

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



Ayrshire

Hey chaps, Hope you are all well.

Back to that time of year again with aeration, or as the members would put it, "Damn greenkeepers wrecking our greens again". Well, as we all know, that ain't the case, but keeping any disruption to a minimum always helps.

I've got to say the majority of members these days actually warm to the tasks we carry out, with a lot more members having an understanding of what the benefits are instead of looking at the negative side of the work we do.

I find keeping our members informed of any works being carried out through a monthly newsletter helps keep the club informed and up to date.

Another thing which is popping through the ground this time of year is the dreaded leatherjackets or as they are commonly known the daddy long legs. They are the larval stage of the crane fly (daddy long legs).

Leather jackets start to feed on grass roots in the autumn. They will continue feed through the winter and spring. In the summer months the leather jackets pupate and the next generation of daddy long legs emerge and lay their eggs in the infected areas. Arrrgh! Who said this job was easy, eh!

Anyway guys that's me for another month... so as I keep asking, if you have any news please let me know.

Thanks

Johnmair982@hotmail.co.uk

07500874449

John Mair



West

The AGM has arrived and will be held at Hagg's Castle Golf Club on Thursday, October 28 and hopefully a few people will attend even those wishing to lend a helping hand by volunteering for committee duty. Our various committee members have been running things for a few years now, and some new blood is required. The day will be similar to others with the AGM and then a talk on Toro machinery or Demonstrations of equipment - weather dependant.

The Section would like to thank Hamilton Bros for its co-operation and sponsorship for this event.

Brian Hillen, our running Chairman, has arranged a football match against the Ayrshire Section for late October. All those interested should contact him or myself, both numbers are in the hand book, or for those who might have mislaid theirs; my number is 0141-942-5554, or mobile 07790823914.

Sportscrete is running a golf day at Eastwood Golf Club with a talk about its product, which should be interesting, as the main bone of contention on any golf course is usually the bunkers. The date for this event has not been confirmed with me in time for this magazine issue, therefore I hope Gavin can inform you at a later date by e-mail or letter.

Next month I will include a report on the Loch Lomond talk regarding the wetters which is being jointly hosted with STRI. This has been rearranged from April this year when the guest speaker could not attend due to the volcano disruption.

I will also include the results from the outing at Helensburgh.

The Patrons' awards will be selected in the next month and those chosen will attend Harrogate, in January, which should provide them with a beneficial experience. The Section would like to thank all the patrons for their continued support at this time considering the difficult financial climate we are presently encountering.

Last but not least, the annual dinner deserves some mention, but as yet the venue has not been confirmed. The likely candidates are the Studio or Curry Karioke situated at the tall ship. I hope this should be a slightly better experience from last year and would request as many people attend as possible to help support the Section. Prices and detail will be confirmed next month.

Best wishes to all for the remainder of the season

Contact details for all wishing to inform me of any events are stuart.taylor@glasgowgolfclub.com or 0141-942-5554, or 07790823914, please do not hesitate to contact me about anything even a moan but please something at least.

Stuart Taylor



North

As I am sitting writing these notes, the weather seems to have a turn for the worse. It is the beginning of September and there are very high winds and on top of that the rain has just decided to help out.

A wee thank you to Scott, at Headquarters for his little input about the notes being missing from last month's edition.

By the time you read this, the Autumn outing will have taken place at Huntly and I will have all the runners and riders for you in

the next edition. Hopefully it was glorious and there were at least 50 people playing.

On the move this month is Eric Pickard, from Longside GC. He has decided for some strange reason to come and join us at Murcar Links. You really don't know what you are letting yourself in for Eric. It's true what everyone says about Brian.

Congratulations go to Kintore Deputy Dog, Davie Stephen, and his long term lover, Suzy. They tied the knot in Inch back in August. I did hear it was a great day and I also heard that the bridegroom fluffed his lines. Instead of saying 'To be your husband', he actually said 'To be my husband'! Now Davie, I've known you for a number of years now and my suspicions have been confirmed! Anyway well done the both of you.

Last but by no means least this month, we sent a team down to play for the Norrie Whytock Trophy, in Auchterarder, in August. George Mitchell, Robert Paterson, Paul Sharp and Mike Braidwood all travelled down and on paper you would think that we stood a pretty good chance of winning it! Well, when I say that we came fourth, you might think that's not bad either. But when I say there were only five teams in it, then you begin to realise that they must have had an off day. Never mind lads hopefully next year we could improve our position. Congratulations to the East Section for winning the competition for the second consecutive year.

On that note I will return next month with the scores from Huntly. Happy Greenkeeping.

Ben Brookes

Murcar Links

07813889374



Central

Congratulations to Section Vice Chairman, Derek Robson, and his wife on the birth of their son Sam who came into the world weighing a massive 9lb 1oz. This might have been in last month's report but Sam didn't realise there was a deadline to meet!

We had a great turnout for the seminar on September 1 to hear Stan Zontek, John Kaminski and Peter Dernoeden talk about the different types of winter damage of turfgrass they have encountered. There were between 40 and 50 people packed into the room and it was great to see the different age groups there from students and greenkeepers just starting out in their career to people such as Walter Woods and John Philp who have reached the very top of the profession.

By the time you read this the autumn outing will have been played and the winning scores will be on the website www.bigcentralsection.org.uk and I'll include them in the next report. Finally, a reminder that the Section AGM will be held on Wednesday, October 13, in the training room at Elmwood Golf Facility at 1pm

Gordon Moir

Northern Region



Northern

Hello everyone. Hope you are all well, as I sit here writing this article. Nice to see the sun after all the recent rain. On Aug 25 we held our invitation day at Harrogate GC. Our thanks go to everyone at Harrogate for their hospitality and courtesy of the course. We would also like to thank Tony and his team for presenting a superb course, a credit to them all. The winners on the day were R. Walker and H. Lampkin with 43pts on a back 9 countback; 2nd J. Dobson and N. Ormonroyd; 3rd S. Rothwell

and P. Saxon. Nearest the Pin 3rd P. Saxon and on the 12th J. Burnside. Thanks to all our winners and everyone for taking part. Thanks also to Mike Brear and Rigby Taylor for their sponsorship.

After the golf presentations we had a couple of mementos to present to two long serving greenkeepers, Keith Gray, who recently retired from Driffild GC, and Tony Baxby, who is to retire shortly from Harrogate GC. We wish them both a long and happy retirement and hope to see them on future golf events.

Just a couple of quick ones. After being provided with a map it was nice to know Alan and Joe Baxter found their way out of Scarborough. It was also rumoured that Roy Armitage was going to join us at Harrogate for coffee and a chat, but was last seen wandering round Knarsborough GC. (Hope we soon get some younger members?). As usual any news or gossip please contact me Frank Stewart, 72 West Park Grove, Roundhay, Leeds, LS8 2DY. Mob. 07947401278. email frankstewart3@hotmail.co.uk.

Frank Stewart



North West

Firstly, let me apologise for not contributing notes for the last couple of Greenkeeper Internationals, sick relatives miles away and having very little to comment on have been the concerning factors. Having said that I still have nothing new to say.

The summer has now come to an end and most of us will have or are currently completing the autumnal renovation work, the turf is being laid and the concerns of last year's weather is at the forefront of my mind. I have always been one to ensure every piece of turf is laid by the end of the year, however, last year we finished turfing in February/March due to the snow, this was followed by the driest spring in my memory causing cracking and very poor looking turf. Having said that "What doesn't kill me makes me stronger".

At Hesketh over the past

weekend, we have just held a dance for the members, not only did we have a clean shed at the end, but also had 115 people raising over £3000 for cancer charities. Give it a try, it's great fun, by the way we called it "The Shindig in the Shed".

So there you have it. I told you I had nothing to report, before next month's notes, I'm going to go on a tour to find interesting things to write about, as always please contact me with any info, Cheers

Peter McVicar
pdmv@hotmail.co.uk
07885347818



North East

Is it that time again already the 5th of the month Section news is now due got to get in touch with the editor pretty damn quick as will miss the deadline. Again nothing coming in so I have to rely on news from other sources.

Well I got a very interesting phone call from David Golding of the GTC informing me that, as from September, Newcastle College has now been confirmed as an Approved Quality Assurance Centre, so if you have any staff who need to go to college get them enrolled you cannot be any more central than that. It's been a long time coming, info can be accessed from either Wayne Reid or Tony Milan on Tel: 01922004704.

Next on my list is that myself, Jordan Gibson and Russ Black will hopefully retain the White-moss Shield in the Inter-Section tournament on September 22, at Llangollen GC. This is now in it's third year. Finally, congratulations to Jordan Gibson and his wife on their new addition to the family - I believe a baby girl.

Jimmy Richardson



North Wales

Autumn is well and truly kicking in now, with the leaves losing their grip on the trees, colder

nights and much shorter days. But do we moan? Of course we do! We do what we do best, whinge our arses off about the "autumn blues" then, just get on with our work as always. The true mark of a decent Greenkeeper, no matter what the time of year or how low that makes us feel, is that the course comes first.

We held two golfing events last month, the Northern region day was held at The Vale of Llangollen Golf Club and the autumn tournament was held at Mold Golf Club. A full write up on both events will appear in next month's column, if you can't wait pictures will be open to see on the North Wales BIGGA group on Facebook. The Christmas tournament isn't that far

away and with it being held on the east of the Section at Mile End Golf Club, you can guarantee it will be heavily booked, so get your entry forms in early!

In local news, I'm sure you'll join in sending our sympathies to Andy "Acorn" Cornes and his family after his mother died recently after illness, and it is with regret that I have to inform you of the death of Graham Hall, who died peacefully at home in August after a long illness. Graham retired approximately three years ago from Bathgate Silica Sand after completing 18 years service. He was well known in the foundry and leisure industry. Our sympathy goes to his partner Etty, daughter Alison and son's Steven and Andrew. I hope the Section joins in sending a get well soon message to Peter Larter, who is convalescing after an operation on his shoulder.

I think that's enough for now so, all the best until next month.

Pete Maybury

E-mail, petemayb66@aol.com or mobile 07756001187



Sheffield

Hello once again fellow Greenkeepers and Groundsmen.

We have once again reached the end of another playing season and we now have the time reflect on the season that has passed. It has once again been a difficult

year for many golf clubs which results in a very difficult year for the workers.

Once again though I believe after speaking to various people that we have again excelled ourselves and provided courses throughout the Region that we all should be proud of. It is credit to us all that through this difficult period we have continued to provide such service and hopefully we will come through this period soon.

Congratulations to everyone who played in the Annual Northern vs. Sheffield golf match, by all accounts we played really well on the day and came away with a creditable tie. Thanks once again to Mike and Rigby Taylor for organising these days for us.

I would also like to thank everyone who attended our Autumn competition at Silkstone G.C. I hope everyone enjoyed the day and the results will be in next month's magazine.

T-shirt sales have continued to be very successful and another order has been made, if anyone else is interested please contact me on the number below.

Throughout September we have been busy organising our winter lecture programme and will hopefully be able to inform you all shortly with a full list of events. As I have said before though if anyone out there has any ideas on what they would like to see or happen at these events then please let anyone on the Committee know.

And finally.... Hillsborough GC recently held a golf day in aid of the Help the Heroes charity. £6500 was raised on the day which is a fantastic effort. Ian would like to thank Mike Brear, Glenn Sawyer and Simon Hardcastle for their efforts in organising the day.

Also a big well done to Tom Strong from Hillsborough in passing his Level 2. The only way is up now Tom.

Thanks for listening and see you next month

James Stevens
07738719614

Midland Region



East Midland

Hello all, with everyone being heads down and working hard the last month has been quiet; however there is a sprinkling of news to catch up on.

First some good news from Forest Hill GC, where long serving mechanic, Mick Gough, is making good progress and recovering well at home from his recent heart attack.

On another footing and again based around Forest Hill, Greg Skinner and I have decided that the only way to settle who was at fault for our whipping boy status in the Headland Pairs competition, will be a "Putt Out" over 9 holes at our next committee meeting at Birstall GC. News on the result in the next issue!

Seamlessly linking into Headland Pairs news, the semi finalists are now known and are as follows, Northern Section, P. Frith and N. Colley v P. Sands and M. Bunney, and Southern Section, F. Kempster and A. Porter v I. Hurst & P. Kendal. Hopefully, in the next issue, I will be able to report on the outcome of these matches and the final.

By the time you are reading this update we will be due to play our Autumn Tournament and afterwards hold our AGM, this will be at Hinckley Golf Club on Wednesday October 20, the last two events have been very well attended with numbers over 40 at each event, and more encouragingly lots of new faces. These golf days are a great chance to meet and socialise with colleagues and should be an important part of your diary, regardless of golfing ability. The cost for the day is £17 to all greens keepers and £25 to trade, 3 course evening meal included and lots of prizes. All entries to Andy De Wet, by October 13 please.

On a final note, I have always liked October, as normally it's a chance to finally ease off the cutting work, I hope everybody reading this has had a good season, as the grass slows

and memories of Autumn maintenance fade, we now look forward to winter and the projects we have planned, lets just hope the weather treats us kindly!

Anybody with any news please contact me @ pds1@btinternet.com,

Pete Smith



Midland

Well here we all are in the hopefully lovely month of October, if the weather is fine. Nice and cool at night and lovely sunny afternoons with the beautiful colours and light that this month gives us. And those who are screaming, "What about all those ****ing leaves?" They come every year, you should be geared up for them with the right machinery. With such in mind the Section would like to thank our long serving sponsors ALS. for this month's calendar page. Please consider them for your leaf collection needs and other turf grass machinery requirements, either; Tel: 01952 641 949. or visit their Website: www.amenity.co.uk <<http://www.amenity.co.uk/>> .

Well I must apologise for this rather short notation for this month, but as requested in August's edition for information etc... I have, to date, received diddly. Nothing new there then folks. Those that would complain regarding such a lack are either those that have, or those that have not. My respects and thanks to those that in the past have!

Looking forward to future information,
Sean McDade.



East of England

Hello all.

That's it, summer's over, Autumn greens renovation work done and greens put to bed for Winter. A summer of long hot spells coupled with

Assistant Profile

Our monthly look into the life of an assistant greenkeeper...

Name: David Patrick
Age: 23
Club: Marlborough GC
Position: Assistant Greenkeeper
Nickname: Dave



1. How long have you been greenkeeping? Three years

2. What was it about the career that attracted you? Always wanted to work outside and the hours are great

3. If you weren't a greenkeeper what do you think you'd be?

I would have loved to have been a pro golfer but I don't play so much now.

4. Which task do you most enjoy doing and why?

Cutting fairways. I just love to criss cross them and make them look good.

5. Which task do you least enjoy doing and why?

Stone picking bunkers. It's just boring and very tedious.

6. What one thing - other than a pay rise - would improve the greenkeepers' lot?

There should be competitions once a year for us greenkeepers and people play, knowing that they are saying thanks for our work

7. Hobbies?

Golf, socialising and taking the dog for a walk

8. Favourite Band?

Blink 182 and Kings of Leon

9. Which team do you support (football or otherwise)?

I'm boring when it comes to sports and don't support anyone.

10. What is your claim to fame?

I used to be in my local paper a lot for breaking course records or holes-in-one. Or just winning big golf events

very little rain has been a challenge to all, what will the Winter have to throw at us this time around!

Congratulations to Graeme Macdonald and Bryan Robinson who have won places at this year's National Championship, sponsored by Kubota and Charterhouse, at The Berkshire. Congratulations and good luck to you both.

The Midland Region Inter-Section Challenge again takes place this year. As current holders of this title we are sticking with the same team of Rob Bement, Rob Welford and Ash Cox who triumphed last year. Once again, good luck to the team.

Our next golf day and annual AGM will take place on Thursday, October 21 at Louth Golf Club. Tee off is at 11am, however members are requested to turn up earlier to attend the AGM. The day will be a Singles competition, the final event to this year's Order of Merit, as well as a Pairs competition with pairs being drawn after the golf has finished.

Many thanks.

Steve Beverly. Immingham Golf Club



B, B & O

Golf! The Golden Years, as the best of the BBO returned once again to take on the delights of East Berks GC which was host to the Summer National Qualifier Competition on August 26 with testing conditions applied by the occasional shower and the sudden downpour from the heavens. The course stood up well to the elements, with natural barriers and cleverly designed doglegs which made the course play longer than the scorecard suggested, coupled with fast undulating greens, this made for a real challenge of not only a players striking ability but also their discipline and course strategy providing a perfect and testing venue to compete for a place in this year's National Championship, sponsored by Kubota and Charterhouse, which will be held at The Berkshire.

The results were as follows:
3. Ian Robbins, Bicester GC,

net 71; 2. Erik Kinlon. Net 71; 1. Mark Green, The Berkshire, net 71.

Tony May, The Berkshire GC, picked up The Tacit Claret Jug with a gross 77. John Bevan snookered himself with the longest walk clocking up an unbeatable clearance of 147.

Nearest the Pin on the 9th was won by Nick Carrisi, Hennerton GC, and Anthony Goodlad hitting The Longest Drive on the 10th with Paul Hedger Radley College finding good form on the 2nd with Nearest the Pin in 2.

To our main sponsor of the day Tim Webb, from Tacit, and all the other trade supporters who provide the Section with fantastic prizes.

A big thank you to East Berks GC for the courtesy of the course; Colin Day and Julieanne Thorp for administrating the event and the catering department for there gastronomic delights which were well received and Course Manager, Matt Nutter, and his staff for ensuring the course which was fantastic and prepared to a first class standard. Our next event is on November 3 at Deanwood Park GC. Stick it in the diary before you forget.

Congratulations! The BBO welcome's Ian Morrison, from West Hill GC, who has taken over as Course Manager at The Berkshire.

Chris Lomas has taken on a new role as Secretary at Worplesdon GC, in Surrey and from all the Section we wish you the very best in his new position.

Ben Edwards is also on the move from Sandmartins GC and takes up his new position as Course Manager at West Hill GC.

The Section welcomes Phil Gibson who has taken a new position as Technical Sales Representative with Turner Groundcare Machinery covering various parts of the BBO.

News has slowly been dribbling in from far and wide over the three counties and if any member has any news or views they would like to share, or would like more information about the section and forthcoming events, please get in touch on the website www.bbogreenkeepers.co.uk

Mark Day

South East Region



Essex

Our Essex Trophy golf day at Boyce Hill Golf Club went off well, albeit with a few showers over the last eight holes or so. Unfortunately I was unable to play in this event but reports are that the day went off extremely well. Our thanks go to Head Greenkeeper, Andrew Harding and his team, who presented the course so well for us. Also to Club Captain, Roger Taylor, for playing and presenting the prizes and the catering staff that feed us all so well throughout the day, and a big thank you to the committee and members of Boyce Hill for the courtesy they extended to us.

Results: Overall winner. Steve Cousins, Orsett GC 33pts. He wins a place in the National Championship, sponsored by Kubota and Charterhouse.

Division One. 1. Barry Mann, Three Rivers G&CC, 31 pts c/b, (Also a National Championship place); 2. Dominic Rodgers, Warley Park Golf Club, 31pts; 3. Ray Clark, Channels, 30 pts c/b. Division Two. 1. Mark Stopps, Bentley GC, 32 pts; Ken Towse, Boyce GC, 30 pts c/b; 3. Sam Cook, Colchester GC, 30pts. Guest Prize, Roger Taylor, Boyce Hill GC, 35pts. Trade Prize, Andy Turbin, Ernest Doe & Sons, 31pts.

Nearest the Pin, 8th Hole: Neil Peachey, 18th Hole: Lee Stephens

We have our qualifiers for the National Championship, sponsored by Kubota and Charterhouse. They are as follows. Tom Smith, Colne Valley GC; Stuart Rogers, Orsett GC; Andy Cracknell, Orsett GC; Anthony Kirwan, Lexden Wood GC; Ben Scrivener, Abridge G&CC; Dougie Fernie, Upminster GC; Steve Cousins, Orsett GC, and Barry Mann Three Rivers G&CC. We wish then all well in their attempts to lift the trophies at The Berkshire this month and good luck.

Looks like there won't be much work done at Orsett at the beginning of October, as they have three of their staff playing

at the Nationals.

I should have been able to give you the result of the semi-finals of the Knockout, but due to some issues with one of the matches, I am unable to give the finalists for the final's match, which we plan to play in October. The venue for which and the finalists will be announced soon on the website shortly.

On the education front, Paul O'Kane is actively working on arranging a seminar for you all, sometime towards the end of the year. If you have any education needs or won't any information on courses. Please contact Paul direct, email: greenkeeperpaul@yahoo.co.uk

If you have any news for insertion in this section of the GI magazine or on our website www.essexbigga.co.uk then please contact me at essexbigga@talktalk.net or on 07764-862.337.

Arnold Phipps-Jones
Press Officer



East Anglia

Eaton Golf Club, Norwich – 11 August.

What can I say? Thank you, all 69 of you for turning up at Eaton Golf Club on August 11. I hope you all enjoyed your golf, (pin positions and all – blame Steve).

We all enjoyed preparing the course, as always for our mates, mainly because it is truly appreciated and secondly, because we'll get torn to shreds in the bar afterwards if it's not up to scratch.

Looking at the scores, I think the course won – only two greenkeepers scored over 36 points; they were Glen Rayfield, with 37 points, and Pat Swinn, 37 points. Our club Chairman managed 40 points. I keep hearing that Eaton is an easy course, so much so that an architect has been brought in to 'tighten it up!' The mind boggles.

Anyway, here comes the bit you've all been waiting for, the results of your efforts (or lack of).

Results: 0 – 9 Handicap: 1 Robert Whiting 33 pts; 2 Mike Virley 33 pts; 3 James Burton 32 pts.

10-18 Handicap: 1 Glen Rayfield 37 pts; 2 Richard Plummer 35 pts; 3 Doug Roofe 33 pts

19-28 Handicap - Real Golfers: 1 Pat Swinn 37 pts; 2 Steve (Mr Pin Position) Freestone 32 pts; 3 Steve Crabb 31 pts

Trade: 1 Mark Keysell 35 pts; 2 Stuart Edge 34 pts

Guests: 1 Mike Hart 40 pts; 2 Brian Lindores 36 pts

Nearest the Pin: 2nd Benny Hill; 13th Nick Howes; Longest Drive: 8th Paul Craske; 12th; Danny Perring; Loo Seat: Neville Rowlandson as he visited the loo four times before teeing off (must have been nerves) - he may as well have his name on it!

Our thanks to Colin Brown, Club Captain and Mike Hart, Club Chairman for their welcoming speeches, and the food was lovely.

The main sponsors of the day were Ben Burgess and Tomlinson Ground Care. Other trade prizes and support were from Symbio (sorry I missed you last time), Rigby Taylor, Bartram Mowers, Aitkens, Scotts, Baileys of Norfolk, Headland, Tacit.

Thank you Eaton for your warm hospitality.

Roger Plummer has finally hung up his rake after over 40 years of greenkeeping. He is a legend among greenkeepers and golfers alike - his knowledge of Royal Cromer Golf Course is incredible, all of which I am sure will have been passed down in traditional greenkeeping ways, none of which you can learn elsewhere nor in a book. We wish Roger a long and happy retirement. His message to all, younger greenkeepers especially, should not be treated lightly "NIL DESPERADUM ILLIGITIMI" (if you don't know what it means, ask me when we meet). God bless you mate.

Mick Lathrope



Kent

If there was such a thing as an X Factor award for greenkeeping, what do you think would be the criteria for winning it?

Would Mr Cowell be looking purely at the aesthetics and landscaping at your own course or would he delve deeper?

Would he consider your

management, budgetary and administration skills, your motivational techniques, staff development, environmental awareness and data monitoring?

Would the work done outside of your own individual clubs come into consideration? For instance, external educational courses, attendance at seminars and shows, interaction with colleagues from other courses, as well as any involvement in BIGGA?

Would your scientific knowledge come into question?

What fertilisers work best for you? What seed mixes are most likely to succeed in your soil type? How do you manage your irrigation system? What is your soil type and how do you manage it to your advantage?

Most people do not realise what it takes to be a successful Golf Course Manager. I'm sure you could think of a number of other items which may or may not come into play in such a hypothetical competition. I know that the Master Greenkeeper award would assess all these, but that is assessed by our peers and not the public remember. It is the local communities who need to be made more aware of the work we do.

And, don't forget we need the diplomatic skills of a politician when it comes to dealing with uninformed sections of memberships and public.

If you think you've got all those boxes ticked then congratulations and get onto ITV now suggesting the new show and don't forget to send me the royalties!

News from Kent Section is a bit thin on the ground this month hence the blurb above. Golf day at King's Hill Golf Club report to follow next month and don't forget that our annual shindig Turkey Trot at Birchwood Park is fast approaching! Make sure you keep November 25 free for what should be another cracking day here.

Best of British

Rob Holland

www.kentgreenkeepers.com



Surrey

Tuesday September 7. Guernsey, - as promised, the following is an unexpurgated copy of my and her indoors' day to day diary. Tuesday August 24 - we drove to Poole harbour and caught the Vitesse ferry. Two and a half hours later, docked at St. Peter Port. Sorry, I can't continue - even I'm getting bored, but I will comment on one big coincidence that happened while eating breakfast. Our apartment overlooked the town and port and a cruise ship arrived that looked familiar. Would you believe it that of all the ships in all the world, the one in which we cruised last year in the Baltic should pick our holiday resort to visit when we were there. Wow!

August 15. Stunning Sunningdale GC in glorious sunshine and 40ish Surrey men and Tracey Maddison, from BIGGA HQ, played for the McMillan Tankard. Perfect conditions for an outstanding round of golf, until the beautiful and in flower heather came into play and magically removed my ball after ball from the face of the earth. Sunningdale is so special that it did not matter, for the walk round and the following Artisan's BBQ made it a day to remember. Now if only I can remember the result. At this point I had to phone Ron Christie to remind me that Mike Lake came first and carried off the Tankard presented by Jack McMillan. Gavin Kyle, that golfing phenomenon and charming chap, was runner-up with Aaron Crittenden in third. Longest drive was Anthony Terry Kojak Freeman and Nearest the Pin, Steve Alibaster.

Welcome to Surrey to Ben Edwards, who takes over West Hill GC from the Berkshire bound Ian Morrison. Our Chairman, John Ross, has left Laleham GC but I am confident that his charm, his MG badge and his somewhat fading good looks will see him rise again to the dizzy heights of management that I know he deserves.

The next event is the Tri-County golf competition at

Three Rivers GC in Essex on October 14. This is followed by the England v Scotland contest at Hankley Common GC on November 2. I would like it minuted that I am available for both events and am looking forward to my usual invitation to stay well away and leave my golf clubs at home where they will do no harm.

There is a rumour going round that I travel in ladies' underwear, this is completely untrue, although I will be able to supply logo clothing and wet weather gear later this year. If successful the under garments may follow.

Yours as ever

Brian Willmott

South West and South Wales Region



South West

What a fantastic time of year this is.....chilly mornings with dew an inch thick that covers the whole golf course, I must say, I love driving to work in the mornings, from the common looking down into the valley, all the houses are covered in this thick layer of fog, and look unbelievable. Shortly the leaves from the trees will start to turn then drop to ground.....hang on just a moment, maybe I'm getting a little ahead of myself, while I sit here and write this its only the middle of August.....plenty of sunshine left!

Well there is for me, as I'm off too Florida on September 1 for two weeks, not that I want you to feel bad or anything, but I've just had a look at the weather forecast for Florida, and the current temperature is in the 90s, FANTASTIC!

Back home, at Minchinhampton, we've just spent the last two weeks working on our greens. On the Avening course we solid tined all the greens followed by our scarifiers with a double pass. This was pretty simple, apart from having to work around a last minute Senior's Open Day and the ladies on a Tuesday. However, like I said this was pretty simple and was completed without any problems...we had

all the fun when we made a start on the Cherington course, again we solid tined the greens, but this time we included the use of a garden machine with the sand injector.

We have used this machine at Minchinhampton before so we knew what we were getting ourselves into, and this time we had a couple of extra summer staff to help us out. With everything in place, on Monday morning we were ready to get on this "challenge". We had the machine, we had the sand, about 15 tonnes in all and we had the all important manpower, nothing could stop us.....apart from the weather! This had to be the one week where the weather just didn't give up. I remember being on the 5th green, the garden work was complete and all that was left was the clearing, we also hired the SQL 600 to help us, this is a powered brush that collects the material, as you walk behind it. With six of us working at the time, the heavens thought this would be a cracking time to open up, all of us ran for cover.....with nothing else to do but watch the golfers dashing back to the clubhouse and the large rain drops bouncing off the windscreen. It didn't take long before the green we were working on was flooded. The worst thing about this is that this was at the beginning of the week, we still had four more days to go.

This is pretty much how most of the week went, stop, start, stop, start, just trying to do as much as we could when it wasn't raining and still manage two golf courses. This was a difficult couple of weeks we had, and a massive amount of credit must go to the guys at Minch, we really did just plough our way through the bad weather and cracked on with the task at hand. A great, great job done!

On Friday, September 27, Section Captain, Wayne Vincent, took a team over the bridge where we played our friendly neighbours, the South Wales Section. Wayne and his team travelled (over 100 miles) with high hopes, I'm sure at the start of the day any victory would have been welcome but to come away with a massive 6-0 win is just something else! Well done Wayne, and well done to all that played.

Just a reminder for everyone.....Thursday, October 14,

this is the next Section golf day. This time we have the pleasure of visiting Worlebury GC. Remember this is also our AGM. I look forward to seeing you all there.

adam.l.matthews@hotmail.co.uk
07732503855
Adam Matthews



South Coast

Hi to all,

Not much happening around the Section at the moment, we seem to be between golf events. Next up is the match against the South West Section to held at Sherbourne GC on October 6, hopefully I will get the results of that in next month's issue! The Autumn tournament is at Broadstone GC on October 19. This is our AGM meeting so we would welcome all the support we can get. Email glassy2003@hotmail.com if you are not already in. Or call Kevan on 01590 624143. Remember, Broadstone is one of the best venues in the Bournemouth area so don't miss out.

I have just returned from a couple of weeks away in Turkey, where I must say a great time was had by all. Barton was the last thing on my mind as copious amounts of beer were downed beside the pool. As I now see less and less of my three daughters, what with university etc. it was great to have them with us, especially to fetch the beer.

Reality then kicked in and it's back to work! The Workman has broken a leaf spring and the water pump is leaking, a bearing is going on the rotary and the fairway mower is awaiting new bottom blades; can you pick up some milk for tea break when you collect the puncture? Where did I go on holiday?

Must admit though the lads have done a fantastic job in my absence the course looks great. By the time you read this the Section committee will have met to discuss next year's fixtures and seminar so I can fill you in next month. As always anyone interested on coming on to the committee please make contact with me by email greenkeeper@bosgc.co.uk.

Thats it for this month, see

you at Broadstone. Don't forget Kevan Glass at the above address to book your tee time.

Tony Gadd



Devon and Cornwall

Not too much to report this month as our Section's season of events start now! Please go to the events section of the BIGGA website and GI magazine to see full listings of our upcoming events.

Duchy College has been busy though and here follows an update of the College's news.

Life after Steve Evans. The replacement for Steve is now in post and a few of you will have met Roger White, who has been accompanying Brian Summers on workplace visits. Roger has been redeployed from his post as Grounds Supervisor for Cornwall College (East Area) and I hope that you will support his induction to his new and demanding job role. He is keen to get to know you all and support the Greenkeeping industry in Devon and Cornwall.

Outstanding Ofsted result for Duchy College. Students, staff and friends of Duchy College are celebrating after Ofsted inspectors deemed its land-based provision to be outstanding. The report published in June recognised that Duchy College has an outstanding range of provision, along with an excellent range of practical and academic routes which meet the needs of the county's rural economy. Apprenticeship success was particularly praised with the report stating: "Outcomes for apprentices are outstanding. Across all subjects, success rates continue to improve and are significantly above the national average. The proportion of learners who complete their qualification within the timescale allocated to them is very high."

The inspectors highlighted the College's excellent learning environment in their report, noting that, "Learners enjoy their courses... they value their training, their supportive tutors and the friendly and welcoming atmosphere" and praised the links with industry that

Duchy College strives so hard to create and maintain, saying that, "Learners benefit from the excellent range of additional industry-specific short courses. The skills developed significantly improve learners' employability prospects and progression opportunities," I would like to thank all businesses and students who completed the many questionnaires that were circulated and that supported this result.

A special thanks to Mike Bush and the team at St Mellion Hotel and Golf Club, who hosted a workplace visit from the inspector. Also to Graeme Gallimore in his role as Educational Officer who represented the Greenkeeping Industry and to Nick Palfrey, Trethorne Golf Club, who represented students and who both met the inspectors. We all seemed to have survived

- Ron Skinner

George Pitts

Section Secretary

Bigga Devon & Cornwall

07929 754401

gpitts.yelverton@gmail.com



South Wales

Hope you are all well.

Firstly, a reminder that our Autumn Competition is to be held at Brynhill GC on Wednesday, October 14. This meeting will include the Section's AGM and will, I believe, take place before the golf. You should by now have had an invite with notification of the schedule for the day. Tee off time is at 1.30pm. Please try and make it for this event, even if it is to attend the AGM only, as this is your opportunity to raise any matters relating to the Section that you feel are important. Or you can carry on being a grumpy old man/woman for another year. It's up to you!

Also, as far as the course is concerned, I know what it's like to host a BIGGA event (Mountain Ash 1994, seems like yesterday) and the hard work involved. So come on guys and gals, let's show our support for Iain Grant and his team and to the Section.

Other news now. The Rigby Taylor Matchplay Tournament

due to be held at Neath GC on August 20 was cancelled due to heavy rain (I blame the Greenstaff) and had been rescheduled for Friday, September 10. Results weren't through at the time of going to print so will be in next month's column. As will a report on the annual Greenkeepers v Secretaries match.

The annual South West v South Wales match was held at the end of August at Ashburnham Golf Club. In a closely fought contest, played on a beautifully presented course, and, after countless count-backs, it was finally agreed that the South West team narrowly pipped the Welsh.... 6 bloody nil! So well done to the South West team and commiserations to the Welsh. Thanks to the Inscapes represented by Tony Horne for sponsoring the day, to Paul Hopkins for producing a great golf course under the direction of Huw Morgan who was watching from his vantage point in the Manager's office, and to Ashburnham GC for the club's hospitality and to everyone involved.

A bit of good news now especially for Steve Chappell, whose BIGGA Scholarship trip with Bernards was cancelled last year. He has just heard that the trip has now been re arranged and he shall be travelling to the GCSAA show at Orlando in Feb

2011. Have a great time Steve!

Right! I'm off to find out if Ms Julia Gillard, Australia's new Prime Minister, who hails from that picturesque and crime free seaside town of Barry, is related to the even more famous, Peter Gillard, former lecturer of Green-keeping at Pencoed College and IOG stalwart. Why, you might ask, is this important? Well, if they are related then the IOG might then have the backing of the Australian Government. Which will put them in a strong position in any future negotiations with BIGGA. I wonder if we can get her to attend the South Wales IOG Dinner? But only if she sponsors a table and brings a raffle prize.

I spoke on my Internet phone recently to an old friend who emigrated to Oz a few years ago and he described Ms Gillard as a 'Ranger' (pronounced like banger) which is in reference to her red hair and is short for Orangutan. I think this very unkind. This sort of name calling has no place in a modern society and I apologise to Orangutans everywhere.

Don't forget, if you have anything that you would like to have mentioned in this column then please contact me on the number below. Otherwise it'll be more ramblings in next month's column as well.

Ceri Richards
07831 168645



John Pemberton
Chief Executive

Sales for the space at the BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition, better known as BTME or Harrogate to many, continue to come in steadily. There is no doubt that there is reluctance by some to commit to a stand at this stage of the year, but for those that delay the choice of stand position is diminishing with each day that goes by.

I hear on the grapevine that some companies, not many I am glad to reveal, think that they can avoid booking a stand and instead they intend to have their representatives wander round the show selling through the back door. This is a practice that must not be allowed to happen and we will be vigilant in watching out for this.

Make no mistake they are cheats. Who are they cheating? They are cheating BIGGA; they are cheating the bone fide exhibitor who invests hard earned money in a legitimate stand and they are cheating you the Member. It is widely known that the profit from BTME is BIGGA's prime source of revenue and is used to heavily subsidise the rest of its activities for the benefit of the membership. If we condone sharp practice like this then I would immediately question our business principles. I for one will do all I can to stop these people and have them escorted off the premises. Indeed, if I get my way, I will also name and shame in Greenkeeper International. Let's hope my rant is in vain and everyone plays the game fairly, but I suspect some will still try to 'do it on the cheap'.

Anyone approached by a company trying to trade from the floor without being an exhibitor should report the details immediately to any member of the Board or the BIGGA Staff. They may think it's a smart move but the real loser is YOU, the Member, you may not realise it but as a Member you own a share in BIGGA. It literally is your Association.

Talking of Harrogate the Continue to Learn brochure is released this month and a copy should have arrived with your magazine. If not then a pdf can be downloaded from the BIGGA website. The quantity and quality of education on offer is unprecedented and I challenge anyone not to find something of interest. For many of the workshops and seminars places are limited so book early to avoid disappointment and also to avoid the VAT rise on the 1st January.

There has never been a more important time for you and your employer to invest in your future. We all know that golf is going through challenging times and whether greenkeeper or groundsman, you need to keep up to date with practices, products and the industry. You can now book your place for education or register for the show on-line through www.bigga.org.uk or www.harrogateweek.org.uk so let's see commitment to your future, the future of BIGGA and the future of the sports turf industry.

John Pemberton
Chief Executive

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