

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



North

We start the news report this month with news of our committee member, Ben Brookes, leaving his post as the North Section News Reporter due to work commitments. Ben has recently left Murcar Links Golf Club and moved to the new Trump course further along the road, to be a part of the fantastic new set up. We wish him all the best for the future in his new job.

I should add that Ben has agreed to stay on the Committee for the time being, so Robert Patterson and I will be doing the Section news until the end of the year. We have someone in mind for the news job, so watch this space.

I will be sending out the entry forms shortly so hope to see a big turn out at Peterculter Golf Club. That's all for this month as it was just to let the members know what was happening, so hopefully we will have a full Section news next time.

Hope we get a big entry for the autumn outing at Peterculter GC on Thursday September 22.

Robert Patterson, Chairman,
and Dale Robertson, Secretary,

Northern Region



Northern

Hello everyone. Hope you are all well. Nice to see the hot weather carrying on into August. It would be nice to think this

could be the start of an Indian summer. The green fairways at Cookridge seem to have vanished, to be taken over by a nice shade of brown. On July 21 it was the annual Northern v Sheffield match, played at Renishaw Park GC. We had good weather and played on a beautifully presented course. Sadly, after retaining the trophy for the last few years, we were beaten by a good Sheffield side 4:2. Our thanks also go to Rigby Taylors for kindly sponsoring the day.

On the news front. Congratulations go to Ben Knowles Jackson on passing his driving test on his first attempt. Hope to see you at a few golf events, Ben.

Next Section golf event is the Autumn Tournament to be held at Huddersfield GC, Fixby, on Sept 28. This will also be the venue of our AGM. Please book early by contacting me, Frank Stewart, 72 West Park Grove, Roundhay, LS8 2DY.

Mob: 07947 401278, email
frankstewart3@hotmail.co.uk.

Frank Stewart



North East

Well here we go again! It's that time again for Section news. I just don't know where the time goes these days. Anyway here goes, Assistant Greenkeeper David Thompson, of Hexham Golf Club, has just recently competed the gruelling Ironman Challenge. This comprises of a swim, cycle ride and a marathon.

It was held at Nottingham Water Sports Centre where David swam 2.4 miles in 1 hour 9 minutes followed by a 112 mile bike ride in 5 hours-49 minutes. Then, just to round the day off, he did the marathon 26.2 miles in 4hrs-13mins. Here at Hexham we were very proud of David

considering he told us he would happy to do this event in 13 hours-30 minutes but did it in 11 hours - 22 minutes and finished 106th out of 650 competitors. He had trained for 20 hours a week for the last six months but he followed by a week's holiday. Reckon he deserved that.

Other news fresh in comes from Newcastle College where James Curry, of Prudhoe Golf Club, who is completing his Apprenticeship, James was one of only 29 candidates who was selected for the Regional interviews for the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award out of thousands of greenkeeping students. Unfortunately James was not selected to go forward to the National Final but this was still a great achievement nevertheless.

And finally, don't forget that the Autumn Comp. is on at Longhirst Hall on September 21. Let's hope there are a lot more members turn up.

Jimmy Richardson



North West

Firstly, let me apologise for the lack of notes in previous months. This is mainly due to the fact that I have had very little to write about, combine that with a memory like a sieve and the busiest year I have had to date and hopefully you will forgive me.

But the aforementioned brings me to another point; as a committee member, surely it's down to me (and others) to organise something to write about and make the North West Section proud. This will be discussed at the next Section meeting and an update will be posted in due course. Anyway, here goes:

As we enter September, many of us will be looking forward to

the Winter programme and all the joys it brings. The last major comps will have been played and, if you are like me, you will be itching to get that shovel in the ground. Hopefully you will find time to break away from the workload to play in the Autumn tournament. This year it is being played at the wonderful Dunham Forest GC. on September 29, and the tee is booked from 13:10. It would be great to see some new faces at this wonderful location.

During the winter months, we are hoping to arrange some training. Some of the thoughts at present are the likes of welding, excavating and first aid. If any of these are of use to you please let me know.

Another item in discussion at the moment to keep you entertained over the winter is an education seminar this will consist of a morning of talks from some of the best in the business followed by a course walk. Once again talks are ongoing but there should be more news in the near future.

Finally, for this month, I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you all a dryish, warmish winter and all the workload you have planned is completed on time and that the snow stays away long enough to make this a fruitful year.

Cheers

Peter McVicar
pdmv@hotmail.co.uk
07885347818

Midland Region



East Midlands

Results first from our inaugural par-3 competition. This was played at Nailcote Hall, home to the National par-3

Championship, and sponsored by Rigby Taylor. Nine teams took part and, in the case of at least one, were undone by the small intimidating greens! Third place went to a team put together by Nigel Colley; second to a team of "drifters", put together by Simon Banks. But the real stars of the day were the winning team from Market Harborough, consisting of Lee Wenlock, Chris Weir, Glyn Buckby and Mick Miles, with particularly impressive displays coming from Chris and Lee. Bottles of wine were put up as prizes for Nearest the Pin on each hole and between them Paul Frith and Derek McJannett took all but three of the prizes. They were last seen heading of to open a new Off Licence! Thanks again to our sponsor for the day, Rigby Taylor.

Moving on the Headland Pairs competition and we are now into the Quarter and Semi Final stages, with the final being played at Bearwood Lakes GC on Sept 21. By the time you read this the Quarter Finals will have taken place, so a quick well done. Commiserations to all of you that have got this far and may still have further to go these people were the teams of: P. Frith & N. Colley; F. Kempster & A. Porter; I. Hurst & P. Kendal; P. Sands & M. Bunney; D. Branson & A. Henshaw; M. Marvel & G. Thurman; C. Weir & I. Wenlock and G. Buckby & S. Banks.

You will all be soon receiving your entries for the Autumn Comp and AGM. This will be held at the excellent Forest Hill GC. If anyone has any questions for the committee and would like to help out, please contact me or Nick Miles, I can be contacted on pds1@btinternet.com

Regards to all
Pete Smith



Midland

The Section held its Summer Tournament at Kenilworth Golf Club on Monday, July 11. The course was in super condition as presented by Course Manager, Richard Dorrington, and his fine team. Thank you to the club for allowing us the day, and to you, Richard, for a very well presented course, as a great day was had by all.

A large thank you to Farmura

for the main prize table on the day, together with Farol's who again provided the refreshments around the course (well done Russ, when we can find you!) and the four Nearest the Pin prizes, sponsored by Sherriff Amenity x2, Global Sales and Rigby Taylor.

The results were as follows: 1. Steve Thompson, 42pts; 2. Ed Stant, 39pts; 3. Mike Hughes, 35pts. Division 1 Paul Evans, Division 2 Dave Fellows, Division 3 Ian Holborn. Trade was won by Paul Tanner, Crocodile Golf, and Gross won by Ed Stant.

The Scotts Doubles Final is played later this month so best wishes to the four lucky players who are going to enjoy the magnificent Wentworth West course. Good luck to you all.

The Section has an Education Day to Tiller's Turf, through Tony Cheese and Rigby Taylor, arranged for September 28. So if you have not already done so, please contact Rhys Thomas to reserve a place on 07775 581615.

Finally, while you are on to Rhys to arrange coming to Tillers Turf, why not book your place for the Autumn Tournament, at Sandwell Park Golf Club on Wednesday, October 5? Sandwell is a very good golf course and well worth a visit, so please come along. For all information, including education dates and golf results etc. please head to www.biggamidlandsection.com

Well, at last it has rained. My apologies to those who have been flooded-out, and as I sit here in Stratford writing this edition, I can see the grass changing colour from brown to green. It always amazes me how grass can recover so quickly. However, I dare say that there will be some areas that will have been too badly damaged and will require over-seeding. Happily this month's kind calendar sponsor is Matt Gresty/Professional Amenity Grass Seed Specialist. You can call Matt on: 07767 278 335 or email him: matthew.gresty@limagrains.co.uk.

My thanks to our Chair, Ed, for almost all of the above, which he managed to send me while overseeing an extension to Stant Towers, and, wearing his Estate Manager hat, alter its grounds. By God, Mrs Stant has you well trained.

Sean McDade

South East Region



East of England

Our latest golf day was held on Thursday, July 28 at Stoke Rochford Golf Club. The warm weather encouraged a good turnout to play on a golf course presented in excellent condition by Gareth and his staff. The day was sponsored by Toro and many thanks again go to Nigel Lovatt and Chris Sellars for their continued support of the Section and impressive array of prizes on offer. Many thanks also to everyone on the bar and catering front who again looked after us very well. Many thanks also to Tracey Maddison, from BIGGA HQ, for paying us a visit and talking to us about membership and any other concerns. Whether she will return after being escorted around the golf course by Gary Cooper is another matter!

Prizes on the day were as follows: 1. Bryan Robinson; 2. Steve Hopkins; 3. Rob Welford; 4. Ron Bingham; Trade. Russ Latham, Mansfield Sands. Ladies. Tracey Maddison. Nearest the Pin. Steve Hopkins. Longest Drive. Rob Welford

The winners of this year's Order of Merit are as follows:-

Greenkeepers. Bryan Robinson. Trade. Ian Collett, Rigby Taylor.

Qualifying for this year's BIGGA National Championship, sponsored by Charterhouse and Kubota, are Graeme Macdonald and Bryan Robinson. Congratulations to all concerned.

Our next golf fixture is the eagerly anticipated Greenkeepers vs Trade match to be played this year at Gainsborough on Wednesday September 14. Greenkeepers available to play should contact Allan Walker, while Trade members should contact Gary Cooper.

A note to all about our Christmas event at Belton Park on Thursday, December 8. This year's event will be a Texas Scramble made up of teams of four. However, members are asked to bring their own teams where possible to ensure even numbers are present. This team can be made up of anyone associated with your golf clubs or even involve greenkeepers and trade members from other Sections.

Again, contact Bruce Hicks for more information.

Finally, congratulations to Graeme Macdonald, of Newark Golf Club, who has managed to notch up yet another stamp on his passport without actually having to pay for it himself! This time he is the winner of a trip to Barcelona, courtesy of Toro, after winning their "Spot the Ball" competition (Yeah, I hadn't heard about it either!).

Many thanks

Steve Beverly, Immingham Golf Club.



Mid Anglia

Another month gone by and time to put pen to paper once again!

A very warm and sunny day welcomed 24 players to Mount Pleasant Golf Club for our Summer Tournament.

Presented in excellent condition by Gavin Simkin, and his team, the course proved a tough challenge to most of us, as always with a few exceptions, notably S. Moss, a member of Gavin's team, who, with local knowledge, secured first place with 42pts; 2. M. Fahy, 40pts; 3. K. Armstrong, 34pts; 4. M. Scullion, 33pts. Longest Drive S. Wooley and Nearest The Pin Clive Parnell, Clive also taking the trade prize with 35pts, on countback from Mark Ellis.

Thanks to the in-house staff at Mount Pleasant excellent new clubhouse. What a superb acquisition this is to the members and

visitors alike.

A big thank you to Mark Day, of Tacit, our main sponsor of the day for supplying and presenting a great prize table to the lucky winners.

Thanks as always to the other trade representatives for their contributions also.

Our next Golf Day is the Autumn Meeting at St. Neots GC, on Thursday, September 22. The AGM will follow the golf so a chance for you to have your say and make any suggestions to the Committee please come and support this day and your Section. Hope to see you there

Nigel Phelan.



Essex

Another month has passed us by and yet again a change in the weather.

Antony Kirwan and I travelled down to Royal St George's to join the Open Championship Support Team in the middle of July. A five day trip of long, hard, wet and warm very enjoyable days. Antony was lucky enough to get a round with the overall winner Darren Clarke, plus sample the delights of an early morning out on the course with the course staff doing the normal pre-completion course preparation. Both of us had a fantastic time, met new friends, renewed old acquaintances and learnt a lot. We would both recommend the experience to anyone who has the time to spare.

I am sorry to have to report that our Secretary, Dominic Rodgers, has decided to resign from the position; the committee accepted his resignation at the last committee meeting held in July and have written and thanked him for all he has done for the Section, over the past couple of years.

At that meeting we discussed the forthcoming Regional Conference being held by our Section in November. We have written to a number of speakers and await the outcome of these preliminary enquiries. I hope to be able to make an announcement in next month's magazine of the full itinerary.

The Summer Trophy at Chelmsford will have passed when you read this but don't forget to enter the next event at Langdon Hills Golf & Country Club. Thursday, September 29. It is our Autumn Trophy.

Entries to Andy Cracknell please by Sunday, September 25.

Sorry it's short and sweet this month but there is not that much to report.

If you have anything for inclusion in Greenkeeper International or on the Section's Website www.essexbigga.co.uk please contact me on 07764-862.337 or at essexbigga@talktalk.net
Arnold Phipps-Jones



Kent

I must start this report by giving full plaudits to the fantastic work done by all who staged a fantastic Open Championship in our fair county in July. The course was applauded by everybody, including the players, and proved that the whole Open experience is one we should all be proud of. As for the eventual winner, I think the whole world would salute Darren Clarke for overcoming the adversity he went through in recent years to triumph in an emotionally charged championship.

I would like to add some notes from Steve Thompson, of Bearsted Golf Club, who was one of the many gallant volunteers for the event.

I thought I would drop you a few lines regarding my experiences at the Open. This was the first time that I had done any match raking and I enjoyed it immensely. I found the whole experience absolutely awesome, from meeting all the other greenkeepers on the Support Team, to being between the ropes with some of the world's top golf professionals.

Thursday - I raked two bunkers for Graeme McDowell, Jason Day, and Bubba Watson.

Friday - I helped my Pod prepare the bunkers for the day's play. Later I raked eight bunkers for Charley Hoffman, Gregory Havret, and Markus Brier. Saturday - I raked three bunkers for Steve Stricker and Webb Simpson. Sunday - Unfortunately, I didn't get selected to match rake on the final day.

My greatest memory was following Graeme McDowell's group between the three grandstands at the 18th green and hearing the thunderous applause. Seeing the sunrise over the empty grandstands early on Friday morning will also stick in my mind.

I'd like to thank - Scott MacCallum, Rachael Duffy and everyone at BIGGA for allowing me such a fantastic opportunity, Graham Royden and the greenkeeping team at Royal St. George's, and all the members

of the BIGGA Open Support Team, especially Billy McMillan and the rest of the Green Pod.

Steve Thompson, Bearsted Golf Club.

Lastly, please don't forget our next event at Sittingbourne GC on September 26. Please see website for all the details. We shall also be playing the final of our Pairs' Knockout competition on the day. Well done to all who played in this event in its inaugural year for making it such fun and well done to our finalists.

Please feel free to drop me a line with any news, views or comments as usual. Hope to see as many of you as possible at Sittingbourne.

Rob Holland
grassyars@hotmail.com
www.kentgreenkeepers.com



Surrey

Gavin Kyle, yes the good looking and now lucky one from Knoll Park GC, has won a new set of golf clubs, bag, new putter of his choice and full custom fitting in a competition on some obscure radio station answering questions on golf. His old set of clubs are to be sold on 'E Bay' with a reserve price of £5 and his application to join 'Mensa' is in the post.

Dave Johnson, Head Greenkeeper at New Zealand GC, is well known to most Surrey members for he has worked there, man and boy, for the past 37 years. I understand that he has decided to take early retirement from the club but will still continue to live locally and offer his gardening and other skills to the residents of West Byfleet and surrounds. Good luck and a long and happy semi-retirement from us all.

Brian Turner arrived here 65 years ago plus 1 day. As an OAP, he will receive in this short paragraph only the respect that he and other OAPs in this era deserve. They are collectively called the 'baby-boomers' and have lived with ration cards, Muffin the Mule, the Cold War, the three day week, Mrs Thatcher, the onset of mobile phones the size of suitcases - and Tiger Woods.

Assistant Profile

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



Name: Sam Evans
Age: 22
Club: Heythrop Park Resort
Position: Assistant
Nickname: Sambo

1. How long have you been greenkeeping?
Three years

2. What was it about the career that attracted you?
Job satisfaction

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

4. Which task do you most enjoy doing and why?
Topdressing by hand because it is hard work

5. Which task do you least enjoy doing and why?
Rough mowing because it is boring

6. What one thing - other than a pay rise - would improve the greenkeepers' lot?
More courses and further education

7. Hobbies?
Cricket, Fishing and Rugby

8. Favourite Band?
The Overtones

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

10. What is your claim to fame?
Chatting to Rob Andrew and Sean Fitzpatrick on the 8th tee, regarding their shots, club selection and the course in general.

BIGGA welcomes the following new members

Scotland

Timothy Leitch, North Section
Paul Livingstone, West Section
Kenny Nisbet, Ayrshire Section
Stewart Smith, West Section
Scott Wells, Central Section

Northern Region

Simon Smith, North Wales Section
Kevin Wright, Cleveland Section

Midland Region

Stuart Aho, Mid Anglia Section
David Ball, Mid Anglia Section
Antony Calvert, Berks/Bucks & Oxon Section
Claire Matthewman, Midland Section
John Ratcliffe, East Midland Section
Gary Wood, Midland Section
Jackson Woolley, Berks/Bucks & Oxon Section

South East Region

Phillip Beeny, Surrey Section
Tony Greenwood, Kent Section
Josh Kelly, Sussex Section
Ben Kemp, Kent Section
Matthew Kemp, Kent Section
Matt King, Surrey Section
Adam Mortimer, Surrey Section
Roy Willis, Kent Section

South West/South Wales Region

Sam Ampleford, South Coast Section
Martin Coleman, South West Section
John Ray, South Coast Section
Mark Young, South Wales Section

N Ireland

Phillip Snellin, Northern Ireland

For more information on new members log in to the Members' Area of the BIGGA Website.

BIGGA Regional Conferences

Northern

29th November 2011,
Cookridge Hall Golf Club

30th November 2011,
Birchwood Golf Club
Contact Peter Larter, RA,
01476 550115

South East

16 November 2011, **Stock Brook Manor Golf Club, Essex**

Contact Clive Osgood, RA,
01737 819343

South West & South East
17 November 2011, **Oaktree Arena, Highbridge, Somerset**

Contact Jane Jones, RA,
01454 270850

Scotland

6 March 2012, **Carnegie Conference Centre, Dunfermline**
Contact Peter Boyd, RA,
0141 616 3440

Brian's career started, some say at 7, in the coal-mines but his deputy and now successor, Paul Robinson, assures me that it was at Sunningdale GC, followed by a disliked stint in the insurance industry, then Wentworth GC, Worplesdon GC, then Sunningdale again before returning to Worplesdon in 2005.

Brian has won many amateur trophies in his golfing career, has played off plus 1 and who knows, if he puts in enough practice in retirement, may return to that level of excellence. Worplesdon GC gave him a grand send-off recently with a BBQ attended by some 120 members and friends. He and wife, Doreen, will be moving to their new home down in the New Forest, at New Milton, and will both be playing golf as members of Barton on Sea GC.

I have myself reached that time in life when the State will repay money that I have lent to them over the past 49 years in the way of an old age pension. This, although gratefully received, will not keep me in the style of life to which I have become accustomed and so, if you are the recipient of a message from yours truly, please do not treat it as junk mail. Read carefully, follow the instructions and leave cash only please in the specified hiding place for my later collection. Doing this will mean that you will still be able to enjoy reading every month, in this exceptional journal, stories of my travels to far away places with "her indoors".

Since my last jottings, Darren Clarke has won The Open at Royal St George's, Simon Dyson did likewise in the Irish Open and Russ Cochran won the Senior's Open at Walton Heath, but it will be next month when I will report the winner of the McMillan Tankard at Sunningdale GC. My prediction is that with my vastly increased clubhead speed, slow backswing, hours of practice and my repaired electric trolley, the Tankard will not be won by me but by someone with the same qualities that have made both Dougie Fernie and Paul Weston the great players that they are. They will be my playing partners at Sunningdale so that I can report first hand if we manage to get all the way round.

Let me know of any news tidbits that you would like to contribute to this article. Brian Willmott 07879474038 email brian.willmott@hotmail.co.uk



London

Summer is flying by at a rate of knots and August renovations have been and gone for some of us. Those fortunate enough to carry out their renovations first week in August were blessed with ten days of sunshine, before renovations and a nice 11mm of rain at the end of renovation week to settle all the dressing down. I have never carried out renovations this early before and was amazed at the rate of recovery. Many things to get through this month for a pleasant change, so I will get straight on with it.

Congratulations to our London Section Chairman, Aaron Percival, on his new appointment at Stokley Pines. All the best in your new venture. Lee Cox, at Muswell Hill Golf Club, has just got engaged, I am sure that there are many happy times ahead for him. Congratulations to Kevin O'Neill, Deputy at Muswell Hill, whose better half has just given birth to a new baby boy. With four out of seven staff at Muswell Hill all with little ones on the way over the next few months there will be plenty to talk about in the mess room I am sure, that's if they're not all fast asleep.

The summer meeting at Finchley Golf Club has just been played and all players were most impressed by the condition, particularly the greens. Thank you to Finchley for hosting our summer tournament and Craig and his green staff for their hard work in presenting the course. Thank you to Mark Day, and Tacit, for sponsoring the day and putting up some great prizes, also thanks to Johnny Beck, of Sherriff Amenity, for keeping us fed and watered half way around. So to the winners. 3. Lee Cox 34 pts; 2. Kane Stone, 34 pts; 1. Finchley Golf Club's very own Ben Williamson, 37 pts. Trade. Mark Ellis, 34 pts. Well done and I hope you enjoying your wine. That's it for this month; enjoy the last of the sun while it's here.

Any queries, questions, feedback or information for the column please email:

adammccoll@hotmail.com
Adam McColl

South East Region



South West

When it was said "Golf. A good walk spoiled", they clearly didn't walk around Royal St George's during the 2011 Open....I did, and it was remarkable! Being part of BIGGA's Support Team, was again a great experience. I don't want to bore many of you with stories from The Open. Firstly, you would have read all about it as you've flicked through this month's magazine and secondly I'm sure many of you were glued to the TV watching it for yourself in any case. While I was away at The Open, I made many new friends....You guys know who you are (I would consider it unfair advantage to comment about you in this article), but honestly, thanks to everyone who made it such a fantastic week!

I feel that this is the perfect opportunity to remind you all of our fixture at Cotswold Hill GC, in October. This year we visit Cotswold Hills for our AGM. Your attendance would be very important if you would like to have your say within our Section. It's your chance to stand up and say what you would like to happen.

With the football season just moments away (or has it already started....?) you wouldn't believe how excited I am. Don't get me wrong, I love the summer and having some time away from the game, but now that it's back, I am very much in love again!

I would like to thank our patronage partners for all of their support for 2011, Ecosol, Irritech Ltd, Countrywide, British Seed House, Headland, Avoncrop and Martyn Lane Golf Signs, Your support is very much appreciated by the whole Section.

Remember that we also have our own South West Section Facebook page, proving to be very useful, only for it grow as more of you become involved. If you are not a member of the page, its time you were, ask for the link and I'll happily forward it to you.

See you all very soon,
adam.l.matthews@hotmail.co.uk
07732503855



South Wales

Our summer tournament this year was held at Wenvoe Castle Golf Club. It was a really good day with 24 golfers playing and 26 eating. We were joined on the day by Club Captain, Tony Cumming, who was very welcoming and our RA, Jane Jones, who toured the course on a buggy with Iain Grant.

The golf course was in great shape thanks to Mark Wilshire and his team so well done to them. The weather was good in the main apart from a few sharp showers. The meal following the golf was first class. Steve Minton, from Tacit, was on hand to present the prizes as follows: 1. Andy Roach, 37pts; 2. Rhys Williams, 34pts; 3. Steve Chappell, 33pts. Best Trade/Guest: Peter Lacey, 31pts. Nearest the Pin: Tony Lafrate. Longest Drive: Ian Kinley

Mr Captain was presented with a BIGGA Tie as a thank you for Wenvoe hosting the event.

Just a quick reminder of our up and coming events the R/T final at Green Meadow which take place on September 16 and a reminder that the Autumn Comp & AGM will be at Trefloyne on October 14.

Our very own Daryl Jones, from Glyn Neath Golf Club, has become their Club Champion. Congratulations from everyone at the Section.

Last, but by no means least, I hope I get to see many of you guys at Saltex this year Sept 6-8. You know where our stand is situated - by the park and main eating area. So if you pop by, I might just get some beers in!

See you soon

Peter Holmstrom and, mainly this month, Steve Chappell.



South Coast

Hi, all,

It's pouring with rain as I write this which is a perfect excuse for not being outside. Much needed rain, I must add, as it has been

seriously warm over the last few days. My beach hut has welcomed many visitors recently, some of whom even ventured into the water!

Our summer invitation competition was played at Brokenhurst Manor Golf Club. Although the sun didn't shine, the few spots of rain certainly didn't dampen the day. The course was in excellent order and a credit to our tournament organiser, Kevan Glass and his team. Truly faultless. Sponsor for the day was Tacit. Thanks as always to Tim Webb and Brian Wilmott for their support and prizes of some very good wine. The competition was an 18 hole Stableford with ¾ handicap allowance, 60 entrants.

1. Ben Bishop & C. Richards, Paultons Park, 42 pts; 2. Colin Pardey & Sandy Barnett, Sherbourne, 41ps; 3. Derek Cunliffe & James Norris, Blackmore, 40 pts. Nearest the String; Tony Locke. Nearest the Pin; Scott Waddingham.

The annual match against the South West will be played in late August, the results of which will be in next month's mag. Our next competition and AGM is at Waterlooville GC, on October 6. I have heard great reports from people that played there recently so try and support the Section and be there.

Here at Barton it's all happening again, more cliff falling into the sea and plans to move one hole 50 metres inland. Not really a problem, except that it involves moving a green, two tees and all the relevant irrigation pipe work. Meanwhile we are having the silt from one of our ponds removed. A real health and safety nightmare as there are thousands of golf balls in the sludge and, no matter what you say to the members, the sight of free balls is too tempting. So the nice new signs warning of deep mud "Keep Out" are totally ignored.

Lastly, the Section Seminar, cancelled from February, is now to go ahead on October 26, at Milton Abbey School, in Dorset. This is a new venue and should be an excellent educational day out with top notch speakers along with walks around the livestock and school facilities.

Until next month.
Tony Gadd



Jim Croxton
Chief Executive

I have recently had the opportunity to attend a couple of BIGGA Regional Board meetings and it has been heartening to discover that so many members are prepared to give up their time to play a part in the Association's governance.

As a committee based organisation it is vital that information, opinion and debate is channelled effectively from the coal face of the Sections through Regional Boards to the National Board to keep the activities of BIGGA relevant to the needs of the members.

At both of the meetings there was healthy debate on a wide variety of issues, with communication and education being recurring themes. These two tenets are prevalent in what I consider to be one of the key benefits to BIGGA membership – the website Bulletin Boards. Every day members post enquiries and discussion points that are read by hundreds and in nearly every instance the responses are well reasoned and informative and prove helpful to both the original contributor and the many others facing similar issues at their facilities. I am a huge advocate of sharing best practice and the BIGGA Bulletin Boards are a fantastic example of the willingness that practitioners in this industry have to help one another. Access to this massive well of knowledge and experience is a major benefit of BIGGA membership and I would urge anyone who has not ventured in to the member's area of www.bigga.org.uk to do so. In future editions of this magazine we will endeavour to focus on some of the many success stories this forum has produced.

The more public face of our members sharing best practice is the annual gathering in Harrogate for the BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition (BTME), registration for 2012 is open so go to www.harrogateweek.org.uk to register now. You will see elsewhere in these pages details of the education programme and, for the first time visitor, how to get there and plan your stay.

BTME is the important event in the calendar for all those in the golf course maintenance industry, we are fortunate that the exhibition continues to be well supported by the manufacturers, suppliers and contractors who value spending time face to face with our membership and many others involved in sports turf care. We as an association need to show them our support by encouraging all of our friends and colleagues in the industry to attend the event.

In the News section earlier you will have read of the outcomes of discussions with the IOG and the AEA over the future of grounds and turf care trade shows. In objectively looking at our own show it was clear that whilst overlap exists with other shows, it is a small part of the overall picture. The discussions were positive and all sides are very comfortable with the outcome which will see BIGGA looking to collaborate with all of the other bodies in the sector as widely as possible. An excellent example is the BIGGA organised educational seminars taking place at the IOG's show – Saltex – this month from which I expect to see greenkeepers and groundsmen alike taking valuable knowledge and information to help them in their day to day working lives.

Jim Croxton