

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

Hello there!

I've finally landed back on my feet after being blown around daft at St Andrews.... What was all the fuss about? 40 mile an hour winds I guess! I could hardly stand on my own two feet and that was me using the bunker rake to hold me up!

Hats off to the players who had to suffer not only the strong winds on the Friday but the heavy showers of rain that visited every few hours. Just goes to show how well Louis Oosthuizen actually played over the whole week. He even managed to smile through every round..... I'm going to try that method, see if it helps my game.

Anyway I thoroughly enjoyed my involvement in the Open Support team. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Scott MacCallum and Rachael Duffy, of BIGGA, for the efforts that they both put in, not only during the week of The Open but long into the night organising us greenkeepers to be in certain places at certain times.

Thank you to you both and the other BIGGA representatives. Also a big thanks to the 52 greenkeepers involved, spirits were high throughout the Championship and a great week was had by all! Can't wait to do it all again in the future.

A congratulations is due to George Morrison and his partner, Maggie, on the arrival of their bouncing baby boy, Rory. Good wishes to the three of you from all in the Section.

Finally, we have a retirement in the Section this month, Robin McMillan, of Moffat Golf Club. Robin has been with Moffat

since 1974 and has clocked up some well earned miles over his tenure, Plenty time on your hands now, Robin, I personally think he won't be able to stay away! Robin handed the reigns over to Mike Wilson at the end of August. From all of us in the Section we wish you well in your retirement and good luck to Mike on his new appointment.

Remember guys get in touch with any news!

'til next time.

John Mair 07500874449

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Central

This year's Autumn outing will take place at Downfield GC on Thursday Sept 23. Entry forms should be with you shortly if you don't already them. We hope for a good turnout over what is a great course.

Course Manager, Paul Murphy, has indicated that he may even cut the greens for this special occasion but stopped short of a definite promise.

At the Section AGM, which is scheduled to be held at Elmwood in the last few days in October, we will be looking for a new Secretary/ Treasurer.

As you will be aware Andy Mellon gave up this position when he was elected National Vice-Chairman.

George Pendrich, who stood in temporarily has decided that his commitments to other matters means he cannot give it the attention the job deserves so any keen members out there please get in touch with someone on the committee.

Likewise, if there is anything a member would like us to consider staging as an educational event then please contact us.

Gordon Moir



West

Autumn has arrived and here we are preparing to core greens and verti-drain a variety of surfaces assuming we can take the machines around the course without sinking, what a difference to a couple of months ago when nothing would grow because of the dry conditions.

I hope all of you have had a good season and are looking forward to the course alterations scheduled with an abundance of enthusiasm and new lively spring in your step.

Only a couple of items to mention as very little seems to be happening, as usual not a soul has been on touch, but maybe that could change or people are just too busy.

The AGM due in October has still to be confirmed for the venue but will be along similar lines to previous years with a couple of speakers, some suggestions would be good if possible.

The annual dinner in November looks to be back to Victoria's but committee have still to confirm this as numbers last year were a bit disappointing.

The outing at Helensburgh Golf Club on September 2 will be reported on in the next issue.

Please remember gents to get in touch at stuart.taylor@glasgowgolfclub.com or on 0141-942-5554, or on mobile 07790823914.

Nice to see the Association recognised Cecil George for all his efforts over the years in relation to education and service to the West Section and before that SIGGA. It was a lovely article on a dedicated greenkeeper. Best wishes from the Section, Cecil.

Last, but not least, I would express our sadness at the passing of Gordon Howat's

mother during the summer. Our thoughts are with you at this difficult time.



North

I start again with another apology, communications or wires seemed to be crossed again. I sent the notes in again on time but it coincided with The Open and they seemed to have got lost along the way.

Editor's Note. Please accept my apologies for the omission of the North Notes for August. There was a communication/administration hiccup at our end. S Mac

The Scottish National Tournament was held back in June at Murcar Links. I must admit we were blessed with good weather on the day. The North Section were narrowly beaten by the Central Section on the four best nett scores. Richard Pirie, from Newmachar GC, won his section as did Derek Green, from Royal Aberdeen. I was lucky enough to win the best Nett score of the day and therefore collected the Friendship Trophy. I have now qualified for the National Championship, sponsored by Kubota and Charterhouse, down at The Berkshire Golf Club just outside London, along with David Simpson, of Crieff GC, who won the scratch competition.

The course on the day was in very good condition and that is all down to Brian Anderson and his staff at Murcar. Did you say that I could go down to the British, Brian? Murcar was immense!

A big thank you on behalf of the North Section goes to the Scottish Administrator, Peter Boyd who had organised the whole day, without him the event would never have hap-

pened. He was ably assisted by the one, the only, some people say thank goodness (or words to that effect), Neil Mitchell from Greentech. A thank you to all the trade who donated raffle prizes on the day. Without you guys the outings would not be possible either.

Just down the road from Murcar, a certain new golfing development is finally getting under way. Full planning permission for the course and driving range at Trump International Links has now been granted. At last some ground work can begin in earnest.

The North Section would like to wish Paul O'Connor and SOL Golf Construction Ltd all the best over the coming months and hopefully there are not too many sticking points.

Dale Robertson will have sent the forms out for the Autumn outing at Huntly GC. He asks that if you do intend going that you get the forms back to him as soon as possible and then hopefully we can get a great turn out just like we did at Deeside back in May. Ross assures me that the course will be in tip top condition!

Brian Hunter, from McDonald Golf Club in Ellon, has returned from his weary duties down at The Open. I don't know if many of you were watching the coverage on the TV during Saturday's play but he was lucky enough to get Henrik Stenson and Trevor Immelman. When they reached the 17th Road hole, one of the players landed in the famous Road Hole bunker and as you are probably aware there is a camera in it. Well when it came to raking the bunker the camera shot to him and Peter Alliss started talking about the BIGGA Support Team and how well they had been working. Brian finished raking the bunker then sat down on the edge of it. Peter Alliss then said something along the lines of, "It looks as though he's had enough!" when in fact he was actually ducking down out the way so he wasn't in the line of sight of the players.

He was very fortunate too on the Sunday as he had the final group on the last day. Knowing him I could imagine him beaming with pride walking up the 18th with the crowd behind him. He was quite emotional when he found out he had the last group, so much so that he actually kissed the Editor, Scott

MacCallum. Never mind Brian! He would like to thank BIGGA for the opportunity of working with the Support team and that he had the time of his life despite being out on the course on the Friday for a round lasting just over eight hours!

One other bit of news this month is that Euan Rankin, from Murcar Links, left us last month. He has gone back to working along side his father at Fyvie Golf Club. Good luck Euan in this new venture for you and despite what Brian says you will be missed.

I did say I was clutching at straws for news this month, so I do apologise again. It is hard to get stories throughout the summer months so I do have to waffle on a bit! If you do have any news no matter how big or small then give me a shout on 07813889374 or on tinternet benbrookes@yahoo.co.uk. Happy Greenkeeping.

Ben Brookes
Murcar Links

Northern Region



Northern

Hello everyone, hope you are all enjoying the summer. With this warm wet weather at the moment, the grass seems to be growing faster than we can cut it. On June 14 at the annual Northern v Sheffield match, we managed to retain the trophy by drawing the match 3-3. The Section would like to thank Woolley Park GC. for hosting the match, and Rigby Taylors for sponsoring it. The weather for the early starters was good, but with a late thunder storm it was difficult for the last few games to finish. One item of news, the Section would like to congratulate Phil Rowbottam, from Woolley Park, on his selection to the England clay pigeon shooting team, and managing to win a team gold medal. The next Section event is the Autumn Tournament plus A.G.M. on September 29, to be held at Bradford GC. First tee 10am. I will be on holiday the week before the event, so please contact me early, or contact J.Watts on 07720294031 to book your place. As usual please contact me at 72 West

Park Grove Roundhay, LS8 2DY. 07947401278. E mail frankstewart3@hotmail.co.uk.

Frank Stewart



North East

Hello everyone. It's that time of the month again unfortunately not a lot of news to talk about, only my holidays which I have always threatened to write about should I not receive any news. Well I popped over to Spain with my family, but before that I had decided to get in touch with Wendy O'Brien, Superintendent at one of those Polaris World courses to ask if she could show us around her course, Wendy previously worked at Carden Park before moving to Spain..

My son, Steven, and I certainly got our eyes opened, especially at the size of the bunkers. Can you believe the total yardage of bunkers covered eight hectares? Some were the total length of the hole and, of course, plenty of water to go with it?

Anyway, anybody thinking of moving over to Spain for a job forget it as they are having a worse recession than us. In fact, Polaris World has sold three of its courses already. To top that the heat is unbearable, it was around 34 degrees centigrade when we visited. So, Wendy, if you manage to read my Section news, thanks for the tour.

Now on the membership news. I believe Barry Wilson, of Stocksfield GC, has taken early retirement due to ill health. Let's hope he gets better. Now that he's gone we don't seem to have any golfing members from there to play in our Section do's. Mind you they aren't the only club. One club in the Section has gone one better, having paid the subs for their staff of five for years and years the new manager claims they cannot afford it. Come on, think of the benefits both club and staff get, at this rate we will never achieve good relationships between greenkeeper and the powers that be.

And finally just to remind you that the Autumn comp is at Gosforth GC [Bridal Path] on October 6. Everyone will be notified via T.S.L as they do our

postage, next year. Still going to try and keep it central. Courses being considered are Newcastle Utd in the Spring and Heworth for the Autumn. If anyone wants their course chosen just get in touch with me and I'll see what I can do.

Jimmy Richardson



North Wales

It's hard to believe we're heading into the close of the summer's competitive season already with club finals being played in clubs all over our Section and the scratch season coming to a close all in this next few weeks. Whether it's me getting a little older or time is actually moving faster because the "September blues" as I call it when the days get shorter (and so does your patience!) seems to be happening a lot sooner after the spring flush than it used to.

This month is also the start of autumn renovation, if you've got an understanding committee or board of management, renovation can start early in the month, if you're like the rest of us (which will most probably be the majority of us) you will have to wait until the end of September, when recovery (and the inevitable whinges that follow) takes longer to happen, but that's enough of my whinging.

In local news, congratulations go to Dave Lewis and his team for hosting one of the Ladies European Tour events at Conwy Golf Club, I understand that Dave left the ladies well satisfied! (With the course anyway). Congratulations also go to Ewan Jones, of Eaton Golf Club, and his wife who recently became parents to their baby boy, Zac. It's not only the ground that's fertile at Eaton because Bryn Roberts and his wife are expecting the pater of tiny feet in November as well. Best of luck to you both! Pat Mcateer, of Nefyn Golf Club, has made it on to the Support Team at the Ryder Cup, Well done Pat, show them how professional North Wales greenkeepers work. Last of all don't forget our Autumn Tournament at Mold Golf Club on the 30th. Entry forms to Jez Hughes ASAP please.

All the best until next month

Pete Maybury petemayb66@aol.com 07756001187

Midland Region



East Midland

Ah, the long dry summer.... Seems a distant dream now! I blame myself. I was foolish enough to write my summer newsletter to my members at the end of June, where references to drought were made. As I am writing this the dry summer has been broken by three weeks of wet and cool conditions, but by the time you are reading this let's hope summer has returned? I do wonder though just what we as greenkeepers would prefer, long dry hot summers, or wet and cool?

Back to the activities in our Section now, and first details of the Summer Tournament and second National Championship qualifier that was held at Rothley Park. Thanks as always to our sponsors for the day, which were, Countrywide farmers, Henton and Chattell, Banks Amenity and Tacit. Winners were Cat 1, Paul Frith, 38pts; Cat 2, Mitchell Jordan, 33pts. The trade prize went to Mick Marvell, with 33pts. Longest Drive and Nearest the Pin both went to Paul Frith. Paul's good day saw him qualify in Cat 1 for the National Championship, with Pete Smith (that's me) putting in another solid display to clinch the qualifying spot in Cat 2.

The course was in fantastic condition and thanks go to Nigel Colley and his team, on another note thanks again go Nigel, due to various reasons he has now stepped down from his role on the committee as Vice Chairman for the Section, we would like to take this opportunity to wish him well and thank him for all his hard work. Congratulations are also due to former committee member Craig Watt, Deputy at Glen Gorse GC, he and his wife, Amye, are celebrating the arrival of son, Isaac, on July 13, Isaac weighed in at a healthy 9lb 4 oz.

The Headland Pairs competition is coming to its conclusion with some semi finalists already decided, more news on the semis and final will hopefully be available in the next update, likewise no news as yet on who is taking the blame between myself and my partner for our

appalling performances in the competition. News on that, as it breaks!

This year's Autumn Education day is to be held at Birstall Golf Club on Thursday, November 18. Subjects for the day are being finalised and places will be limited so watch out for your invites/registration forms soon. Greg Skinner, my colleague on the education front, is very close to finalising Excavator Training, although I think he is having trouble convincing his committee that having 20 trainee digger drivers at Forest Hill GC is a good idea!

It's not always easy finding things to write about, so in an effort to avoid 500 words of drivel next month, anybody with any news from within our section can contact me at pds1@btinternet.com, you have been warned!

Regards to all
Pete Smith



Midland

Well it never ceases to amaze me the many differing conditions that can affect sports turf, and our wonderful ability to diagnose such influences and respond to such. However one that was recently of puzzlement to me, was slight desiccation to the sward with no other apparent factors. Unbeknown to me, a helicopter had landed and taken-off on the said sward. I wonder whether the STRI will include such in their revised book regarding "Turf Grass Pests, Diseases, and Disorders". Such could take the name/condition of: "Helicopter exhaust desiccation syndrome".

Anyway, now down to the real news and my thanks to our Chair, Ed, for the following (I hope that you have recovered from that food poisoning mate). Edgbaston Golf Club held the Summer Tournament on Monday, July 19. Our thanks to Eddie Mills and his team for producing a great looking golf course. The windy conditions made us feel like we were at St. Andrews! Thanks too for Edgbaston's hospitality for allowing us the day.

Thanks to New Holland

Tractors and Simon Gumbrill, of Campeys, as the main prize sponsors for the day.

Thanks as always to our President, John Hammond, for starting us off at the 1st tee.

Thanks to Kev, and Turner Groundscare, for the refreshments before and half way around.

Thanks to British Seed Houses, Sherriff Amenity, Whitemoss and Crocodile Golf Products for Nearest the Pin prizes.

Results: Gross: 1. Mike Hughes, 31pts; Nett 1. Mike Large, 40pts; 2. Paul Jeffries, 38pts; 3. Jim Gilchrist, 38pts. Div 1. Mike Hughes; Div 2. Dave Fellows; Div 3. Andy Brougham. Trade. Peter McCrainor.

Nearest the Pin Winners. P. Jeffries, C. Woodall, E. Stant, J. Ganley.

Lovely to see three new faces at the golf, Mick Large, Wayne Banner and Anthony Wilkes. Please come again, gentlemen!

Congratulations to Vince Gilroy on his appointment as Course Manager at Gay Hill Golf Club.

Can all members and trade alike look to the website for information. All new members are required to bring a handicap certificate if they have one and don't forget we always require a jacket and tie for our sit down meal after the golf.

Please look on website for the next BIGGA Breakfast Club meeting. The last one was held at Great Barr Golf Club on Wednesday, August 18 where the STRI were demonstrating their Performance Measuring tools and the benefits of recording this data.

And now just time to mention our wonderful sponsors of this month's calendar page. Such being our long term sponsors of the Section Scotts. Please consider them for your fertiliser etc needs, and visit their web-site with your enquires; www.scottspromotional.co.uk <<http://www.scottspromotional.co.uk>>. Also, good luck to those remaining in the Scotts Doubles Knockout Tournament.

Don't forget to get your entries in for the Autumn Tournament to be held at the wonderful venue that is Beau Desert Golf Club on October 7. Start time 10am at only £20. Also, don't forget that our AGM is also to be held there with a start time of 5pm. All of

course are welcome to attend. Your thoughts and council are of great importance to the committee, indeed without such it is all most impossible to serve you, but we do. Impossible we do, however miracles take a little longer!

Well that's me, off in five days for six and a half, can't wait! SW-Alan, Caersws pal, the land of 4lb wild Browns 3lb Grayling, Salmon, oh and of course the odd Chub.

Sean McDade



Mid Anglia

Hello all, it's been a long time since I've had to do this article, but Craig and his wife have just had their second child and they're a little busy, as you can well imagine! Congratulations to the both of you from us all.

I hope you're all praying for some much needed rain, but only between 6pm and 6am! Its nice to have a prolonged spell of dry, warm weather, it's been a few years of wet summers and I hope your courses are holding up well.

Our Summer comp was held at Stocks Golf Club and we managed to get 33 players to attend at such short notice, as we had to bring it forward due to a cancellation from one of our Charity events.

Of those who made it, all had a great day, played well, ate well, drank well and with the relaxed dress code, felt more comfortable on a warm summers night.

I would like to thank my boss, Mr Harris, for allowing us to hold our event at Stocks as we don't normally have Corporate or Society days.

Our sponsors for the day were Tacit, and what a prize table, thanks go to Tim Webb and Mark Day for their generosity, also a big thank you goes to Michael Payne, Steve Bush, of Ernest Doe, and his wife for hosting the BBQ all day and putting on a great spread for us. To Nigel Church, of Ransomes Jacobsen, for providing the on-course refreshments too and all our other trade members who support our Section so well.

I personally want to say thanks to my staff for presenting the course in probably its best

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condition over the last few years, well done lads.

The results for the day were as follows: 1. P. Crouch, 43pts; 2. M. Lambert, 40pts; 3. G. James, 39pts; 4. S. Mason, 39pts. Trade, M. Payne, 41pts. Nearest the Pin. S. Banks and, finally, Longest Drive. G. Bruce.

I hope everyone enjoyed the day and I'll try again in a few years to hold another comp, but with a clubhouse this time.

Some dates for your diaries, the Autumn meet is at Berkhamsted G C on October 20 followed with the AGM and the Christmas Scramble is at Ashridge GC on December 15. Please get your entries in early as this one is sure to fill up very quickly.

That's all for now, if you have any news at all that you want aired through this article, then contact one of the committee and we will get it in the next available publication.

Steve Mason.



East of England

Our second golf day of the year was played on July 15, at Tydd St Giles Golf Club. The day was sponsored by Collier Turf Care and Burdens Groundcare, many thanks to them for their continued support.

The results were as follows: 1, G. Macdonald; 2, B Robinson; 3, D Beba

Nearest the Pin, J P Bowers; Longest Drive, G Macdonald

Many thanks to all at Tydd St Giles for their hospitality, the food provided and the condition of the golf course.

Our next golf day is the eagerly anticipated Greenkeepers vs

Trade, this year to be held on September 22 at Lincoln Golf Club. Please email your notes to scott@bigga.co.uk by the 5th of the month, to ensure inclusion in the next issue. Steve Beverly, Immingham Golf Club

South West and South Wales



South Wales

Hi Everyone!

Firstly, Here's hoping that you are all well and are looking forward to your Autumn renovation and the subsequent comments of approval and encouragement for your members!

The Summer tournament was held at Glynneath Golf Club in July and around 25 players enjoyed the warm (after a wet start) summer weather and a golf course that was in great condition, which was a credit to HGK Kevin Griffiths, Darryl Jones and the rest of the Greenstaff. The buffet meal was excellent, as were the prizes, which were provided by the day's sponsors, Tacit, represented by Steve Milton. Thank you for sponsoring our section once more. The results were as follows: 1. Darryl Jones, Glynneath, 37 pts; 2. Nigel Ruck, Glynhir, 31 pts (bih); 3. Wayne Benger (Glyhir, 31pts. Nearest The Pin: Nigel Sandquest, Glynhir; Longest Drive: Mark Wilshire, Newport.,

Trade: Peter Holstrom, Countrywide. The prize for the most frantic search for a raffle ticket went to Gary Rose, Corus.

Commiserations to Mal from Glynhir, who was the only attendee from his club not to win anything!

Our sincere thanks go out to Glynneath Golf Club for their hospitality, to Steve Chappell for his work in organising the event, to Jane Jones, Regional Administrator for BIGGA, to Peter Holstrom and myself (!) for the raffle prizes and to everyone who attended.

As I write, preparations are on course for October's Ryder Cup. Everyone I have spoken to who are on the Greenkeeping Support Team are looking forward to the event immensely. So good luck to Jim McKenzie and everyone involved. Please God, let it stay dry! And if it does then be sure to point this out to Nick Faldo if you see him, but he may be laying low for a while!

The annual Greenkeepers V Secretaries Golf match will be held this month, details weren't

available at the time of going to press, so if you would like to play then please contact Steve Chappell.

I do know that it will be again sponsored by CWC so thanks to Alan Abel for their continued support.

The next golf day (and AGM) will be held at Brynhill GC on October 14. Invites will be sent out but if you haven't received one then please contact Steve Chappell.

Finally, on a rather sad note, I learned that three Head Greenkeepers from the section have recently lost their fathers. So to Harvey, Julian and Steve, I quote an old proverb. 'Say not in grief 'He is no more' but live in the thankfulness that he was'.

Take Care

Ceri Richards



South Coast

Hi all,

Hope your summer is going well, as I write this in early August the weather forecasters are saying that rain is on the way with a cooler changeable week, we will see.

Firstly, the results of the summer tournament held at Stoneham Golf Club in July. This is our invitation day sponsored by Tacit, the prize table consists of wine (lots of it). Results: 1. Chris Bitten and Clive Cook, Stoneham; 2. Tony Gadd and Graham Hodgkinson, Barton on Sea; 3. Stephen Christopher and Stephen Rayment, Barton on Sea

Longest Drive. Chris Bitten. Nearest the Pin - Tony Crouch.

Hole in One. Ben Bishop.

What a day! First the weather took a massive change and blew a gale, at least it didn't rain. Wonderful to see some old faces returning to the section Alan Rideout, Tony Crouch and Tony Locke. Also great to see some new faces Beverly Blair, from Southwick Park GC, Sadly Beverly's day was ruined when she fell and broke her ankle while out on the course.

We all hope you are making a full and rapid recovery, looking forward to playing Southwick next year.

The course was in excellent condition, thanks to Vince and

his team for all their efforts. Lastly, thanks to the sponsors Tacit for their ongoing support, (you can see who the wine drinkers are as the same names crop up each year)!

The annual match against the S. West will be held at Sherbourne GC, on October 6. If you want to play contact Kevan Glass by email glassy2003@hotmail.com its only 10 a side so be quick. Following that on October 19 we have our Autumn tournament at Broadstone GC, this is our AGM day so we need good support. Once again contact Kev on the above email or phone 01590/622643.

Here at Barton we are still incredibly dry, I am being accused of always top dressing the greens on ladies day and watering one of our members who was on the course too early one morning. My excuse is my age, I can easily forget which day of the week it is and as for watering with the remote control with all those codes you have to put in its easy to get the wrong green! Anyway my wife tells me I am in a mid-life crisis as I keep looking at motorbikes!

Lastly, and on a very sad note Ian Noble, Course Manager at Moors Valley, has been made redundant after 23 years service. I'm sure that all of you that know him will join with me in wishing him well in whatever venture he chooses.

Tony Gadd



Devon and Cornwall

Hello all. Not much to report regarding events as this is our quiet time! We now have a full fixture list for the forthcoming 2010-2011 season of events. Fixture cards have been sponsored and printed courtesy of Martin Ward at Symbio. The first event for your diary will be our Golf Day and AGM at Stover Golf Club on Wednesday, October 6. The fixture cards will be sent out to all Devon and Cornwall members very soon. In the meantime, please check on forthcoming events via the events sections of the GI magazine and the BIGGA website.

Many thanks to Symbio for the sponsorship of these fixture cards.

Congratulations to Gavin Moore, from Launceston Golf Club who has earned himself a place in the national final of the Toro student of the year 2010. On behalf of the section I would like to wish Gavin every success in the finals at Aldwark Manor in September.

Steve Hasell, Cannington College Lecturer/Programme Manager, is to retire after 37 years. Steve will be a familiar face to most Greenkeepers throughout the South West and beyond. Anyone who has attended Cannington on a training course or as a student from NVQ to HE level courses would have been taught by Steve who specialised in Mechanisation.

Steve also spent many hours organising the Greenkeeping training as Programme Manager. Anyone who has met or been taught by Steve has known of his passion and enthusiasm for education and what a fantastic character he is, once met, never forgotten! I had the privilege of studying under and later working alongside Steve at Cannington and I would personally like to congratulate him on all he has done for Greenkeeping Education. If it wasn't for Steve, Greenkeeping courses may well have been lost at Cannington College! I know Steve would like to think he has had a positive impact on his past students and would like to thank them for being so attentive in Class (well mostly!) and wishes them all the best for their future. From the Section, we would like to wish Steve every happiness in his well-earned retirement.

Catch up with you all soon,
George Pitts



South West

What a great week that was, not sure that Paul Casey would agree, I'm not sure that Lee Westwood had the time of his life and I'm pretty sure that Tiger Woods was hoping for a little more... However, for the greenkeepers that were apart of the BIGGA Support team that really was a great week. Just recently I was fortunate enough to be a part of the 2010

Open at St Andrews.

This month I want to tell you about my time at The Open. Most people arrived on the Wednesday which was of course the main practice day, those that wanted to go and have a look around the Old Course, St Andrews could do so. This is when I realised that I was totally unprepared for the weather conditions in "sunny" Scotland, I still don't understand why I thought it was a good idea to leave my waterproofs behind! But anyway, I was walking around one of the greatest places in golfing history, I was not going to let the weather ruin this, just wished that some of the golfers were as brave. By the time we were ready to enjoy watching some of the big names play their practice round the weather changed all of this. However, I managed to find my way to the driving range, I was like a little kid in a candy shop, watching the pros "smash" balls for fun, however, I did have to laugh when I witnessed Sir Nick Faldo thin one!

That evening we had our pre event meeting and we were given our matches for the Thursday. My first group for the Thursday was with Todd Hamilton, the 2004 Champion. For me, this was rather a quiet morning, it wasn't until the 11th hole, a testing par 3 that I was called into action.

I had to wait to rake the bunker while the match putted out, by this time John Daly and his group were standing on the tee, no pressure I thought, I'll just have to hold him up, it's only the big John Daly and he only had a few thousand people watching...

As I had an early tee time, this meant I had most of the afternoon to kill, so returned to the driving range, this time it was even better, Tiger Woods turned up, I was stood about 10 metres away from him, watching him hit balls for about 30 minutes, and still not even sure he noticed me, probably because I'm not blonde with a nice cleavage.

Friday was the day play was delayed, I happened to be at the furthest point away from the clubhouse, which was not fun! I was grouped with an amateur on the Friday, he was playing really well, -1 thru 11 holes, looking like he may make the

cut, however, play restarted and he never looked like the same player and unfortunately started to drop shots. A real shame, I'm sure he will be back to play again one day.

The Saturday was rather uneventful, being paired with two Americans who didn't seem to care that we were even around and after raking four bunkers for one of the players... never mind, that's just the way some people are I guess.

The Sunday was the best day, this time I was with Ricky Fowler and Matt Kucher, two of golfers at their finest. Without being rude, I'd never heard of Ricky Fowler before, people reassured me that he was the next big thing and everyone in the US loved him. Dressed in all orange to represent his uni colours.

Watching him play was amazing, his ball striking was so pure, I don't even recall him missing a green on the front 9. I know that he didn't go in any bunkers all week.

I would like to thank everyone who attended The Open. Being with such a great bunch of people for the week was fantastic.

To more "real life" matters now then I guess. The South West Section Golf Management competition was recently played, sponsored by Scott's Turf Professional. Held at Marlborough GC, which I hear was in fantastic condition! The overall winners were Chipping Sodbury GC, scoring 86 points, well done JK. Second was Saltford GC with 81 points and third was Chippenham GC club with 78 points. Nearest the pin was won by M Horler and the longest drive went to Gwen Spear.

Thank you everyone who attended this event, I trust you all had a wonderful time.

Just another reminder guys that the South West Section has its own Facebook page. This was set up by Jamie Acton, and it is already becoming a big success. I encourage all of you that are on Facebook to check this out, and if you're not on Facebook, its time you logged on.

Hope to see you all very soon. As always keep in contact, it's great to hear from everyone one of you.

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Assistant Profile

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

This is not the first time that 'Sheeno' has been featured in a magazine. This pool-playing poet once had a poem published! He also follows the Blue half of Glasgow...

Name: Stephen Sheehan
Age: 24
Club: East Kilbride
Position: Assistant
Nickname: Sheeno



1. How long have you been greenkeeping?
Five and a half years.

2. What was it about the career that attracted you? Like working outdoors.

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

4. Which task do you most enjoy doing and why? Cutting rough or raking bunkers on a summer's day.

5. Which task do you least enjoy doing and why?
Hollowcoring! Millions of cores feels like it's never going to end.

6. What one thing - other than a pay rise - would improve the greenkeepers' lot?
There should be a rule banning members from playing before 8am.

7. Hobbies? Pool, snooker, watching footy

8. Favourite Band? Kenny Rodgers

9. Which team do you support? Glasgow Rangers

10. What is your claim to fame?
Once had a poem published in a magazine.

South East Region



Kent

You know how it is. Sometimes things that seem implausible just happen.

There I was toiling away at Birchwood when a call came through inviting me to play in a Pro-Am for an Ernest Doe & Sons team at Sittingbourne Golf Club the following week! After several seconds of um-ing and ah-ing, and being brave enough to make a decision without consulting the wife, that was it. The day was in the diary and nothing was going to stop me. The lead up to the event should have been a heady mix of fine tuning, putting, pitching, driving and grovelling to the wife but before I knew it the day had arrived and none of the golfing practice side of things had materialised although several excursions with the Hoover had fortunately appeased the initial misgivings of the marital spouse.

Sittingbourne Golf Club was fantastic. Almost unbelievably green in the current 60 day plus drought, Dave Horne had presented the course brilliantly for the pros and the likes of me to enjoy. It goes without saying that my golf didn't live up to expectations or do the course any justice but, I'm pleased to say, our team came second overall so thanks to my playing partners, Tom Smith, Colne Valley, and Andy Turbin, of Ernest Doe. Less said about our pro the better.

Many thanks to Ernest Doe & Sons for the invitation.

Of course, this event should have stood me in good stead for our latest Kent Greenkeepers' event at Herne Bay Golf Club. The latest in our epic annual tour of the magnificent county in which we are proud to live. I have to say that one of the abiding memories of going to Herne Bay was the welcome we received from the golf club. They were extremely courteous hosts and, obviously with Phil Hirst, John Fullager, Steve Ellis and Sam Brearly presenting to the course to its optimum level, I would like to thank them for all the efforts they made for us on the day.

The course played deceptively

difficult despite a fairly innocuous appearance. After opening with a good par my round fell away rapidly as I (again) got caught up enjoying the company of my group too much to worry about the golf. Thanks to Barry Bradshaw, Mark Roach and Pete Leeves for making the round so enjoyable and to Steve Vogels, from John Shaw Machinery, for bravely winning a (hopefully substantial) bet by wearing the comedy shorts on the day.

Local knowledge proved to be key (not surprising bearing in my mind some of the pin positions) and the results were as follows: 1. Phil Hirst 33 pts; 2 and 3 were the Dynamic Duo from North Foreland of Adam White and Lee Campany.

Trade prize was won very deservedly by Pete Leeves and his magic putter.

By the time you lot read this, the next event will be only days away at the superb venue that is King's Hill Golf Club. We really have been very lucky this year to play so many great courses and I hope as many of you as possible will be able to join us on September 15. It goes without saying that we need confirmation of numbers a week prior to the event so please call me to let me know if you're coming. Guests welcome too.

Prior to that, I'm off on my holidays to Egypt where I'm hoping the sun will constantly shine while we get the rain we so desperately need at home.

Take care one and all
Best of British
Rob Holland
kentgreenkeepers.com
07843 410755



Surrey

Monday August 2, was my birthday and I can now sing that old Beatles song, 'When I get older, losing my hair' etc. Chris Rudkin, my new near neighbour, although still hairy is also qualified to sing and remember with me that tune, recorded many years ago, when 64 to us seemed very old indeed. Now 64 feels comfortable and I feel no older than when I started calling on you some 20 years ago.

Enough of this reminiscing - I

should not keep remembering the past, but look forward to the future and my holiday in Guernsey later this month. News of this will feature heavily in October's edition.

Epsom GC, managed by our new Dad, Mark Harvey, has been the scene of two mishaps recently. Unable to expedite the departure of a visiting Worthing representative, (no names of course), by conventional means, Mark finally persuaded him to leave by reversing his pick-up into the said representative's new car. An accident, some would say, but I have heard that it has been contemplated at other clubs in Surrey.

The second mishap was the complete demolition of Mark's irrigation water storage tank, by forces unknown. Surely the damage to a new car and the destruction of an old water tank in the same month must be a complete co-incidence.

Jaws, be afraid and very careful, for Les 'the fly' Coombes, Windlesham GC, is fly-casting the waters of Avington for the whopper trout that weighs over 20lbs. His best so far is 13.5lbs. Any trout that Les captures at 20lbs or above is not to be fried, baked or smoked but will be despatched to the taxidermist to be stuffed, mounted and then displayed in the comfort of Chateau Coombes along with Les' other antiquities and objets d'art.

Surrey bandits raided Sussex Section at Haywards Heath GC, on August 5, and successfully picked up second prize in a three-man team event. Yours truly, Anthony 'Tel' Freeman and Tony 'Lars' Bremer narrowly escaped incarceration and flogging before fleeing back to their Surrey homeland. Thanks to Peter Ray and his team for a course that was very enjoyable to play and because of some recent rain was showing signs of the normal green, green grass of home.

Addington Palace GC hosted a Suppliers' Day, on July 28, and the above team + an old Surrey member, Douglas Iolanthe Fernie played with all our usual endeavour to come nowhere. Despite our disappointment, we realised that the course, although dry, had excellent and fast greens, all due no doubt to the instructions left by the on holiday Course Manager, Ronnie Christie.

When Enid Blyton wrote the

Famous Five books, her characters didn't ride powerful motorcycles along country roads but sailed quietly in boats to secret islands and all returned safely to their mummies and daddies. Unlike them Surrey Section's Infamous Five, Jim, Terry, Anthony, John and Paul went to see bike racing at Silverstone but only three arrived. Terry went to hospital, having broken his arm and Jim had to go home in a recovery vehicle, having hit Paul's bike when Paul had stopped to help Terry.

The moral of this story is keep your distance and exchange your two wheeled conveyance for an armour-plated Land Rover. It may not be as much fun but you will always go home safely, like the Famous Five, to your mummies and daddies.

My last paragraph is to congratulate Lingfield Park GC, Lingfield Park racecourse, Marriott Hotels and sponsors Vines BMW on creating an exciting venue for an activity holiday and week-end break for those who enjoy golf, horse racing and hotel luxury.

Brian Willmott



Essex

May I firstly on behalf of the Essex Section, pass on our condolences to Neil Peachey. Our thoughts are with you.

Ian Wood reported on the match held earlier in the month when the Greenkeepers played the Essex Captains, at Romford. Unfortunately the Captains won the day, beating the Greenkeepers by 16½ to 6½. We lost again! That's at least 10 years - we'll have to arrange more BIGGA days to get some practice in!

Winning Captain - Steve Range, from Hartswood. Winning Greenkeeper - Stewart Rogers from Orsett. Both scored a very creditable 41 points.

Ian partnered Ian Denny and beat Ian Seymour, Romford Captain, and Ian Timpson, Essex Captain Society Captain, from Royal Epping. (A four times 'Ian' football - they had all the jokes.)

Craig Campbell, from Romford, partnered Jon Selwood and they beat two Past Romford Captains, Steve Baker and Brian Baker.

The Tuckwell Golf Team Championship was held at Bentley Golf Club; Tuesday, July 20 a warm day greeted the 26 three man teams that took part, with a greenkeeper and two club officials making up the team. First place went to Romford Golf Club with 57 points for the Texas Scramble format. With a tenth of the combined.

Ian Wood's 25 handicap with his team mates 3 & 4 giving a combined 32 and with just three shots to play with the end result was a great score.

I understand they had three eagles in their round. James Tuckwell thanked Bentley Golf Club and Mark Stopps and his team for a fine day and the compliments about the courses' condition flowed.

We were very sorry that Neil could not be with us on such a great day, he was greatly missed. Robbie assisted James in the running of the day and we all enjoyed the fine hospitality that we were given. Our thanks once more to, P. Tuckwell Ltd and Bentley Golf Club.

I spent five very happy days up at the Open Golf Championship's in St Andrews with the

BIGGA Open Support team. I thoroughly enjoying the experience, meeting up with old friends and learning one or two things to boot, the camaraderie and friendship is something I will never forget, thank you to all those that made it such a worthwhile trip. What a course! If you ever get the opportunity to play or walk the course, grab it with both hands, it really is the true test of golf.

The knockout competition is down to the semi-finals stage and we will have a new winning team this year, with the overall winner's prize a trip to the National Championship, sponsored by Kubota and Charterhouse.

Next month I will have the results of our golf day at Boyce Hill Golf Club for you, plus some other information from the Section.

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



John Pemberton
Chief Executive

September already and it is noticeable how the nights are beginning to pull in with the start of Autumn just around the corner. A depressing thought and with this year's New Year resolutions now a distant memory there is not enough time left in 2010 to make up for lost time. I wonder how many of you have managed to fulfil your own ambitions in these very testing times.

As you will read in the Chairman's Column, BIGGA attended a meeting at the NEC to discuss the future of trade shows in response to pressure from a number of companies. There is no doubt that exhibitions in general are not as strong as they used to be and both the IOG and ourselves need to look at how we can evolve and adapt to suit a changing market place. A further meeting has been scheduled and we will keep members updated on a regular basis.

The Continue to Learn brochure, that outlines the education programme at Harrogate Week, next January, will be released at the start of next month and I hope that as many of you as possible, take advantage of the opportunities on offer. It is equally important that clubs recognise the value of Continuing Professional Development and encourage their staff to participate in Harrogate Week, in the quest to improve the standard of both their own performance, as well as that of their team. I am hoping that by working more closely with some of the other major bodies in golf that this message can be delivered to golf club owners and committees with greater conviction, better success and that participation in the event will be understood to be a must.

Times are difficult and I don't think we are anywhere near being through the worst of the economic struggle. However, I never fail to be amazed at the actions of some clubs. The golf course must unquestionably be the club's most valuable asset and yet we so often see greenkeeping staff being the first resource that is targeted in a budget cut. More worryingly, the victims of cuts are sometimes the Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper, mainly because they tend to be the higher paid members of staff, and yet it is they who have the greatest skills, the very skills needed to give the club that competitive edge.

Perhaps it is time that BIGGA, the GCMA, the Home Unions and the PGA got together to create some form of business advisory service to ailing clubs. Now there's a thought!

BIGGA will be exhibiting at SALTEX and a warm welcome awaits you on our stand. We will also be pleased to welcome non-members and talk to them about the work that we do and the benefits of being a member.

BIGGA is working closer and closer with the IOG and so please support their event if you can. It is however paramount that Harrogate Week 2011 is a success - the success of the Association and the success of your future membership depends upon it. Many companies are still sat on the fence and have not committed to exhibiting because they do not feel that the membership is supportive enough of their Association's key event.

Tell them they are wrong. Prove to them that they are wrong!

John Pemberton
Chief Executive

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on 01347 833800**