

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



Scotland



Central

On behalf of everyone in the Section I would like to say a massive thank you to Peter Boyd and wish him the very best in his retirement from his role as Administrator for the Scottish Region these past 14 years. Peter, we hope you have many good golfing days in the future and that some of them will be at our outings.

Speaking of which, the spring outing is very nearly upon us at Craig on April 17 and entries, with the entry fee close on April 11. We have no more educational events confirmed for the near future but are trying to set up an evening talk with John Kaminski, a lecturer from Penn State, who will be in the area this summer. Members should keep an eye on the website for this or any other things we set up.

We will mail shot everyone we have an email address for as normal. However, there are a huge number of emails coming back to us undelivered. If you haven't been receiving emails from either Gordon McKie or me on a regular basis, then check the website where we will have a list of these names and you can contact us. Maybe we have typed it in wrongly or you have changed your email address and forgotten to notify BIGGA. One event, which is taking place on April 26 is an Environmental Seminar being staged by St Andrews Links Trust in The Scores Hotel, in St Andrews. Entry is free but you have to register so numbers for food can be calculated. You and your Club Manager/Secretary should have information about this already but if you haven't

then please contact me.

Finally for this month congratulations to John Watson who has become the Course Manager at Downfield GC.

Gordon Moir



East

Here is the April news from the East Section, up here in Scotland land. Hope you are well.

The Committee had its monthly meeting on February 21, where we discussed a number of ideas that could help and improve our Section run smoothly in the coming months.

Our education lads are trying hard to initiate seminars, workshops, or site visits for us to enjoy and our secretary will keep you informed of any future education events.

Hopefully we shall have some social events later in the year, as well as that there has been a couple of different ideas brought to the table.

There has been some feedback collated from green staff in and around the Edinburgh area. These issues will be discussed further at Section level to see if we can improve the level of attendance at BIGGA events in our Section.

We look forward to the Scottish Conference next week in Dunfermline, where we will enjoy many good speakers passing on experiences and expertise in their chosen fields.

It will be Peter Boyd's last event that he will be organising for us and the East Section would like to say: 'THANKS PETER!' for all the help and enthusiasm he brought as Scottish Regional Administrator. Good Luck for the future from us all.

Look out for the invitation for the spring outing at the Glen

Golf Club soon. The course is looking good already, Des! I hope you have got some good hole positions in mind for us.

Remember if you want to be considered for the Patrons' award at the end of the year, the more you attend the better chance you have at picking up this exceptional award.

If you have any news or views please do not hesitate to email me at: s.crawford@live.co.uk.

Stewart Crawford,
Chairman.



Northern

As I am writing this report in early March the weather has been really good to us and I am getting through the spring work, hopefully this will continue into the summer and we can have a good season weather-wise because it has been a few years and the golf course would benefit from it.

I would also like to say on behalf of the Committee thank you to Ben Brookes for all his hard work that he has done for the Committee over the last few years, and to wish him every success in the future as he has left the greenkeeping business. It's a shame because more people are leaving and it's hard to replace them in this financial climate, but that is another story.

There is also some movement in the greenkeeping world. Callum Anderson has left Aspire Golf Centre and joined Newmachar Golf Club as an Assistant Greenkeeper and we wish him every success.

Also, it's not long until the Spring Outing which should be a great day at Royal Aberdeen, hopefully the weather will be kind to us and will look forward to seeing you there.

If you have any information I can put into the magazine please feel free to get in touch with me as it would be helpful to try and get as much information as possible to you. On a final note we have set up a Facebook page, please feel free to like it because we will be posting information on there, and hopefully we can get some suggestions from you.

Ross Macrae

Mobile No 07588896635.
email: ross.macrae@hotmail.com



West

Started to type this up and funny enough it was raining outside. Oh what a surprise, when are we ever going to get some decent weather, as in dry conditions, whoops! Sorry, I forgot, we had two weeks of good weather in February didn't we? That must be our quota for the year. Guess what guys they're moaning in the East for not having enough rain and how dry it is. Never mind, there is always a bright side somewhere. Don't ask me where, but something will cheer us up.

So what's happening in the Section recently, other than moaning about the weather? Well a recent Seminar held at Renfrew Golf Club took place with 20 plus in attendance, organised by Fraser Ross and Everris, covering subjects such as feeding programmes, fungicide treatment, and sand materials. The day seemed to go very well and all those in attendance found the content extremely interesting, so many thanks to Gary Smith and Craig Aitken for their contributions, and well done to Fraser and Gavin for organising the day.

Next the Scottish Conference at Dunfermline, which saw 190

people attend a very excellent day of speaking from seven key speakers, Graeme Francis and Robert Smith, on irrigation; Robert Patterson, on the Journey to the Walker Cup; Grant Moir, on Setting up your Course; Les Howkins, on Bunker redevelopment, Dave Vrooman on Optimum nutrient efficiency, and, finally, John Philip on The golf ball development. I would say that I found all the talks to be very interesting and there was a good diversity of subject matter, interesting to both young and old. Congratulations to all the speakers and thanks to Ian Macleod for chairing the morning session, and all those who attended which helped make the retiring gift presentation to Peter Boyd all the more poignant.

May I take this opportunity to thank Peter for organising such a successful event, and for his excellent service to the Scottish Region over the last 14 years. He has helped establish a very well organised run region and I hope he enjoys his retirement over the coming years.

May I also take this opportunity to thank the patrons for their continued support of the Scottish Region and I hope this will continue in the future to help build on what has been established.

Finally, thanks to the catering unit and the organisational team at Carnegie Conference Centre for the expert way in which they conduct their business and the attitude they convey with nothing being a problem. Well done, Refa, Janice, Allan, and Stuart.

Please remember the Spring Outing is at Cardross Golf Club on May 10 and the Scottish National Tournament is at Ratho Park on June 20.

Should anybody have any information to pass on then please contact me on 0141-942-5554, or 07790823914, or by e-mail to stuart.taylor@glasgowgolfclub.com.

Stuart Taylor

Northern Region



North East

Congratulations on a first class February magazine especially the BTME Review. It was good to see so many pages given to photos. Did you see anybody you knew? On page one we had

Terry Charlton of T.S.L, if it's not him then it's a good look-a-like; then Andrew Black and David Common, both from Rickerbys of Hexham, attending the Celebration dinner on Tuesday night, in fact, Andrew is in twice. Lastly, Martin Woods, of Bedlingtonshire Golf Club, attending a seminar, I'm not sure if he's having a catnap or not,

This year the section sees two more Head Greenkeepers retiring, these being Graham Smith of Whitley Bay, and George Gainford of Prudhoe Golf Club. Best of luck to you both, maybe we will see you at section golf days. No excuses now lads, I will continue to send you notifications of future events.

I was expecting some new members to be joining the section from Close House. There was a rumour that four people were going to do just that. Me thinks I'd better chase them up quickly before they change their minds. Also two staff from Longhirst Hall were doing the same, looks like I'm going to be busy. Sorry lads if you have joined already, as this news is for six weeks in advance.

And lastly, when I was helping out at BTME on the Museum, I was reading the BGGG Minutes from 1912 and came across the following (these are to do with the North East Section by the way): 1946 Mention was made of a Northumberland Greenkeepers Ass, 1957 The N.E. Section, now defunct, where a report came to light that a golf tournament had been held in the North East under the BGGG banner, the secretary to investigate and a couple more nationally, 1948 wages recommendation: Head Greenkeeper £6-10s to £8-00pw, and finally, 1955 golf clubs to be asked to pay £10 for protective clothing. My how things change over the years.

Jimmy Richardson



Northern

I'll start by making a huge apology to those guys who I offended with the comments in the notes regarding my good friend, James Bentley. I now realise that my sense of humour does not wash with everyone. People who know me come to expect wit and banter as the norm, especially at work and

when we socialise. I had spoken to James before the comments went in and have apologised since. He saw the funny side, as I knew he would, but it was wrong and I regret it. I have said sorry to John and the rest of the Committee and now to you guys. Sorry again.

You should all have the flyer with the fixtures on and entered them on your wall planners. A big thanks goes to Greensman Ltd for their kind sponsorship of this flyer. It's truly appreciated.

I have been up to Easingwold golf club on a reconnaissance mission, to talk shop and menus with the Secretary. It is looking in great nick. The first golf day should be a great day out.

That's all folks, please let me know if you have any goss, movements at your places and so on, and I will gladly pop them in the notes.

Andy Slingsby
07506407867
slingsbyfamily@virginmedia.com



North West

Summer should be well and truly upon us by the time you read this!

I am currently sat in my office its 14°C outside and it is March 1. "Unbelievable" for the time of year! The potassium nitrate has been applied, now it's fingers crossed that we get that early kick-start.

One person moving last month was the Deputy at Mere GC who has moved to St Anne's Old Links. Good luck with the move Greg.

Unfortunately there isn't a lot to tell you about this month, combined with the fact I've been out of the country, so sorry about the lack of news. Hopefully I will supply you with a bumper edition next month.

The spring tournament is to be held at Leasowe GC, the times and dates will be sent to you very shortly on your fixture list. Anybody wishing to play in the tournament; please contact Phil Dewhurst - 07768180604 as he is the compiler of the start sheet.

So let's have a good turn out at Leasowe GC, and I will see you there.

Spencer Lloyd-Pye
spencer@lloyd-pye.freeserve.co.uk



North Wales

Here we go the season starts now, with the fixture lists filling up and the grass heading skywards!

On catch up, I hope everyone who went to the Charlie's Groundcare utility vehicle demo day enjoyed themselves as much as I did. The bacon trap was lovely, but that test track they set up was amazing, and if I ever need the use of a laxative I'll only need to think of that track to remedy the situation!

The Spring Tournament takes place at my home course at the Vale of Llangollen on the 25 of this month and it's normally based as an individual Stableford and National Championship qualifier.

I hope you all can play as well as Paul Roberts of Baron Hill did in August last year, when he hit a course record on his home course with a 62; then in the same week went to St Deiniol where he's also a member and hit a course record of 61, and to top it off became Club Champion at both courses.

We're making an appeal for e-mail addresses as we now have our own e-mail address - bnwales@hotmail.co.uk - so if you can e-mail your e-mail address, name, address and any thoughts or needs you have of an educational nature we can then send out fixture lists and seminar/golf day entry forms direct for you to download and better formulate our sections educational needs.

In Section news the aforementioned Paul Roberts, and Rhys Butler, have made it on to this year's Support team at The Open. I know you both will do our Section proud.

I think that's about it for now, please keep your news coming in you've no idea how difficult it is some times to fill a column with no news to use!

All the best until next month,
Pete Maybury e-mail
petemayb66@aol.com
Mobile, phone or text
07756001187

Facebook North Wales
B.I.G.G.A



Sheffield

We now enter April and all our spring renovation will be complete and the golfing season will be creeping up on us quicker than expected. With the continued exposure of golf on our TV sets the expectations of golfers is ever increasing, which can lead to pressures of creating something that is just not ready to be created yet. It all takes time and is a lesson for us all from time to time that patience is a virtue and with the correct management methods the golfers will get the conditions they want, when the course is ready to give it to them.

On the Section front we have found a replacement for our long serving Section Treasurer, Mark Crawshaw from Hallamshire GC has agreed to take on the position and I'm sure he will be a very good replacement for Alan. The role of Treasurer isn't an easy one but with all our support I'm sure Mark will settle into the role with no problems.

I must at this point once again thank Alan for his service. He has covered many roles and has put in a lot of time for the benefit of the Section. I hope you will all join me and thank him for his service and we hope to see Alan at Section events for years to come.

Hopefully you will all have received your fixture cards by now. If you haven't then they will be posted on Facebook and Twitter so check us out.

That's all for now, have a good month,

James Stevens

Follow us at

Facebook [biggasheffield](#)

Twitter [@sheffieldbigga](#)

Midland Region



East Midlands

By the time you are reading this month's notes the vast majority of your Easter eggs will be but a memory and all your April Fool's jokes will be

long forgotten as the workload of the greenkeeper starts to ramp up and we start to think about showing off our courses to their maximum potential to members, visitors and societies.

Maybe you have been at your course for a while and 'know the ropes', always an advantage, or perhaps this is your first summer and you are watching carefully, asking colleagues, listening and learning about the behaviour of your new workplace. For all of us it is a relationship, and like all relationships respect and understanding plays a huge part in that relationship's success.

April is always a month of challenges; just ask Asa English who has recently completed the Brighton Marathon AGAIN! Well-done Asa. Although your abilities are a long way ahead of mine, I know just how much time, effort and commitment it takes to complete the training schedule, let alone the race itself. I have been fortunate enough to complete the London Marathon on two separate occasions, and no it wasn't me in the deep-sea diver's suit. My biggest obstacles on both of those days were a couple of Kenyan runners and a guy on a motorbike in front of me who wouldn't move out the way. Rather selfish of him I thought as traffic is banned on race day?

You should all have now returned your Spring Tournament invites to be held at the end of this month. As stated in previous months' notes, this year there is only one National Championship qualifying competition so, if you haven't, please dig them out and return them ASAP or email your intention to attend to Nick Miles or me at biggaeastmid@gmail.com. In fact, as an inclusive Section, any suggestions or opinions that you have on how the Section should be run please also use this email address to communicate them to the Committee.

Due to 'Pit Crew' issues I am unable to report on the results of our Toro-sponsored Go-Karting event. Hopefully May's edition of GI will let me enlighten you on all the incidents and accidents of the evening.

Finally, my personal note this month is for Pete Larter, our Regional Administrator. Pete is retiring from his role at the end of May after many years of service to BIGGA and the East

Midlands Section. I'm sure that those of you who know Pete will join me in thanking him for his help, support, advice, opinions and jokes over the years. Good luck Pete!

Tally Ho!

Greg Skinner

07970 095264



Midland

Well here we are then, April. The month that is the month before the month that is the month of May (try reading that after a glass or two of Shiraz Cabernet). Such brings me to the full emergence of our courses in their ever-splendid glory, and the hatching of the May Fly (If you're not a fisher, duffers' fortnight).

As I'm sure you can tell, I don't have a lot to report this month so here's a light funny; a greenkeeper (whom shall remain nameless for legal reasons) was brushing greens and an early player asked, "What does that do?" The greenkeeper responded, "It hurts my legs".

Talking about funnies, we come to our sponsor's of this month's calendar page our old friend Nigel Tyler/Sherriff Amenity. Nigel should have been an Otter of Briton, not a Beaver! A little humour is a many splendid thing, and the world without it would surely be a far sadder place. Jest aside, Nigel and the products of Sherriff Amenity can be relied upon. For your fert's and pesticides and other related products please contact Nigel on: 07989 548 058 or visit www.sherriffamenity.com The Section's thanks for your long and continued support.

Chris Stilgoe, Course Manager at Great Barr GC, and his wife, Lyndsay, have had a baby boy, Benjamin, born in February weighing 8lb 4oz. Congratulations to them all.

Don't forget our first golf day of the year coming up at The Chase GC, on Wednesday, May 23. This will also be the day we draw the first round of the Everis Doubles Competition. Please get your entries in for both to Gary Cunningham as soon as possible. Details of all our golf

days and seasonal education events can be found on our website www.bigga-midland-section.co.uk

The klinkhammer addict.

Sean McDade

South East Region



Surrey

Monday March 5. The sun has just thrust his head through the clouds but it is very cold. This is not from personal experience, the kitchen fitters who arrived at 8 o'clock, and woke me, told me from the other side of the letterbox. I have now let them in after checking their ID cards and they are now doing what they do.

Please tell me what's happening in your part of Surrey as Ron Christie has threatened to take my laptop away if I continue writing about my fascinating life at the old people's home here in Dorking. Have you read Ron's yearly report? Tony Bremer has, and was most upset that Ron failed to mention that the England v Scotland match at Hankley Common GC was another resounding victory for ENGLAND. Personally, I have no particular interest as I am now the 10th reserve and not wanted by either team. It is true, I must admit, that my golf is a little poor at the moment but there are few who are as enthusiastic, be it in a rather confused and uncoordinated way.

The programme for 2012 is as follows: May 22. Blackmoor GC, Spring Tournament; Date TBA Worpleston GC, Cresta Cup. Date TBA Sunningdale GC, McMillan Tankard. October 8&9, Irvine Bogside GC, National Championship; November 6 Hankley Common GC, England v Scotland - does anyone need a caddie? November 21, Section v Secretaries, The Berkshire GC; December 7, Turkey Trot, Guildford GC.

Well that's it for another month except to inform you that, after falling of my ladder, I am now nearly back to my old self and the memory is returning slowly.

Brian Willmott



London

Members, the Course walk at Sandy Lodge proved successful, many thanks to Course Manager, Robert Phillips, next is the Spring Tournament at Stanmore on Thursday, May 24, sponsored by A T Olivers where we will be saying a farewell to Tony Martin as he retires after working at Olivers forever! This event is the qualifier for the BIGGA National Championship.

Then the Summer Tournament is at Crews Hill - a hidden gem as it's a Harry Colt course. This will be on Wednesday, August 1.

The London Section website is now up and running, well done to Robert Phillips. And we now have a Facebook group [bigga london] and also Twitter [@biggalondon] well done to Lee Cox!

Finally here are the committee contact details:

Matt Plested [Muswell Hill] Chairman, matt.plested@hotmail.co.uk 07818410333

Adam McColl [Crews Hill] Secretary adammccoll@hotmail.com 07886513975

Robert Phillips [Sandy Lodge] Treasurer/website robert.phillips1@btconnect.com 07785791700

Lee Cox [Mill Hill] Golf Organiser/facebook/Twitter l.cox15@btinternet.com 07931927346

John Wells [South herts] Education/Magazine.j.wells1@sky.com 07952956857

John Wells



Essex

Just a short one this month, as we are only just getting back into the swing, as they say.

At long last we have some news for you, with golf dates for the year and a few more bits of news for later in the year.

Firstly, the golf; we kick off the season with a bang at Ilford Golf Club, Wednesday, May 16, for our Summer

Trophy, followed by the Essex Trophy, at Rochford Hundred, Thursday August 16 and then the Autumn Trophy, at Stoke by Nayland, Wednesday, September 26, with the Christmas Team Event at The Essex, Thursday, December 6.

The team Knockout competition is back, with entries to Antony Kirwan by May 16, so we can draw the matches at Ilford.

We are planning to run a trip to the Hurlingham Club; details will be posted on our website as soon as we have a date. Plus we are also running a couple of seminars with Howard Swan later in the year, again more details nearer the time.

Ian Wood would like to hear from any Essex members, who are looking for a training course. He arranged some First Aid courses over the winter, but these were not taken up, so if there is anything else that you need please contact him and he will see what he can do.

Toro's Larry Pearman and Richard Freeman have again arranged a football match for us against another team from our region, if you are interested in playing please contact Mark Stopps or Martin Forrester, but be quick as places are limited for this prestigious game. We played last year, at West Ham's Upton Park Ground against the Sussex Section, which we narrowly won. So if we do draw Sussex again this year, there will be quite a match on, as I'm sure they will want to turn the tables on us.

Lastly ten of our members and Section Sponsors made the trip to the renamed, South East Regional Golf and Dinner day at Walton Heath early in March. Although the weather was overcast, the rain kept away with dry but cold conditions, but what a day. Everyone had a tale to tell. It was my first time actually playing on the course and my second visit, the first being for the 1981 Ryder Cup. Many thanks to my playing partners, Tracey Maddison and Gary Ogilvie, for putting up with my sometimes-erratic golf. I shall be returning again next year to try my hand at conquering this famous golf course.

Just a note of thanks to my colleague and driver, Tom Smith, who helped make the day more enjoyable for me, as I

didn't have to endure the drive around the M25.

For those of you who have not experienced this day it is something not to be missed, you meet old friends and make new ones. Love him or hate him, one friend who will be there again next year for sure is that 36 hole friend called Walton Heath.

The day was finished off with the prize presentation and although Essex were absent from the prize list I'm sure they all enjoyed themselves.

The inaugural Ian McMillan Memorial Trophy was presented by Ian's son, Callum, and was watched by his grandparents, two uncles and many friends.

Congratulations to the staff for producing one of the finest courses I have had the pleasure to play and well done Clive Osgood for organising the day.

Details on contacting any of the above committee are on our website.

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

Arnold Phipps-Jones



Kent

Not much to write about again this month I'm afraid, although with two events in the offing this month, be prepared for a fuller report in May. Don't forget that we have another event at West Kent Golf Club on May 24. This is one that I am particularly looking forward to as I haven't played here before. The e-mail invitation should be in circulation by now, so please get your replies in to Kev ASAP to secure your place.

One piece of news you may be interested in is that I am approaching the first anniversary of my Golf Support company. The fact that I have managed to gain and establish so many friends and professional relationships in my time has meant that I have had quite a successful year. Many thanks to all those who encouraged me

Assistant Profile

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

Name: Ian Scott
Age: 24
Club: Largs Golf Club
Position: Assistant Greenkeeper
Nickname: Jap



1. How long have you been greenkeeping?

7 Years.

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

Working outdoors every day.

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

In the military.

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

Bunker renovation, because it is a joy seeing the finished article.

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

Raking the bunkers after heavy rain, because they go like concrete!

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

Faster career progress for younger greenkeepers.

7. Hobbies?

Football, Golf and building computers.

8. Favourite Band?

Eminem.

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

Glasgow Rangers FC.

10. What's your claim to fame?

My picture from Harrogate 2011 being in the magazine about six times!

Are you an Assistant?

To appear in this column email scott@bigga.co.uk or ring 01347 833800 Option 510

Around The Green

to climb out of the rut I was in and take the plunge. I wish I had done it ten years ago! Thanks too to all the clients who have employed my services over the year. For details of what I can offer please visit our webpage from the address below.

Best of British
Rob Holland
www.kentgreenkeepers.com

Section Notes

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

BIGGA welcomes the following new members

Scottish Region

Michael Doris, Head Greenkeeper/Course Manager, Central
Ryan Winton, Assistant Greenkeeper, Central
Shaun McNaughton, Greenkeeper, Central
Scott Logan, Greenkeeper, Central
Thomas Hooley, Assistant Greenkeeper, Central
Samuel Nisbet, Student, Central
Mike Riddell, Greenkeeper, Central
Natasha Repinskaja, Greenkeeper, Central
Fraser Robertson, Assistant Greenkeeper, Central
Scott Watson, Greenkeeper, Central
Gavin Jones, Greenkeeper, Central
Gordon Nimmo, Affiliate Member, Central
James Johnston, Affiliate Member, East
Andrew Houston, Assistant Greenkeeper, North
William Sutherland, Assistant Greenkeeper, North
Stephen Lindsay, Greenkeeper, West
Alan Stewart, Greenkeeper, West

Northern Region

Garry Morse, Assistant Greenkeeper, North East
David Wilkinson, Head Greenkeeper/Course Manager, North West
Lee Burton, Affiliate Member, North West
Ben Minshill, Assistant Greenkeeper, North West
Richard Hodge, Greenkeeper, North West
Oliver Wood, Greenkeeper, North West
David Hales, Student, Northern
Conrad Cavill, Student, Northern
William Barratt, Assistant Greenkeeper, Northern
Mark Jessop, Greenkeeper, Northern
Jason Horner, Head Greenkeeper/Course Manager, Northern
Lewis Pattinson, Greenkeeper, Northern
Tom Haslam, Assistant Greenkeeper, Sheffield

Midland Region

Tim Carlisle, Head Greenkeeper/Course Manager, East Midlands
Jordan Baker, Assistant Greenkeeper, East Midlands
William Slater, Assistant Greenkeeper, East Midlands
Harvey Brooke, Greenkeeper, Midlands
Richard Turner, Greenkeeper, Midlands
Colin Sanders, Affiliate Member, Midlands
Joe Patterson, Affiliate Member, Midlands
Daniel Stanley, Assistant Greenkeeper, Midlands
Matthew Horton, Assistant Greenkeeper, Midlands
Philip Jones, Affiliate Member, Berks/Bucks & Oxon
Scott Fleming, Assistant Greenkeeper, Berks/Bucks & Oxon
David Cliffe, Affiliate Member, Berks/Bucks & Oxon
Mark Price, Affiliate Member, Mid Anglia

South West and South Wales



South Coast

Hello everyone, and welcome to April's around the green. Well we finally got there on February 15 with our Section seminar held at Milton Abbey School. I hope you all had a fantastic day, and for many of you it gave me a good chance to show you the life

South East Region

Reece Jones, Assistant Greenkeeper, Surrey
Andrew Ramsay, Greenkeeper, Surrey
Glen Newbold, Greenkeeper, Surrey
Michael Browne, Greenkeeper, Surrey
Sam Moss, Assistant Greenkeeper, Surrey
Daniel McMillan, Assistant Greenkeeper, Surrey
Ross Poulter, Greenkeeper, Surrey
Steve Paterson, Head Greenkeeper/Course Manager, Surrey
Harry Watson, Assistant Greenkeeper, Surrey
Nigel Hosegood, Assistant Greenkeeper, Kent
Michael Caplin, Assistant Greenkeeper, Sussex
Harish Sharma, Affiliate Member, London
Mark Smith, Affiliate Member, London
Joshua Leswell, Greenkeeper, East Anglia
Jack Davies, Greenkeeper, Essex
William Elgood, Greenkeeper, Essex
Daniel Homewood, Assistant Greenkeeper, Surrey

South West/South Wales

Christopher Rose, Assistant Greenkeeper, South West
Jonathan Tulk, Greenkeeper, South West
Lee Beaver, Assistant Greenkeeper, South West
Lewis Woodward, Assistant Greenkeeper, South West
Steven McLaren, Greenkeeper, South West
Robert Elliott, Greenkeeper, South West
Luke Mills, Greenkeeper, South West
Edward Horne, Assistant Greenkeeper, South West
Tom Freeman, Greenkeeper, South West
Iestyn Carpenter, Head Greenkeeper/Course Manager, South Coast
David Mulcahy, Greenkeeper, South Coast
Ian Lloyd, Greenkeeper, South Coast
Steve Farrant, Greenkeeper, South Coast
David Baugh, Greenkeeper, South Coast
Jack Potter, Assistant Greenkeeper, Devon&Cornwall
Martyn O'Shea, Greenkeeper, Devon&Cornwall
Noel Westlake, Greenkeeper, Devon&Cornwall

Northern Ireland

Chris McArthur, Greenkeeper, Northern Ireland

Overseas

Henry Squance, International, Austria
Carsten Brandt, International, Denmark
Espen Bergmann, Affiliate Member, Norway

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

of a Head Groundsman and our way of life at a private school.

We had excellent numbers in attendance, which was really encouraging for the Section, and I would like to thank all our guest speakers for their time and effort in making such a successful seminar. I just want to say a big thank you to the catering department at the school, who did provide us with a fantastic lunch and I hope you all enjoyed the pork! It was also nice to see so many people interested in the Abbey itself, which holds so much history; even one of our fellow greenkeepers made an inquiry about getting married there, nice one.

April sees our first Tournament of the year, which is on April 26, at Dunwood Manor, and is a 18 hole medal round, which will be our qualifier for this year's National Championship, held at Irvine Golf Club, Bogside, Irvine. I do hope we get a good turn out for this day, as many of you will know, this will be the last round of golf to be played at Dunwood manor so I am sure it will be an emotional day for many.

We are now up and running with our own website, address is biggasouthcoast.org.uk so no excuses, you can see what is happening in your Section. All fixtures and flyers will be available to view.

Finally that leaves me to wish you all a Happy Easter, Happy Greenkeeping for the season ahead, I'm just off to check my new born lambs! There's never a dull moment at Milton Abbey, Joe Cooper.



South West

Thursday, March 8, the Section had a seminar, titled Aspiration & Inspiration. Taking place at Chipping Sodbury GC, with a great turn out of over 40 people. With BIGGA's CEO, Jim Croxton, attending, guest speakers also included MJ Abbotts, speaking about their time at Wentworth and the amazing changes that they made. Simon Bush from training express spoke with Paul Worster about course safety. This was a great day, and again just proved how well everyone

supports the Section. Let's keep going!

Also March saw a big day for Matt Workman. Matt works at Minchinhampton GC and has recently got married. From all the guys, we wish you all the very best and hope you have a happy future together.

The fixtures for the coming season are now with you, we have some rather impressive golf clubs to visit this year, please do your very best to attend, don't be that person who says I'll go to the next one. Be that person who goes to every one.

We would also like to thank our patronage partners for 2012, Farmura, Countrywide, Headland, Eco-solve, TH Whites, Irrtech Ltd, Avoncrop.

We also have a Facebook page for the South West Section, one that will make it much more convenient for you all to use, you don't have to do anything, just enjoy this amazing feature you have at your finger tips.

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Devon and Cornwall

Our February meeting was held at Bigbury GC, on the South Devon coast. It was an extremely chilly day but we still managed to have 56 attendees brave the conditions of which 24 even braved playing golf. Strong, sub-zero winds made it very challenging but most completed the 18 holes, with Andrew Prouse, Porthpean, coming first with 41 pts. James Sheehan, Truro, was second with 38 pts. J. Twitchen, Warren, third with 37 pts on count back. Longest Drive was Graham Clarke, Chulmleigh. Nearest the Pin. J. Twitchen.

Graham Davis, Head Greenkeeper at Bigbury since 1983, led the course walk. He explained that over the years he has been in charge, he has changed quite a lot on the course, enlarging all the tees, planting several thousand trees, extending the 15th green, and building new bunkers, renovating existing bunkers and creating ecological areas. There are a staff of five including Graham, Des Bickle,

David Moulding, Stewart Kent and Robert Hamley. After the golf and course walk, Mick Higgins and Jonathan Skelton, from Sibelco, gave a very interesting educational talk on sands used for sports turf. Mick concentrated on matching particle size distribution and also showed some products which the company have been involved with in recent years.

Many thanks to Graham and his team, and all the staff at Bigbury GC, for their hospitality. Also, Big thanks to the sponsors for the day, Masons Kings and Reel Grinding SW, Gary Tucker, for providing the prizes and sponsoring the day.

On Tuesday, March 6, we held our annual Spring Seminar at St Mellion International, Cornwall. The day was organised by the Section but special thanks goes to Mike Bush MG, who did the majority of the organising of the day, along with his staff at St Mellion.

The day consisted of a round robin of machinery and technique demonstrations in the morning, followed by lunch and then two educational presentations in the afternoon. The topic for the day was "Working the Surface, looking at techniques to improve surface performance. The morning demonstrations included looking at the Graden pedestrian Sand Injection scarifier, the Blec tractor mounted sand fill scarifier, the Campey Vredo overseeder, the Dakota spinner dresser, the new Greentek units including over-seeding and hollow-coring units and the Smith-Co turf iron.

One of the demonstrations included Steve Gingell, STRI, who set up a mini trial on the putting green to establish the relationship between heights of cut, frequency of cut and the use of a turf iron and their effects on green speed. It was interesting to note that increased speed was recorded where a single cut at 5mm followed by using a turf iron as opposed to double cuts or cutting at 4.5mm. The two presentations started with Mike Bush MG, Course Manager, St Mellion, talking through dealing with the thatch problems and reducing the inputs over the years to the strong position they are in now. Steve Gingell summed up the day by looking at the areas covered in the demonstrations, concentrating on thatch and Organic Matter

control and how these areas can influence over-seeding success rates. Thanks to the 75 attendees who attended the day including Level 2 and 3 students from Duchy College. Thanks also to David Chammings and Sherriff Amenity for sponsoring the food for the day. Thanks to Mike Bush and St Mellion for staging the event; a very successful day all round!

Our next meeting will be at Borringdon Park, Plymouth (date to be confirmed, and is likely to be last wed in May!). This will be an afternoon kick off and the qualifier for the National Championship. We also have meeting at Launceston GC on July 4, Devon V Cornwall team Event. This too will be an afternoon event.

I hope you all have a great season and look forward to catching up with you all in the summer,

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South Wales

Good Morning South Wales, with our Nation at a standstill, our great rugby team on the brink of another GRAND SLAM, time to give the French Rugby Union what they deserve on the pitch after the travesty of the World Cup. A huge congratulation must go out to Lee Evans and his staff at the Millennium Stadium, the pitch has been outstanding this season good luck for the rest of the year and enjoy the matches during the Olympic games.

Our spring seminar will again take place on April 19 at The Royal Porthcawl GC, from what I'm led to believe Gerald Orme has been trying to pull out all the stops this year to ensure we have fantastic guest speakers all to be confirmed. Many thanks to him and his team at Farmura Environmental for their continued sponsorship and support for this event. For booking please contact Gareth Knight on 07595988512.

Keep enjoying the spring guys remember any news or views contact me at any time,

Peter Holmstrom



Jim Croxton
Chief Executive

A recurring theme on BIGGA's Bulletin Boards and in my conversations with members is the importance of the relationship between the Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper and the Golf Club Manager/Secretary.

It is too simplistic to say that when this relationship is good the course is automatically likewise but I'm certain that it can be a contributing factor. I was delighted therefore to be asked by the Scottish Golf Union to attend its innovative Management Development Programme recently. The SGU has identified Club Manager education as a high priority for the on-going health of the game and is offering the opportunity for current and aspiring Club Managers to undertake the CMAE Certified Club Manager (CCM) course at heavily subsidised rates.

The first week of the course is an introduction to the key elements to the job and it is gratifying that BIGGA has been asked to present on the importance of golf course maintenance, how the Association can help and how to get the best out of the course manager. I'm convinced that if the next generation of Club Managers place appropriate value on the skills of our members the game of golf has a healthy future, the SGU is to be commended on its initiative.

The ability to adapt to changing weather, economic forces and golfer expectations has been vital

Another regular discussion topic has been the variety of weather conditions our members deal with across the UK and beyond. A recent Bulletin Board thread on rainfall statistics revealed huge discrepancies in rainfall levels even within relatively short distances. I have been constantly amazed by the resourcefulness of BIGGA members in dealing with all that Mother Nature challenges them with.

In some areas we have drought orders and hosepipe bans being applied from April while in others golf courses are still dealing with the after effects of severe flooding. This is when the renowned adaptability of greenkeepers comes to the fore. I've heard it said that this trait is a curse as it means that occasionally our members are taken advantage of, but there is no doubt that the ability to adapt to changing weather, economic forces and golfer expectations has been vital in surviving the last few years. We at BIGGA HOUSE are doing all we can to ensure the golf industry recognises that.

Finally it was a pleasure recently to attend the Scottish Regional Conference, which was once again expertly organised by Peter Boyd, the Regional Administrator. During the excellent conference, Stuart Taylor, Regional Chairman, presented a gift to Peter to commemorate his forthcoming retirement after 15 years excellent service. It was clear that Peter will be sorely missed by the many friends he has made in the Region and I would like to place on record my gratitude for his hard work and professionalism during the last 15 years and his support during my time with the Association.

Jim Croxton, BIGGA CEO