

Section Notes

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

All the latest news from your Section

Around The Green



Scottish Region

Central



I trust everyone had a good Christmas and New Year and are now looking forward to BTME. In December, the Section had an interesting evening seminar at Elmwood with Martin Ward, of Symbio, talking about Compost teas. This was hastily arranged due to the short notice of Martin's availability and we are fortunate to have good email communication along with the info on our website, www.bigga-centralsection.org.uk which allows us to contact people in this way.

To stay in the loop it is vital members keep us informed of any changes to their contact details. This took the place of the appraisal training which has now been postponed until the New Year, it is hoped that we will run this course sometime in February, in association with the CMAE, at the same venue (Old Course Hotel, St Andrews). Further details will appear on website in near future.

In early December I was fortunate to visit the Manitoba Turf Conference in Winnipeg, Canada, to give a couple of presentations. Including me there were only three speakers to cover the three days and it was fascinating to discover that although from different fields we were all advocating the practical, cultural approach and also that the Canadians face the same problems as we do in the UK.

You may think Winnipeg in December would have been a difficult (and cold) gig but I found the 100 attendees to be extremely motivated and enthusiastic which made the whole trip very enjoyable. At the time of

writing Gordon McKie is doing a similar exercise in China, along with Elmwood College, a report on that next month.

A presentation by Stan Zontek, of the USGA Green Section, sometime in April is on the cards. More details later.

Gordon Moir



West

Happy New Year all, I hope you are now dieting hectically after you're over indulgence during the festive period or you're out jogging trying to shed the few pounds around the waistline. As nobody else is willing to undertake the task of penning a few words each month and the fact that the whole of last year not a single footnote was submitted I have now been giving the opportunity to try and stir up some enthusiasm within the ranks of the West Section. Therefore if you have any information to pass on let me know about it by contacting me via phone 07790823914 or 0141-942-5554, or e mail me at st.greenkeeper@ukonline.co.uk Stuart Taylor in case you were wondering.

I hope you are all keeping well and looking forward to a good season this year. Hopefully the financial situation will change slightly in the next few months to give some optimism for the future as I'm most of us have suffered from budget restraints.

Well, let's try not to be too depressive, I look forward to seeing a few of you at Harrogate this month and would pass on my congratulations to John Brown and David McBride on receiving the Patrons' Award and will hope you enjoy the trip to the show. Thanks to our many Patrons.

A couple of items to mention which happened over the last few months

The AGM was held at East Kilbride Golf Club, on October 29, and 25 people attended, which isn't too bad as things go. Thanks must be extended to Symbio and Rigby Taylor for sponsoring the day and giving two excellent talks. Thanks also to Brian Bolland, and East Kilbride Golf Club, for hosting the event this is very much appreciated.

The annual Match against the Clubmasters was held at Cardross golf club on November 2 on a pretty wet day and congratulations must be expressed to John Barr and his staff for enabling this match to go ahead. Well done lads. Four teams took part with the matches finishing two a piece - the clubmasters retained the trophy as they were the previous winners. Could members who are interested in taking part in this event next year please inform a committee member as each year the clubmasters have at least 12 people available and we struggle to find numbers.

The Ingliston show this year wasn't quite as busy as previously seen but numbers appeared to be satisfactory, I hope all that attended enjoyed the experience and were able to conduct their business satisfactorily.

The Annual Dinner on November 27, held at The Loft in Ashton Lane, was attended by 23 people and all who turned up seemed to have a good time. There was some comment that people didn't know about the event and I would apologise if this was the case but, at the same time, who did you contact to find out about it, as the event is held each year at roughly the same time?

One for the future will be at football match against the Ayrshire Section some time in March/April. If there are people

interested then contact any of the committee members: Brian Hillan; Douglas MacIntosh; John Barr; Brian Bolland; David McBride; John Brown; Derek Duthie; Gordon Howatt; Gavin Jarvis; Fraser Ross and myself

I hope to hear from you in the near future and look forward to the various comments from members

Stuart Taylor

Northern Region



North Wales

January comes but once a year and thank goodness for that with new year resolutions that last if you're lucky a couple of days, cold short days and longer even colder nights but we must look on the bright side (well we are greenkeepers do we really have a choice but to look on the bright side!), new year, new start, lessons learned during the last year put to practice to make this coming year possibly the best yet.

In November, we held the Christmas tournament at Caldry Golf Club and on the what seemed like the only dry day in that month, 56 greenkeepers and guest played what can only be described as a completely blemish proof course, followed by a scrumptious meal in the club house all thanks go to Carl Crocher and his team for the exemplary course and to the clubhouse staff for the food and warm hospitality shown to us all.

The results of the golf day are: 1. Stuart Yarwood (who also did pretty at the raffle table too although I'm not bitter... not much anyway!), Ian Taylor, Andrew (Acorn) Cornes and Rob

Cooper, 84pts; 2. Phil Watson, Eifion Ellis, Will Evans and John Moody, 82pts; 3. Jez Hughes, Johnny Evans, Peter Larter and Huw Brown, 82pts

Nearest the Pin went to Jim Adamson on the 2nd and Ian Taylor on the 17th greens.

The AGM was also held after the meal and with 27 members present, various reports were given on the state of our Section and we're looking pretty healthy and the Section committee was voted back on as is.

We held a half day seminar at The Welsh College of Horticulture in Northop on December 9 on the subject of cylinder sharpening and the importance of sharp units in greenkeeping. We have to thank Bernhard's for giving the seminar and the College for hosting the event.

The bus to Harrogate is due to run again this year but will only be put on if enough seats are booked so please get your seat reservations to Jez Hughes by January 10 at the latest.

Well that seems to bring us up to date for now but if you have any news to share with the section please get in touch contact details below.

All the best until next month!

Pete Maybury petemayb66@aol.com

Johnny Evans

Johnny.Evans@tesco.net



North West

We held the AGM and Bert Cross Trophy at Wilmslow Golf Club on December 3

The day started well and then down came the rain and sleet. 41 members started but only 18 finished the full round. The winner was Tim Johnson, who works at Wilmslow Golf Club,

Tim also won Nearest the Pin with the Longest Drive going to Spencer Lloyd Pye. Many thanks to Bathgate's for their sponsorship over the years. A special thank you to Steve Oultram and the Wilmslow Golf Club for allowing us to have our AGM and golf day there every year.

While we are on the subject of thanks a mention to the North West Committee who work very hard on your behalf. We have a new Chairman this year, Adie

Holt, who is based at Birchwood Golf Club, was pleased to accept the post and our Vice Chairman is Peter McVicar, who will take over from Adie in two years time. Two new additions to the committee are Mike Davie and Alec Davis. A warm welcome to you both. These will be the last notes I will be compiling as Peter has kindly decided to take on this job next year. Thanks Peter.

Please think about attending Harrogate this year if you can bring your Green Chairman or Secretary they might be impressed at how professional we all are. I am sure they will enjoy the show.

Chris Sheehan



Northern

Hello all. Hope you've all had a good 2009 golf season. We hope to see you all at this year's golf events. A few changes to note on the Northern Section Committee. Firstly, to thank Adam for his good work over the last few years as Secretary and I'm pleased to see him carry on as Treasurer. Also a welcome to Richard Smith onto the Committee.

I hope by the time you read this report we will have news of your 2010 golf fixtures and a date for a spring seminar.

Hope to see you all at BTME at Harrogate.

Just time to wish all a belated Merry Christmas and hope you all have a Happy New Year.

Any news or gossip, please contact me.

Frank Stewart

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Midland Region



East Midlands

Over the three years I have been greenkeeping I have always read the "Around the Green" articles and found it fascinating the different topics people write

about and the different styles of writing, having just joined the BIGGA committee for the East Midlands I now find myself thinking frantically of things to write about, hoping that it at least maybe interesting to some of you reading this.

Firstly, I would like to start by saying a few over due congratulations to David James and his wife, Biba, for the birth of their son, Connor, and to Colin Crowther and his wife, Clare, on the birth of their baby daughter, Chloe. Both babies are doing well.

Our Autumn Comp and AGM was held at Matlock GC on October 15. The damp and foggy day wasn't able to curb people's enthusiasm and a great day was had by all in attendance. The day was won by Mark Blacknell, Mick Marvell and Tim Bloodworth – putting his local knowledge to good use! Our thanks go to Tim and his team for presenting the course in such fantastic condition and also to our sponsors for the event – Boughton Loam, British Seed Houses, Henton & Chattell and Sheriff Amenity.

The AGM was largely uneventful with Asa English, Andy Marsh and Tim Allard standing down from the committee. Thanks for all your effort and input over the past few years guys. They have been replaced by Peter Smith, Greg Skinner and Matthew Wormald.

The education day that was held at Forest Hill Golf Club saw a great attendance from many golf clubs. I think everyone who attended would agree that the topics were very interesting and created great debate.

I would like to draw people's attention to the article in last month's magazine about the fund that was set up so that greenkeepers could possibly have a course to call their own. What a dream! What an inspirational idea, that if successful could change our industry for the better. Wouldn't it be nice if greenkeepers around the country pulled together and made the dream come true.

If anyone has anything that they think is worth mentioning, it can be anything, anything at all then please e-mail: Andy de Wet at biggaeastmidlands@hotmail.com.

Matt Wormald



Midland

Well I am afraid that as usual I have left our notes to the very last moment, if indeed not too late. The reason for such being that here at Stratford we have been reconstructing a tee and laying turf that must have come from Cockermouth in Cumbria! So all I have time to report is the results of our Christmas event held at the wonderful venue of Woburn.

Thanks to Woburn Golf Club for affording us the opportunity to play such an internationally renowned and respected course, as wonderfully presented by John Clarke, Course Manager, and his expert team. You must all be very proud of the course you produce, tremendous. The famous Duke's Course was our host and what a pleasure. As two tees were employed we were blessed with two Mr Starters, our thanks to John Hammond and Mike Whitehouse. The main prize table was sponsored by Mark Chamberlain/Tacit. The results being; 1. A. Jones & A. Brougham; 2. T. Cheese & R. Beacham; 3. M. Hughes & C. Lowe. N.T.P.s were sponsored by both Tacit x2 and N. Tyler/Sheriff Amenity x2, M. Chamberlain, A. Jones x2, and J. Hughes. Our thanks to Turners Groundcare for their usual halfway house refreshment (including Blackthorn Berry Mother's ruin) with Russ and David.

It was also nice to see S. MacCallum, from H.Q, who played and gave a brief rundown of how the organisation is addressing the current climate at this difficult time.

The results of the Aggregate Trophy's were calculated as; Best Gross: Mike Hughes. Best Nett: Gary "Board Member" Cunningham. Well done to you both and thanks for supporting the Section over the whole year.

And finally, just a little hint into that to which I shall be considering for your thoughts next month, formal education and the opportunities that greenkeeping as a profession not only provides, but indeed influences and inspires even the most reluctant of us to rise to the challenge and reap the rewards

both professionally and personally. Should anyone have any thoughts on such please contact me on; sean.mcdade@homecall.co.uk. Thank you Dave, but you will have to wait until next month mate. Such requires more than a few hours of consideration, it's not a foundation mate; it's what a foundation's for!

Wishing all a happy new year,
Sean McDade



Mid-Anglia

Happy New Year to one and all, I trust you all had a restful and peaceful Christmas. Let's hope that Spring comes early this year and any troubles you encounter are minor ones. Sorry it's a little while after the event but here is the report from the Autumn Tournament held at Mid-Herts Golf Club on October 7. A field of 34 contested the event and the weather was not bad at all. 39pts was enough to secure victory for P. Compton, from Stevenage Golf Club, with Nigel Phelan, St Andrews Hospitals GC, on 37pts coming a good second and D.Hodkin, Knebworth GC, in a respectable third with 36pts. There were prizes for Nearest the Pin on all five par threes with Geoff James, Geoff Fenn, Nigel Phelan, Kevin Armstrong and Steve Mason proving to be the most deadliest eyed dicks.

Rob Catlin and Dave Murphy, from Pareto, were the generous sponsors of the day and a big thank you to you both for not only sponsoring the event but for your long and continued support over the years of the Section.

Jody Wilson and his team must also be congratulated as the golf course was in exceptional order, as it is all year round. As a fairly regular visitor to the club, I have seen the course improve and develop over the years and I know that the members are suitably proud of their course. Thanks also go to Mid-Herts Golf Club itself for their kind hospitality and making us feel most welcome.

This year's competitions are pencilled in for Aspley Guise GC, Stocks GC, Berkhamsted GC and Ashridge GC. Dates and

times are yet to be confirmed but I will keep you posted. We were going to have an extra golf day this year but we couldn't find another venue within walking distance of the others!

The Section Committee would also like to take this opportunity to thank Frank Scullion, of Dunstable Downs GC, most sincerely for his contribution to the Section. Frank is stepping down from the committee this year after many, many years of service looking after the members interests and enabling the Section to function effectively. Thanks very much Frank, it is very much appreciated and we wish you well.

I look forward to seeing those of you that are travelling to Harrogate for BTME later this month, let's hope it doesn't snow. TTFN

Craig Spooner
craig.spooner@limagrain.co.uk



B,B&O

Another year is over - Happy New Year to you all. The season of 2009 has passed and the nativity plays and panto's are now just a faded memory. Father Christmas has hammered his credit card - eaten one to many mince pies and now down to Turkey pot noodles and Sudoku puzzles to keep him occupied during tea break with a small glass of homemade pink Gin in the evenings to look forward to and soothe those memories of last years resolutions which bit the dust. Welcome to 2010.

The Christmas Turkey Trot got off to a good start! On a mild winter's morning in December the BB&O Section had the pleasure of visiting The Oxfordshire GC for this year's AGM and Turkey Trot.

The Oxfordshire, set in the rolling hills of the Chilterns, is located approximately 45 minutes drive northwest of London on the outskirts of the historical university town of Oxford.

Designed and built by the world-renowned architect Rees Jones, his first in Britain. No expense has been spared in creating this beautiful course. A tactical blend of bunkering,

strategically placed lakes, wispy rough and wind make this a real challenge. Combine that with its natural beauty and you have all the course you'll ever need, a perfect end to 2009 as the Section relished the chance to play this wonderful course.

A record turnout of 108 was recorded to battle it out for The Avoncrop Cup in Texas Scramble format, followed by a roast dinner and AGM. Barry McCluskey, from Avoncrop, presented the 1st prizes and the results were as follows:

First place went to The Magic Pencil Team who named themselves Making Up The Numbers from Maidenhead GC with 55.9; second place to the Golf and Turf mob led by James Moore and Co and third to The Angry Mob from Sonning GC.

The putting green competition run by Peter Helps, from Turner Groundcare, was won by Sean Haynes representing Bearwood Lakes GC

A big thank you goes to The Leaderboard Group and Adam King, our Secretary, for co-ordinating this excellent venue and for the courtesy of the course which providing the Section with fantastic golf and catering facilities which were enjoyed by all on the day.

A big thank you to Nigel and Shawn, and all the greenkeeping staff for preparing the course to a first class standard and ensuring we all had a great day out.

Thank you to all our sponsors throughout 2009. We have had great support from the trade which has included Sheriff, Avoncrop, Tacit, Vitax, Rigby Taylor, Turner Groundcare, Golf & Turf, Browns, Amenity Land Solutions, Headland, Banks, ETT and Speedcut Contractors.

The Annual General Meeting followed and Sid Arrowsmith was re-elected as Chairman for the Section followed by Chris Lomas, Vice Chairman; Adam King, Secretary; Frank Booth, Treasurer); Alec McEndoe, Simon Marsh (Education), Matt Smith, Matt Nutter as committee helpers with yours truly as the scribe for another year.

Clive Parnell has joined forces with Amenity Land Solutions after Gem Professional ceased trading last year, its nice to see Clive up and about and we all wish him the very best in his new position.

If any member has any news or views they would like to share,

or would like more information about the section and forthcoming events in 2010 you only have to log in to brogreenkeepers.co.uk your cyberspace details and e-mail address with the Secretary Adam King who will only be pleased to keep you informed and up to date. Adam can be contacted on ajk@radley.org.uk

See you all at BTME in a few weeks time and wishing you all a great start to the New Year!

Mark Day
mark.day@tacitgolf.co.uk

South East Region

This year's South East Region's Annual Gentlemen's Dinner will be held at Walton Heath Golf Club on Friday, March 5.

For details or entry forms please contact South East Regional Administrator Clive Osgood on 01737 819343 mob 07841 948410 or cliveosgood@yahoo.co.uk

BMW PGA Championship

Anyone wishing to volunteer to be a part of the BMW PGA Championship Support Team for the final two days of the Championship at The Wentworth Club on Saturday May 22 and Sunday May 23, should contact Clive on the above numbers. A limited number will also be required as an emergency squad for the opening two days Thursday May 20 and Friday May 21.

Clive Osgood



Surrey

Sunday, December 6. The following should have appeared in the December edition. I do not know why it was missed as it was emailed on time. Please read on for belated news.

Saturday, November 7. I am sure you will all be pleased to read that since my Baltic cruise I have not just been enjoying myself driving around in my van, visiting customers, I have had to endure two further short holidays. The first was a long week-end at Studland Bay,

Dorset. The weather was warm and sunny and nearly warm enough for a visit to the nudist beach. Not to participate, of course, but merely to observe and ponder the idiosyncrasies of the human psyche.

The second break, just a few days later, was a Wednesday to Sunday visit to France, in a village called Chatelleraut, between Tours and Poitiers. Plenty of food, wine and a game of golf. A visit to a chateau and on the Sunday home on empty toll motorways that only resemble the M25 at 4 o'clock in the morning. That's holidays over until Christmas and then another long sea voyage to the Isle of Wight.

Whilst I was in France, the annual England v Scotland golf clash occurred at Hankley Common GC and I understand from Tony Bremer that a grand day was had by all, especially the English team. Ronnie Christie would not answer my text enquiry from France as to the outcome and only told me to concern myself with not upsetting our European colleagues. My assumption that England were victorious proved correct and the result, I later learned, was England 4 - Scotland 2. That I was not able to play, I hope will not stop me from being selected next time, for I know Tony was particularly upset that my golfing expertise was not available this year.

Mummy of the month is Caroline Wales, who gave birth to Freddie, 6 lbs. 12 oz on October 2. Daren Wales, husband and Course Manager at Clandon Regis GC was, he informed me, a major player in the proceedings but now needs time to rest and recuperate.

Retford was the venue for the Northern six hour lawnmower race and Surrey's answer to Jenson Button, Steve (Basher) Bush and his 24 inch Atco lawnmower were 1st in his group. Steve, Head Mechanic at St. George's Hill GC, finished 12th overall, having raced 140 miles in six hours. Some say you have to be mad to race a Formula 1 vehicle - what do you have to be to race a lawnmower?

That was all, so read on once again for January 2010.

Have you heard the news? Of course you have, how can any Surrey member not be aware that we have in our midst a man whose knowledge, persistence

and for his age, reasonable good looks has at last entered the higher echelons of our greenkeeping world. I write this with the deepest respect and I know that you must all be feeling that when next you meet this aficionado of grass and everything green, including Dollar Spot, that his humorous and talkative nature will not have been affected having now earned that great honour to be called Mr John Ross MG.

Ken Cooper will retire on December 4 after 36 years at Kingswood GC. Ken previously worked at Burhill and Banstead Downs and will retire with his wife to a flat in Banstead Village. Many will know Ken's son Steve, who is deputy at Silvermere GC.

Tony Kyle, Surrey Downs GC, and his wife, Samantha, have been so busy looking after twin boys, Logan Aston and Quinn George who arrived on February 26 and 27 and their other three children that Tony forgot to tell me about the happy event. A belated congratulations to you both.

The Greenkeeper v Secretary Golfencounter was played at The Berkshire GC in November and ended in a friendly draw 3 all. Only one of our pairs appeared to play for the Secretaries by losing their match 6 and 4 and it would be ungentlemanly of me to divulge their names. Needless to say that Tony and Anthony must both practice more if they hope to be picked next year.

The Turkey Trot results will appear in February's Edition as the deadline for January is on December 5.

Brian Willmott



Kent

Happy New Year!

Now that silly season is over and hopefully all the extended families have left your respective domiciles relatively unscathed, you can start to concentrate on restoring some sanity to your daily lives. The psychological tolls taken by excessive Christmas pleasantries can leave us all emotionally drained and, I find, that there is no better cure than going out on the verti drain and punching a load of holes



John Pemberton
Chief Executive

I hope everyone has enjoyed the Christmas break and that there are not too many sore heads left over from the New Year celebrations.

The first few days of January are when many, well some, of us try to keep our New Year's resolution, but how long does it last? From personal experience whether it's a diet to counteract the excesses of turkey and treats at Christmas or work on that short game to knock a couple of shots of the handicap somehow by the end of January good intentions slowly seem to slip by the wayside. As I sit here in the middle of December writing my column to beat the rapidly approaching editorial deadline I have convinced myself that 2010 will be different. Why will it be different? I'm determined to enlist the help of family and friends.

BIGGA is in a similar exception to the rule and while all exhibition space at Harrogate 2010 is fully sold, the Association needs the support of its members and the sports turf industry if it is to prosper.

We have had donated some issues of Golf Greenkeeping, the official publication of the British Golf Greenkeepers' Association, dating back to the later part of 1982 and early 1983 and it is surprising in reading them how many articles and features are topical today. Headings such as 'BGGA reject proposed IOG merger', 'How secure is the Greenkeeper's job?', 'Greenkeepers at cross roads', and 'Head Greenkeeper sacked by Committee' could all have been written in the last 12 months let alone 26 years ago.

The following is a direct quote from an editorial from February 1983 and I hope it gives you food for thought:

"Never has there been a time in the history of golf and the greenkeeping profession for a more united front. We have seen over the past ten years a wind of change in the economics of our lives which could well develop into a hurricane.

Golf courses will no longer remain the cosy club supported by a few wealthy members who are content to keep their club exclusive and did not mind paying for it. Golf Clubs, or rather Golf Courses, are fast becoming part of the sporting leisure business and with business comes capital investment and the expectation of profit."

The article continues by pointing out the need for greenkeepers to improve their image, improve training and education and encourage management development.

It concludes with the statement: "The turf trade in general could help and in fact some of the big names in industry do make a significant contribution to the training and education of greenkeepers, but the good Lord only helps those who help themselves and all greenkeepers should give considerable thought to their own future and the direction they would like it to take." By my way of thinking that sums up the situation today very well, it seems that some things never change which perhaps reflects the general apathy that still exists in some part of this very traditional industry. We all know that the wind of change is blowing. Do yourself a favour and take advantage of the many education related opportunities that BIGGA presents, that way you can help shape your own future and perhaps that of your employer.

Will I see you in Harrogate?

John Pemberton, Chief Executive

Around The Green

into various parts of the course. This has the double benefit of relieving the pent up frustrations of having an over-bearing urge to throttle your nearest and dearest and restoring health to stressed areas of your courses. The vagaries of the wettest winter for a long time are playing havoc with many of our courses and anything we can do when conditions allow to shift some of the excess water has to be paramount to restore the playing surfaces.

Many thanks to the 40 or so of you who attended our AGM at the end of November. Kev and I both appreciated the vote of confidence in our respective roles and now with Glenn Kirby on board to arrange more educational events, we are confident of strengthening the Kent Section to its fullest. Details of the meeting are all on the website as is the fantastic fixture list for this year. We put a fair amount of leg work into securing these venues so please do your best to support as many as possible. We are now sourcing host courses for 2011 so if you're up for it please let us know.

The Turkey Trot that preceded the AGM was a great day as normal. A strong contingent of Kentish greenkeepers flocked to Birchwood Park for the annual extravaganza. Thanks to my guys for helping to produce a course worthy of the multitude of our peers who made the pilgrimage to Dartford. After the recent poor weather we were blessed indeed by some lovely winter sunshine and as Kev and I took up our usual positions at the back of the group after completing the days organisational duties, it was clear that high scores would be the order of the day as players competed for the Scotts Shield.

Given the role of Master of Ceremonies for the day was James Watson, of Headland Amenity, whose voice resounded far and wide as players were announced onto the 1st tee. Also at the first tee to send us on our way with a little seasonal cheer was Mark and Amanda Brown, of MAB Grounds care. After a strong front nine we were met at the 10th by MAB again but this time with a very welcome barbeque and yet more cheery beverages to revitalise the happy throng as they took to the trickier Birchwood back nine. The quality of our players prevailed on

the day, however, and as dusk fell as we played the last holes, another successful event had been added to the annals of our Section's history. Results were as follows: 1. Russ Bain 43 pts (and winner of Scotts Shield); 2. Nick Leach 42 pts; 3. Rob Holland 42 pts

Longest Drive went to Michael Wigstone.

Team Rumble competition was won with a massive 127 points by Paul Rudkin, Darren Burton, Nick Leach and Russ Bain.

Again, many thanks to all who attended and contributed to making it such a great occasion. I look forward to seeing you all at Princes Golf Club in March. Please keep tabs on all up to the minute information at our very regularly updated website www.kentgreenkeepers.com and remember if you have any news, views or pictures for it then please contact me and I shall be happy to post any items you wish to be shown.

Nothing else to add other than to sincerely wish you all the very Best of British for the coming year.

Rob Holland



Essex

We are into a new year and Essex has a slightly changed Committee, at the AGM and Winter Team event at Orsett Golf Club on Tuesday, December 1. Mark Stopps, of Bentley Golf Club, was elected as your new Chairman. Dominic Rodgers, Warley Park Golf Club, as your Secretary, plus Andy Cracknell, Orsett Golf Club, to the position of Competition and Handicap Secretary. The following stay in their former positions of Treasurer Tom Smith, Paul O'Kane, Education and Arnold Phipps-Jones as your Press Officer. All contact details are on the committee page on the website. A write up of the minutes from the AGM are available on the website.

The day started with a slight frost but soon warmed to give a pleasant day though there was a nip in the air as the day progressed. Don Clark, our former Chairman, presented the

course in an outstanding condition. With the course having been closed the day before due to flooding it was a remarkable achievement and our thanks go to him and his staff for the hard work and presentation that we all remarked on.

The winners, though I heard a few murmuring the words "bandits" at the prize presentation were as follows:-

The AGM and Winter Team Event at Orsett GC. Format: Progressive Stableford.

1. Ben Scrivener, Tom Bowens, Steve Crosdale, C Bowens. 124 pts; Jeff Taylor, Rob George, Neil Stopps, Noel Kettle. 121 pts; 3. Richard Dunmow, Kyle Smith, Malcolm Smith, Neil Tutton. 118 pts.

Longest Drive, Tom Brook. Nearest the Pin, Tom Smith.

This year's Greenkeepers Order of Merit was won by Stuart Rodgers.

The Trade Order of Merit was won by Neil Peachey.

The Essex Section wishes to thank all those at Orsett Golf Club for a fine day, the catering staff did us proud and our thanks to the Club Captain Steve Biggins for his vote of thanks and wishes before we started the AGM. Plus all those that helped to fill our raffle table for the evening.

To our sponsors of 2009:- Avoncrop Amenity Products - Bailey's of Norfolk Ltd - Banks Amenity Products Ltd - Blade Amenity Ltd - CMW Equipment Company Ltd - Collier Turf Care - Ernest Doe & Sons - Fieldfare Amenity LiquiTec - GM Amenity - Golf Mats UK - Grasshopper Horticultural - Headland Amenity Products - Limagrain UK - Prime Irrigation Ltd - Rigby Taylor Ltd - Scotts - Tey Farm Systems - P, Tuckwell Ltd - Vitax and Writtle College.

We thank you all very much for your support over the past year.

The Section also wishes to thank Clive Osgood our Regional Administrator for his support to the section over this last year.

Lastly, I must thank Martin Forrester, our long standing Secretary who has decided to stand down from the position after such a long time. Martin was an instigator in the formation of the Essex Section some 13 years ago and he has put in a lot of hard work over his years on the committee. We will miss him as Secretary and wise

man on the committee I'm sure, though he will still be joining us on our golf days over the coming months and years.

Also to Antony Kirwan, who has decided to have a year of rest from a major roll on the committee? He will be missed, as he has a big contribution to the section in the way we have progressed forward on our golf days, bringing computerisation into results and handicapping.

Thank you to both of them for what they have done for the Section.

Next year's events are also on the website, starting with our Seminar and then the first golf event, The Spring Trophy at South Essex Golf Club, Tuesday, April 27.

If you do have any news for the website or for GI, please contact me on 07764 862 337 or via email essexbigga@talktalk.net

Arnold Phipps-Jones
Press Officer



London

Firstly I would like to wish a Happy New Year to all of you in the Section.

I know it has been along time since the London Section has put anything in the 'Around the Green' but I am going to try and produce reminders of education days, golf days and any other news. I've got a lot to talk about for once this month.

I am writing this before the Turkey Trot which is being held at Sandy Lodge Golf Club so I will have the results in next months issue. I would like to thank Lee Cox for writing last year's notes.

There has been a slight change to the London Section. Rob Phillips, from Sandy Lodge, has stepped down as our Chairman after eight years on the committee.

We have enjoyed some wonderful golf tournaments and really good education days over the years, so I would like to thank Rob for all his time and effort to keep the Section going. Don't worry, Rob will remain as Treasurer on the new committee, he won't let the purse strings go just yet!

The new Chairman is Aaron Percival who has been Rob's

Vice this year. Aaron has just had a baby boy this year. So congratulations to him on that, hope your getting your sleep! The new look committee being headed by Aaron is as follows: Matt Plested Secretary and Around the Green notes. Lee Cox Education and Tournaments. Rob Phillips Treasurer and the Committee Members are Jamie Lomas, Phil Jones, from Supergrass, and Barry McCloskey, from Avoncrop. The trade members are out and about. They will be able to keep us in touch with what is going on and what people want from the Section.

There is a new drive from the new committee to do more education and to give you as much notice to when and where the golf days will take place.

Remember this is your section too and there is funding for education. Tell us what you want to learn and we will try to organise something for you.

So far organised for 2010, The Spring tournament, May 20, at Ealing Golf Club. I know we have the 2mm debate at Harrogate this month, which should be good but this will give you the chance to see what Greg Evans has been doing with his greens! Also this is the National qualifier. The first and second place winners will get their expenses paid trip to the National Tournament, which this year is at The Berkshire.

The Summer Tournament will be held on July 21 at Muswell Hill Golf Club. This will give you chance to look how we have changed the course after the fire in 2007. We will have a BBQ after the golf with golf dress welcome all day, so need for your shirt and tie.

This we hope will allow us to enjoy the sun!

We will keep you updated on Education days once we finalised them and next years Turkey Trot. We want to improve this section but we need just a little bit of help from you. So please if you have any questions or suggestions on the Section please contact us.

You can call or use the web site www.biggalondonsection.co.uk.

Matt Plested
07818410333

South West and South Wales Region



Devon and Cornwall

Hello all! Firstly I apologise that there hasn't been any "Around the Green" entries for our Section for the last couple of months. There has been a few changes to our Section with new personnel coming in and roles within the section changing. My name is George Pitts, Course Manager at Yelverton Golf Club, and I have taken over as Section Secretary from Abi Crosswood, who has started an internship in the States with her first placement at Augusta National. Abi has also completed her Foundation Degree with a merit, so thanks to Abi for all the hard work she has done for the Section, congratulations and good luck for the future. Someone else who has stepped down from the committee is Jeff Mills. Jeff has been very active within BIGGA over the years, both in our Section and Nationally, having stood on the National Board. We would all like to congratulate Jeff on his commitment and the enthusiasm he has shown for the industry and for our Section. Jeff will still be representing the Section on the Regional Board. New Committee members include Tony Gooch, from Great Torrington, Steve Harris, from Ashbury, and Brian Summers, from Carlyon Bay.

The last meeting held was at Great Torrington Golf Club on November 5. The day consisted of the usual format of Golf, Course walk, lunch and an educational presentation in the afternoon. The day was kindly sponsored by Devon Garden Machinery and Scotts. Many thanks to Tony Gooch, Head Greenkeeper who provided a Golf course in fantastic condition. The 30+ strong course walk was led by Tony and was extremely interesting. Towards the end of the Course walk, Steve Gingell, from the STRI, displayed some of the techniques that are being made available to quantify per-

formance of putting surfaces. In the afternoon the 55 attendees were given a presentation on "Rescue" selective herbicide by Simon Barnaby. Simon was working for Syngenta during most of the trial period and gave a very honest and comprehensive presentation on how the product can be used and on the results of all the trial work leading up to its arrival on the market. This was followed by a presentation by Steve Gingell which continued on from the display of equipment for evaluating the performance of your putting surfaces. Steve explained how by benchmarking and setting out realistic performance targets along with regular recording of performance, that this can be used to plot progress and evaluate your maintenance programme. Thank you to both speakers on the day for very interesting and thought provoking presentations. The Golf competition was won by Roy Dow, 38pts, from Chulmleigh GC, Kevin Pitts, 37pts, from Fingle Glen, was second and Andrew Dunstan, 37pts from Newquay came in third. Kevin Pitts won the longest drive with Richard Parker, from Ilfracombe, winning the Nearest to Pin. A huge thank you to Great Torrington Golf Club who made us all feel very welcome and helped to run what was a very successful and enjoyable day.

Details of the Christmas meeting at St Enodoc will be in the next "Around the Green". Our January meeting will be held at Newquay Golf Club on Wednesday, January 13. The afternoon speaker will be Mark Hunt, from "Headland Amenity", who will be talking about where the industry is heading over the next 10 years. Full details of this event and all other events for our Section will be in the events' section of the website.

At the end of November, I attended a Section Secretaries' meeting at BIGGA HOUSE. It was a great chance to meet the other Section Secretaries and to discuss the good and bad things that are happening within all the Sections. We discussed best practices and continuity of the Sections. I look forward to implementing some of the ideas discussed and working towards continually developing the Section from strength to strength.

Please feel free to contact me regarding any issues within our

section or any events or news you would like me to include in these "Around the

Green" notes. Happy New Year! George Pitts, Section Secretary.

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South West

Hey everyone, I hope you're all well! What a great time of year this is, dark mornings... early evenings...and wet miserable days. But don't let me get you down, it's not all doom and gloom we do have something to look forward to. As I write this month's letter we have Christmas just around the corner and then New Year after that. New Year's great, it a real chance to re-write the last year and start all over again. Myself, I just want to do everything I'd done in 2009, but this time just a bit bigger and bit better, can't go wrong that way!

Many congratulations from the Section to Matt Hawker, Course Manager at Bristol & Clifton Golf Club, on successfully completing 20 years of service at this top Bristol Club. In this time, Matt, under the tutelage and guidance of the likes of John Barr and Huw Parry, has raised through the ranks from Apprentice Greenkeeper to the position of Course Manager. A real success story for both Matt, and the support received from BIGGA and the industry in general. A huge well done goes out to Matt for this, and it just goes to show for all the younger members of staff out there reading this, hard work and determination can ensure you reach the very top and your dreams can come true!

Just recently I bumped into Ali Turner, who most of you may know suffered from a horrible broken leg recently. Ali, I must say it was great to see you, and it was even better knowing that you have recovered so well from such a horrific accident. This also reminds me that I would also like to wish Roger Neale a speedy recovery, twice in one year, Roger let's just roll onto 2010 shall we...

I would like to welcome Jamie

Around The Green

Blake, Roger Ashby, Dan Taylor, Roger Roberts, John Collinson and Joe Willcocks all from Broadway GC. They have just recently transferred to our section from the Midland section. You guys will be a great addition to the section!!!!

Just recently I attend a secretaries meeting at BIGGA HOUSE, this included a one night's stay in the glamorous Aldwark Hotel. For those of you that have never had the opportunity to visit the Aldwark Hotel, well let me be the first to tell you how amazing this place is. The food was great, our rooms were fantastic and we were made very welcome by the staff. I arrived there on the Sunday evening after a terrible drive, which took me over four hours. Anyone been up the M1 recently? If you haven't don't bother! It's 20 miles of 50mph, not what I wanted on my Sunday evening. To top it off when the average speed limits did come to an end the heavens opened up and there's me driving with the wipers on full blast going even slower than I previously was. However all was forgotten when I arrived to the hotel bar to find Chelsea v Arsenal on the box, I remember thinking to myself "this is what Sundays are all about!" On the Monday morning we had our Section Secretaries' meeting. This is when it became a really worthwhile trip as it's great to say that BIGGA are always trying to move forward and get the very best for you as the members. This was also a pretty good eye opener for me, it was great to meet the people who do the work at BIGGA and to see how the generally day to day running goes. Thanks everyone at BIGGA house for this.

Could I please remind everyone that if you move house or change your phone, e-mail address or anything to please inform the HQ or even drop me an e-mail. I would hate for you guys to miss out on any information or events because of this, thank you!!! On the final note, your stories can also make some great reading. Feel free to drop me an e-mail anytime. Look forward to speaking to you soon.

One final remind... Spell check... check, Grammar... check...

Adam Matthews
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South Wales

After a week of heavy rain we were fortunate to have a beautiful, if slightly chilly day, for the Christmas competition at Pyle and Kenfig. The course was in superb condition thanks to the efforts of Paul Johnson and his staff.

Results: 1. (Vitax Shield) Kerry Jones, Carmarthen Hedgehog Trust; 2. Andrew Roach, Haverfordwest; 3. Rhys Norville, Newport, Nearest the Pin. Jamie Probert, Pontardawe. Longest Drive. Steve Lloyd, Burghill. Best Trade/Guest. Peter Lacey. Silver Salver Award for the best aggregate score for the season, Andy Roach.

Thanks go out to Joe Crawley, from Vitax, for sponsoring the day and for his efforts in putting together the superb prizes; to Club Captain, Richard Hurne, for presenting the prizes.

To all the wonderful catering staff and last but not least to Paul (PJ) Johnson and his Greenkeeping team for producing a superb golf course for us to enjoy.

Joe Crawley also advised me that this year's sponsorship of the Section will be their last as they now intend to sponsor the Association nationally via the Silver Key membership.

So I would like to thank Vitax for their sponsorship of the Section which goes back to at least the early '80s, when Colin Murphy, was their Rep! Since then we had Allan Stow, myself and Adie Masters so it's a bit like the end of an era.

On the education front I believe that the winter series of evening lectures will start in January. More information soon.

In closing, I would like to thank the Section's sponsors for 2009 who were: Countrywide, CWC, Farmura, Inscapes, Keith Morgan Mowers, RT, Scotts, Tacit, Tower Europe and Vitax.!

Also thanks to Section Secretary, Steve Chappell, for all his work and congratulations on becoming Regional Chairman.

Ceri Richards
07831 168645



JOHN DEERE



BIGGA

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- 1 Go to the BIGGA website www.bigga.org.uk
- 2 Click on the Members area, the Jobs page or the Education page and click on the BIGGA Training Manual link.
- 3 Enter your login details and select the BIGGA Training & Development Manual from the left hand menu.
- 4 The Training Manual will load and the user can click on Enter the Site to view a welcome video or can select 1-9 or 10-18 on the top menu bar. You can progress through the manual hole by hole or go straight to the hole you wish to view. You can also skip to holes 10-18.
- 6 When you select a hole you will be presented with a window that explains what that hole is about. You can then select from the bottom tabs, video or sub-text (downloadable documents and links).
- 7 When clicking on a downloadable document it will automatically open in your default word processor. This can then be amended, updated and saved to your computer's hard disk or printed and filed in your personnel files.

