

time to complete feedback forms. This data is invaluable in terms of communication and will enable the line-up for next year's event, which is planned for a similar time in 2013, to be tailored more closely to members' needs. The day was rounded off by Tony Smith, BIGGA Chairman, with a Q&A session, which was an opportunity for people to ask those questions that we all think up between BTME annually.

Thanks should also go to Sandra Raper for coordinating and organising the day and for being the driving force behind the day. She was brilliantly assisted by Stuart Green from HQ and overall the whole event was, I believe, a total success.

I don't know about you but the chocolate in my advent calendar this year seems much smaller? Have Thorntons introduced austerity measures in their production program? This is going to be a difficult Christmas for me as I'm in training for The Brighton Marathon next April and I can't justify starting to 'Carb up' four months prior to the event.

I'm not doing it in fancy dress, my SpongeBob Square Pants outfit has been retired, but I am doing it for The Leukaemia and Lymphoma Research charity to help raise money for an extremely worthy and supportive cause.

If anyone would care to sponsor me then I do have a JustGiving page set up or you could text/email/phone me and pledge your support.

There isn't much more to report this month so I'd like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous 2013.

Greg Skinner

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MIDLAND

Well here we are, the end of the year.

And what a year! As the poet Coleridge should have wrote: "Water, water everywhere and not a drop to fish", or indeed do anything outside such as,

perish the thought, work with a little sun on our backs.

Lets all pray for a more clement 2013.

The Autumn Tournament was held at Druids Heath Golf Club on Thursday 25 October, where the weather was cold, breezy but dry.

The course was presented beautifully by Course Manager Jim Lake and his fine team.

Congratulations to you all, and thanks to the Club for allowing us courtesy of the course.

The main prize sponsor on the day was New Holland Tractors, with thanks to Ted Barnet of The Compact Tractor Centre in conjunction with Simon Gumbrell from Campeys who presented the prizes.

The nearest the pin sponsors were Sherriff Amenity and Working Turf, and the hot drinks and chocolate at the halfway house was courtesy of Farols.

Thank you to all our sponsors who contributed to make it such a successful day.

The winners were as follows: 1 Andy Brougham 38pts; 2 Dave Fellows 36pts 3 Ed Stant 34pts. Division Winners were Clint Woodall, Tom Boyd and Howard Middlebrook. Trade Prize was won by John Lewis from Lely UK.

Thanks also to Sandra Raper and Stuart Green from BIGGA who attended and added valuable input to the AGM.

There were no changes with any committee members and as such the following were voted in for next year: President John Hammond; Chairman Ed Stant; Deputy Chairman Rhys Thomas; Secretary Andy Smith; Treasurer Gary Cunningham; Committee Nigel Tyler, Richard Beacham, Leigh Swann, Kev Pugh

What's this I see on this month's calendar page? A photo of our Chair looking rather portly and indeed void of tan.

Ed, rectification requires more time in the field, and Tracy's cakes should be posted to Stratford for the attention of SELM.

This month's calendar is sponsored by Countrywide/Andy Lane MBPR.

Please consider Andy for your Turf and Amenity requirements.

Email: alane@countrywide-

farmers.co.uk or Mob: 07774 416 429.

And finally, our ever gracious, supportive and learned President Mr J Hammond has seen fit to undertake his PA1 and PA2 (whatever they are now) spraying test, and of course passed with flying colours. John is, as many of us remember a man that retired some years ago from sales, and a very respected man he was, and indeed still is as our president. Such is amplified by the fact that John is still wishing to keep in touch with Greenkeeping and its modern ramifications and laws.

Well done John, again you have set the example to follow. Sean McDade.



MID ANGLIA

As I write this in mid November the temperature is 15 degrees and hardly what we expect in late Autumn.

Then again the weather for 2012 has hardly been textbook so nothing surprises me in what has been a very testing season for turf managers.

We had our third outing for the year and had a healthy attendance at Verulam GC for the Autumn Golf Day.

The weather was very testing as it was damp, cold and miserable early but cleared up nicely towards the final holes.

Our thanks go to Chris Carpenter and his team for getting the course in great shape for the event at this awkward time of year.

The Results are as follows: 1 Simon Woolley 38pts; 2 S Parnell 36pts; 3 Oly Browning (BIGGA National Champion!) 33pts; Nearest Pin - John Moorhouse (yes that is correct! Mr Moorhouse's first outing for 8 years?); Nearest Pin - Gerald Bruce; Trade Prize - Rob Catlin

We are all looking forward to the Texas Scramble at Dunstable Downs GC and let's hope Frank has come back down to earth after Celtic's stunning win over the mighty Barcelona! I am sure he won't mention it at all on the 4th..ha ha.

Darren Mugford - d.mugford@rigbytaylor.com

Assistant Profile

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

Name: Gavin Jones
Age: 24
Club: St Andrews Links Trust
Position: Greenkeeper
Nickname: Too many to say!



1. How long have you been greenkeeping?

I have been a full time greenkeeper for one-and-a-half years but have been greenkeeping from the age of 15.

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

I could never be indoors all day, worst nightmare. It's a way of life and I feel it keeps you healthy

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

That's a tough one, Think I might be musician or an artist

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

Cutting greens, as the greens are massive at the Castle Course and I am proud when I see golfers play on them

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

I don't really know, it's hard to say depends on the weather!

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

Good weather every day of the year with the odd day of rain for irrigation

7. Hobbies?

Music, Art, Photography, relaxing

8. Favourite Band?

Coldplay would be at the top

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

Ireland and Leinster in the rugby

10. What is your claim to fame?

Hugh Grant robbed my pencil at Kingsbarns (but gave it back).