

Surrey



Monday November 7. I have today been ringing a few Surrey members in the hope that someone has an exciting bit of news for me to relate to you all. Well, I have warned you many times in the past that if you don't tell me I will tell you. Therefore my latest holiday, was short, only a weekend break, Friday, October 28 to Sunday, October 30, in Studland Bay, Dorset, only a stone's throw from The Isle of Purbeck GC. I did not play golf, I did not join two other males in their pursuit of an all over sun tan on the naturist beach and I did not swim in the sea. I did eat three meals a day, drank a little vino and sampled the local public transport service, using my bus pass, to the delightful but slightly damp seaside resort of Swanage. Now if that doesn't bore you to tears, again be warned, I can go on with this sort of interesting travelogue for as long as it takes.

I hope you enjoyed the seminar, arranged by Les Howkins, on December 1. I was hoping to put the information in last month's edition but the speakers had not been finalised. Cameron McMillan was hopefully participating, probably on the same subject on which he will be speaking at Harrogate. Thursday, October 27.

Many Surrey members gathered at Epsom GC to recognise the semi retirement of one of the industry's most underrated, but extremely handsome salesmen. Ron Christie and with limited help, but strong encouragement, from Douglas Iolanthe Fernie were the duo who thought up this tribute to the one and only yours truly.

Thanks to all my friends who attended this extravaganza and presented me with a fine selection of red wines and I look forward to next year, when I think we should do it all over again. Dan and Duncan, two Kent members who travelled far to be there, were also especially welcome. I played with Douglas, Ron and Paul Weston and with a little coaching from me Douglas [El Bandito] with

43 points came first and Paul [Aqua Cushman] was, with 37 points, runner up. Mark Harvey, Course Manager at Epsom, gets my gratitude for presenting the course, as always, in the sort of condition we expect and hope to find at any venue greenkeepers attend.

I have today been sent, by a Surrey Member, an informative text regarding this year's late leaf fall and how they are coping with the huge increase in the number of acorns, 10 times more than usual. He was also concerned that they are today under attack from a flock of seagulls, reminiscent of Alfred Hitchcock's movie 'The Birds', but he did not go into details. If you have suffered from any similar problems please discuss them with this member, who wishes to remain anonymous, personally. Name and telephone number are available from the appropriate authority.

This is the sort of information I need to interest my readers, so please, follow XXX's example and text me your thoughts and experiences or it's back to the isle that's whiter than Wight.

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South West and South Wales Region



South Wales

Hello South Wales. Well last month I wrote about the Rugby World Cup and I was hoping to be able to call ourselves World Champions but unfortunately there was a certain Irish French referee that had something to do with that! I'm so proud of all the lads it was great to be Welsh again even the Welsh flag was flying above Downing Street. Fair weather supporters I call it!

Onto the matters in hand we have held our autumn South Wales golf tournament at the beautiful Trefloyne Golf Club.

The course was outstanding how Gareth Knight and his one other staff member can maintain the course at that high standard is incredible. On the day the rain did threaten but we fortunately did miss all the showers and a good competition was had with Big D eventually knocking Andy Roach off the top spot. Peter Lacey was back in the prizes as the Trade Winner with Wayne Bengier and Nigel Ruck winning the Longest Drive and Nearest the Pin respectively. A thank you must also go out to the catering staff whose meal and dessert after the golf was second to none.

With the golf over it was one last chance to have a beer with Steve Chappell before he left for Gleneagles and so I'm led to believe there wasn't much beer left in Tenby that evening! Again all the best to Steve and his family heading up north we wish you the best of luck and dryness possible.

Prior to the golf we did hold our AGM with Steve Chappell standing down Gareth Knight has been elected Secretary, Paul Handy as Chairman and myself back on as the Trade representative. Gareth and the committee will be looking at new fresh ideas to continue the great work that Steve Chappell has started and we will be looking very shortly of arranging a new format for the Countrywide Evening Lecture Series and everyone will receive an email confirming what all our new plans will be.

Royal Porthcawl Golf Club has now been confirmed as the host venue for the 2014 and 2019 Seniors British Open Golf Championship a huge congratulations to Ian Kinley, his team The Royal Porthcawl GC and even the Welsh Assembly, for supporting this event and again putting Wales golf and Welsh greenkeeping high up on the map. I have recently seen some of the subtle changes to some of the greens and realignment of some strategic bunkering not to mention the new 5th back tee possibly slightly sadist!

All the improvements are fantastic and I can't wait to play them in the New Year. With our Winter Competition being held here for the second year running on December 13, hopefully all of you guys can

Assistant Profile

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

Name:

Simon Connah

Age: 39

Club:

St. Andrews Links Trust

Position:

Deputy Course Manager, Old Course.

Nickname: Si (there are others)!



1. How long have you been greenkeeping? 22 Years.

2. What was it about the career that attracted you? I was lucky enough to work at the 84 Open whilst at school. My Grandfather also knew Walter Woods!!

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

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

Training & Developing Staff hopefully to help them progress.

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

Dealing with Staff discipline issues as most could easily be avoided.

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

An upturn in the Golf Industry which would hopefully provide opportunities for all, especially the Trainee Greenkeepers coming through College.

7. Hobbies? Football, Rugby Union, Live Music & Drumming.

8. Favourite Band?

Bruce Springsteen & the E Street Band.

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

Dundee United FC

10. What is your claim to fame?

Appeared on Sky Sports News chatting to, or maybe looked like 'harassing', Tiger Woods for his signature at the 2010 Open!