you don't do this at your own club but would like some assistance in setting things up, do give me a call.

Obviously times are hard in the industry, and BIGGA needs your support more than ever. Please make every effort to talk to greenkeepers you know who are not Association members - we are one profession and we need unity and solidarity more than ever. Any news you may have of local issues is also gratefully received.

A forward date for your diaries is September 30, for the BIGGA/GCMA business seminar at The

Kendleshire. And finally - we are offering Manual Handling Training and certification - a half-day course covering handling techniques and all relevant legislation. Give me a call if you're interested.

Paul Worster.
paulw@mgcnew.co.uk



South Coast

The spring tournament was played over the beautiful course of Parkstone and was in really great condition. The results are as follows: Played over 28 holes: 1.1 Joe Cooper, Milton Abbey GC, 65pts; 1.2 Alan Magee, Remedy Oak GC, 64pts; 1.3 Kevan Glass, Brokenhurst GC, 61pts. 2.1 Chris Bitten, Stoneham GC, 61pts; Paul Cooper, Parkstone GC, 60pts; Steve Christopher, Barton on Sea GC, 56pts; Overall winner of Chalky White Trophy, Joe Cooper, 65pts; Nearest the Pin, Chris Bitten, Longest Drive, Chris Bitten. Thanks to the sponsors Avoncrop & Parkstone GC for allowing you all to play.

Well hello to you all at what is now a very busy time for all of us! We at Andover Golf Club is playing catch up after holidays and bank holidays. How many of you were caught with disease in your greens this winter? I for one can't remember it so bad but we are now recovering.

I must remind you all about the The Isle of Wight meeting on October 1, it will be sponsored by our Section - therefore the golf and food will be free, all you have to do is get there, by ferry or fly!

Until next month
Chris Sturgess



South Wales

Hi Everyone. Hope you are all well and are still employed since the last 'Around The Green' Firstly I'm sure that those who

attended the excellent spring seminar at Royal Porthcawl Golf Club would like to thank all the speakers who came down and gave such great presentations. Maybe many came to listen to Greg Evans talk on 'The Short Cut To Better Greens' which has created a lot of interest and asks questions of traditionally held greenkeeping beliefs, which I think is a good thing. My favourite presentation though (they were all good, mind) was the one given by Allan Patterson, of The Castle Course at St Andrews. I just found it amazing how they turned a flat area of agricultural land into a very natural looking cliff top links -not only did they create a great looking golf course but they must have ticked all the boxes environmentally as well, so that even the most bearded of environmentalists would be happy (if that's possible!) Thanks go out to Richard Blizzard, of Soil Harmony, for sponsoring the day, to all the speakers for their time, to all the people who attended, to Royal Porthcawl GC for the use of their facilities (and a cracking lunch!) and to Steve Chappell for all his hard work in organising the event.

As promised, here is the draw for the 1st round of this year's Rigby Taylor Knockout which was made at the seminar: Tony Horne (14)/Martyn David (15) V Nigel Ruck (11)/Mel Leech (12) Mark Wiltshire (18)/Mark Anderson (1) V Peter Lacey (13)/Simon Lacey (24) Steve Price (15)/John Knight (5) V Darryl Bray (9)/Leigh Davies (11) James White (3)/Wayne Benger (20) V Phil Thomas (15)/Stuart Jones (15) Steve Chappell (22)/Darryl Jones (5) V Rhys McDonough (0)/Gary Humphries (0) Huw Morgan (9)/Rob Williams (3) V Andy Roach (5)/Gareth Knight (18) Colin Thomas (15)/James Rees (18) V Steven Lloyd (6)/Mark Wells (11) Adrian Parsons (20)/Ceri Richards (18) V Paul Handy (13)/Rhys Norville (4) Marrison Griffiths (9)/Glyn Jones (5) V Jim McKenzie (9)/Alan Abel (10) - good luck everyone!

Steve has also asked me to thank the 14 people who attended the mole control training day at Neath GC recently and made the event such a big success. If you would like to attend a training day on chainsaws, abrasive wheels, tractor driving or something else that is relative to greenkeeping

then please contact Steve. If eight people or more apply for a particular course then funding can be available, so have a think about it!

Good luck to Jim McKenzie and his team for the preparation for this year's Wales Open (June 4-7) which is to be played on the Twenty Ten course. Jim is often interviewed by the press during the tournament, so whatever you do Jim, don't tell them any of your jokes! You make Chubby Brown sound PC!

Speaking of big golfing tournaments, one journalist described the Augusta course after The Masters as being 'The prettiest in the world' which prompted a response by a sports journalist from The Guardian, who wrote that the chap should go and visit St David's City Golf Club, in Pembrokeshire, before coming to that conclusion! I have to admit, I'm with the chap from The Guardian, It's only nine holes, but it is a beautiful course in a wonderful setting and John Phillips, Head Greenkeeper, produces consistently good greens. Best of all though, he makes a nice cup of coffee to enjoy the scenery with! He now has a copy of the article on the notice board in the clubhouse to remind all the members of how lucky they are!

Swansea City and Ospreys fans will be pleased to learn that Dan Duffy, Head Groundsman at The Liberty Stadium, was recently voted Championship Groundsman of the year for the 2008/9 season. Dan is one of the most dedicated Turf Managers that I know and thoroughly deserved the accolade. How he can produce such a good playing surface when both Rugby and Football are played on it (sometimes one after the other) is amazing - well done mate!

How long is your semi? That question was put to Julian Bartlett Jones by the Ladies section of Dinas Powys GC recently. Julian wasn't sure so they went out to measure it. They concluded that it could be left to grow longer to provide them with more of a challenge. When he got home and he relayed the day's events to his partner, Joanne, he found himself sleeping on the sofa! Funny creatures women! But then height of cut is an emotive subject!

Ceri Richards
celticceri@aol.com



John Pemberton
Chief Executive

All members should by now be aware that the Board has called a General Meeting of Members for Tuesday, June 16, to consider, and vote on, a change to the Constitution that will allow Groundsmen who are employed in the sports turf industry the opportunity to apply for Full and Associate categories of Membership of the Association.

All current members who are entitled to vote will have received a voting form by now and these are starting to be returned as I write. Please use your vote if you have not already done so, it is your Association and this is your chance to have a democratic say in its future.

At the March Board Meeting the structure of the Sub Committees was reviewed and it was agreed that more representation from outside of the Board would be sought in order to better engage the views of the Membership. In future, meetings will be held by way of mixture of conference calls and round-the-table meetings. In addition a series of sub-groups will be formed that will liaise with the relevant member of staff by e-mail in order to identify members' views. If you would like to be considered for inclusion in either of these then please forward your name and e-mail address to the appropriate member of staff as below:

General Purposes

Chairman, Mark Dobell
Staff member, Steve Wragg
e-mail: steve@bigga.co.uk

Membership

Chairman, Archie Dunn
Staff member, Tracey Maddison
e-mail: traceymaddison@bigga.co.uk

Learning & Development

Chairman, Jeff Mills
Staff member, Sami Collins
e-mail: sami@bigga.co.uk

Communications

Chairman, Tony Smith
Staff member, Scott MacCallum
e-mail: scott@bigga.co.uk

Environment

Chairman, Paul Worster
Staff member, Sandra Raper
e-mail: sandra@bigga.co.uk

John Pemberton
Chief Executive