

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



East

Well I hope you are all well and prospering in 2012. The winter months are almost over and spring is just around the corner (we hope!)

The committee had our first meeting on December 13, at Rigby Taylor's HQ, in Newbridge, specifically to have a Cabinet reshuffle, as it were.

Mr George Oliver has the reigns of Social Convenor and is busy thinking of ideas to bring some welcome cheer for the year ahead - if any of our members have any ideas or input please contact George - Tel: 07824557041. He will be glad to hear from you.

The Vice Chairman and Education Convenor, Mr Scott Corrigan, has the honour of Philip Butler as an assistant. Both Scott and Philip will bring to the table fresh, inspiring ideas to discuss and both young men will work well together, I am sure, in this difficult, but highly rewarding, role. Please contact Scott on 07877098237 or Philip on 07841759080.

Jim Smith 07841316864 will be calling in on you throughout the spring period to establish any information about any BIGGA matters you may have to gauge the feedback and give us some indication as to how we, as your East Section Committee, can best serve you as a member.

I would ask that you help us to help you, by contacting and contributing in these matters - your opinion counts.

Stuart Ferguson 07961630553 - stuferg@btinternet.com, as ever will be on hand as our hard working Secretary. The experience he has

amounted over the last three to four years is crucial in the smooth running of the Section.

It was suggested by me to bring back the summer knock-out comp whereby two members or member and guest, play against a similar set up at the top named venue or neutral venue, to establish the Section's Champions. Any input or opinion would be gratefully received.

Our Patrons' Award, Messrs Philip Butler and Jamie Martin, should have enjoyed their Harrogate BTME experience, (well done boys). We look forward to hearing about your trip.

Once again please inform us of any questions or queries you have and we look to hearing from you.

Yours in golf
Stewart Crawford
Chairman 07873464097 - s.crawford@live.co.uk



Central

Congratulations first of all to Grant Frogley, who is leaving gWest to take up the position of Course Manager at The Roxburgh. We wish him well in his new job. Before he left, Grant and Lee Strutt MG gave a presentation to a full house of greenkeepers hoping to make the step up to Deputy or Course Manager, at Auchterarder GC, on January 11.

A few things coming up in the Section. On February 9, Agrovista is staging a Vermin Control course at St Andrews Links Practice Centre and will happily run a second course in the west of the Section if there is sufficient demand. Also in February, we still hope to stage a practical training course on how to rectify irrigation faults with Tony Barnett, of Bar Systems. On Wednesday, March 21,

James Cobb, a retired lecturer, will give a presentation on planting of native species of trees and shrubs for maximum environmental benefit and our Spring outing will be over the Craighead course at Crail on Tuesday, April 17. For all information on these and other events look on www.biggacentralsection.org.uk or follow us on Facebook. All correspondence for events will now be done by email so please provide us with your email address. Finally, thanks to all those companies who have again sponsored the website which allows us to stage these educational events. Their logos are all listed on our website and a click on them gives you a direct link to their website.

Gordon Moir



Northern

I would like to start off this month with the weather and I am sure everybody has experienced the baw bag and I hope you have not had too much damage on your course with fallen trees etc.

I was told a very funny story about an excuse for being late which I would like to share with you. It starts off with the certain person phoning his boss and letting him know that he was going to be late because his parrot had a heart attack and he had to wait for the vet to come to give him an injection. The worst part of it all was when he got the bill through the door. Believe it or not this was a true story.

Also there has been some movement with the greenkeepers starting with my good friend and work mate, Dennis Grant, who is leaving Newmachar Golf Club to become Head Greenkeeper of Huntly Golf Club. We wish him all the best for his

future, also I (Ross Macrae) am leaving Newachar Golf Club to become Head Greenkeeper of Turriff Golf Club. On this note I wish to thank Dale Robertson and George Mitchell for having me at Newmachar Golf Club again (I'm going to miss the banter and the rest of the staff).

Ross Macrae

Northern Region



Northern

I hope everyone is enjoying these mild conditions for this time of year. The fact that I played in the weekend comp on New Year's Eve was fantastic considering this time last year we were under snow! As always I'm looking forward to another good year in the Section. We have some great courses to play and with The Open at Lytham this year it is always a great week to look forward to.

Since my last notes we had our final golf day at Selby in December. Frank Stewart and I were sitting having a brew in the clubhouse that morning fearing the worse. The black clouds and the very strong winds were a concern but us northern boys are made of strong stuff. Gordon and his lads were out cutting away while we were trying to work out the coffee machine in the warm lounge talking to nice ladies!

The weather all week had been horrible and it's a massive credit to Selby, Gordon and his crew, for turning out a fantastic course for us. It was hard going, but very enjoyable all round. A big thanks to Gordon and his team again; to all you guys who braved the conditions and, as always, our sponsors.

Last, but not least, I bumped

into an old chum of mine who I have not seen for a long time - James Bentley, who I had the pleasure of working (???) with at Hollins Hall and Moor Allerton. He moved to Oslo in Norway and has moved up to Deputy at Miklagard Golf Club. It just goes to show all those afternoons sitting and listening to me have finally paid off!

No, it's great to see young lads, who have a bit of ambition in them even if they can't hold their beer, pull girls and are bone idle.... Sorry, that was harsh. His girlfriend was very nice.

So, as always, any news please pass it on and I will bid you a great month. Take it easy.

Andy Slingsby



North Wales

With the winter competition calendar in full swing it's a rush in the mornings to get ahead of play and be able to see the course in the late dawns.

I hope you all tried your best to get to Harrogate. At the time of writing this month's column, I don't know as yet if enough people booked seats on our Section's coach to make the trip viable. I always enjoy my time spent there and I hope you get as much enjoyment and information from your time there.

The Christmas Competition and AGM took place at Heswall Golf Club on December 7, with good weather (although more than a little windy), a great course and extremely friendly clubhouse staff and membership. A good day was had by all.

The results of the day were as follows: 1. Stuart McCall, Paul Stanley, Callum Roberts and Simon Whitley, 73 pts; 2. Jez Hughes, John Evans, Andrew Cornes and Jim Croxton, 71 pts; 3. John Morris, Miles Todd, Barry Wright and Darren Anderson, 70 pts. Nearest the Pin went to Jez Hughes, on the 7th, and Charlie Land, on the 14th.

I think we all owe a big thank you to Guy Cannings and team for the fantastic course they set up for our day.

The AGM also took place on the day and we welcome three new members to the Committee, two greenkeepers and one from the trade, the new Greenkeeper members are; Rhys Butler of

Aberdovey GC and Neil Oxtan of Heswall GC. The new trade member is Paul Lowe, of Symbio. We hope your time on Committee is a long and fruitful one!

In January my Course Manager Jez Hughes took up his position as Club Vice Captain at the Vale of Llangollen Golf Club, which coincides with him also celebrating 25 years as a Greenkeeper. Well done, Jez!

I think that just about does it for this month, please remember to send your news to my contact details at the bottom of this and every column so all the best until next month!

Pete Maybury e-mail petemayb66@aol.com mobile 07756001187



North East

Here we go again. It's that time of the month for Section News. I always struggle this time of the year. In fact, I had sent out a couple of e-mails to members to see if they could fill me in on news from their course, even telling me what they were doing for their winter programme. I mean to say how hard is that to reply to. Anyway God loves a trier.

Well I do have some news but now having been informed by Newcastle College recently I see that not only greenkeepers James Curry and Tony Callan, of Prudhoe GC, are attending, but also Michael Hall and Stuart Ineson, both from Dunstanburgh Castle, and Grant Burton, of Gosforth GC, and lastly Harry Carvey, of Heworth GC. Well done to those golf clubs on sending them onto further education in greenkeeping.

I have recently just received confirmation on the Spring and Autumn comps. They are as follows: Spring. South Shields GC, April 18, tee off time 11am-11.30am. Autumn. Wooler GC, October 10. Now for those people who have not played South Shields, leave home earlier than normal as it's not easy to find first time around unless you use Sat Nav. It's been a long time since we have played there and it would be good to have a few more people turn up the same goes for Wooler. This will be the first time we have played

there I am sure you will enjoy both courses. Members will be notified in due course to these events.

Jimmy Richardson

Midland Region



East Midlands

Come on now, be honest, did anyone manage to continue their New Year Resolutions through Harrogate Week?

How great to see so many greenkeepers, old and new, at the show and also socialising at organised events and in the hostelrys of Harrogate. For an industry that is under great pressure from the media and bank-fuelled recession the vast majority of people seemed upbeat with a positive outlook for 2012 and beyond.

Having already thanked Andy and Danny, at Lingdale, in my January notes for their hospitality in early December I am now able to report the results of the windswept East Midlands Christmas Tournament. Firstly, the Greenkeepers' Nearest the Pin prize was won, with a majestic strike of a 7-iron to four feet of the pin on the 16th hole, by..... Greg Skinner. Nearest the pin for the trade was won by Carl Chamberlain, of Rigby Taylor - some say quite fortunately, but I didn't see it! Nick Miles partnered Simon Banks (marking their own card...hmmmm and with Mr Banks playing his 15th day of consecutive golf) to victory with 44 pts. Pete Smith and Sam Voss were runners-up. Longest Drives were won by Chris 'Plus Fours' Weir for the Greenkeepers while Matt Court took the Guest/Trade prize. Both Nearest the Pin and Longest Drive prizes were sponsored by Tacit, so thanks go to them along with Symbio and Farmura for their support of the day.

For all the Chairmen, Green Committee members, Proprietors and golfers in general who get to read Greenkeeping International magazine I can reveal that having whipped all my colleagues at cards, darts, pool and Wii in the shed over the winter I am now looking forward to warmer days next month. There is only so much Jeremy

Kyle and Loose Women that you can watch before you develop shed fever. In addition to this my doctor says that the strain of kettle finger I have contracted over the winter is immune to my winter flu jab. Odd?

Leicestershire has, like a lot of areas, (not you Pete 'Arctic Circle' Smith) enjoyed a very mild, Long John-free winter, which has enabled winter projects to be completed ahead of schedule and allowed a more frequent than usual winter mowing programme. This has kept the golf course looking like a golf course which in itself is motivational and most importantly keeps our salary providers (the golfers) happy (ish)!

So here we are in early February with less than 180 days to go to the 2012 London Olympics, will Greenkeeping ever become an Olympic event like beach volleyball. I wonder?

TTFN

Greg Skinner



Midland

The Section's Christmas Tournament was held at Woburn Golf Club, on December 9, around the Duchess course. The weather was perfect as was the golf course, as presented by the Course Manager, John Clarke and his fine team. Our thanks to Woburn for allowing us courtesy of the course once again. The main prize sponsor on the day was Crocodile Golf, with thanks to Ian Marshall and Paul Tanner, for their continued support of our Christmas tournament. Thanks also to the chocolate and "sloe gin" on the 10th tee courtesy of Kevin and Russ, from Farols. Thanks also to all the other trade members who brought so many prizes for the Nearest the Pins and raffle on the day.

The result of the day: 1. Steve Scott & Aaron Saunders, 40 pts (back 9 22pts); 2. Ed Stant & Clint Woodall, 40 pts (back 9 21pts); 3. Tony Cheese & Simon White, 37pts. Nearest the Pin winners: Vince Gilroy, Steve Scott x2, Rich Lloyd.

Please make a note of the next education day coming up, hosted by Sherrieff Amenity, at Walsall Golf Club, on March 14. With some first class speakers

Around The Green

on show and lunch provided please contact Nigel Tyler on 07989 548058 to reserve your place or for further information.

Yet again our committee has produced a great calendar for 2012, and our thanks must go to our many sponsors. This month's page is sponsored by Farol Ltd. Please consider them regarding your John Deere needs, and indeed many other machinery requirements. Please contact either Kevin Pugh: 07943 192498 pughkevin@farol.co.uk, or Russ Tomlinson 07943 192588 tomlinsonruss@farol.co.uk.

My thanks to our Chair, Ed, for the above,
Sean McDade



East of England

Happy New Year to all.

By the time you read this maybe we will have actually experienced some winter weather! At the time of writing I can count the number of frosty mornings we have had on one hand. Couple that with mild temperatures and well below average rainfall and once again we have another upside down season of British weather. Quite when we are going to get all the indoor and off course jobs done I do not know.

As I write this before, and you read it after, BTME has been I am sure the entire event will have passed off as the success it usually is.

Our Christmas golf event this year was held at Belton Park Golf Club, in Grantham, on Thursday, December 8. This year saw a change to the format with a Team Texas Scramble, made up of members and invited golf club officials.

The golf course was presented in fantastic condition as always by Gary Poole and his team, although we all could have done without the gale force winds that accompanied the day. An excellent meal was also provided by the clubhouse staff who all made us feel welcome throughout the day. Many thanks also go to the sponsors of the day, Rigby Taylor and Mansfield Sands, for providing an excellent prize table and their continued

sponsorship of the Section.

The results of the day were as follows: Nearest the Pin. Bruce Hicks; Longest Walk. G. Poole, N. Smith, L. Carratt, L. Smith; 3. A. Kitchenson, R. Moody, A. Hill, D. Grundy; 2. P. Wilkinson, I. Mawer, R. Mawer, O. Gurney; 1. R. Welford, A. Cox, M. Sutherland, N. Fox.

Once again many thanks to all concerned for an excellent day.

The Midland Region, Inter-Section Championship was held in October at The Belfry. For the third year in a row the East of England Section team of Rob Welford, Ash Cox and Rob Bemment were victorious.

Unfortunately this "Dream Team" will not be able to defend their title in 2012 as Ash Cox has now left the industry. We wish him all the best in his new career.

Belated congratulations also go to Brian Robinson (spelt it right this time, Mrs Robinson!) for his exploits at the 2011 National Championship winning the BIGGA Challenge Plate for best Stableford score on Day 2.

Finally congratulations go to Gary, from Burghley Park, and his wife on the birth of their son, Edward.

Many thanks.

Steve Beverly, Immingham Golf Club.

South East Region



East Anglia

Lovely day at Thorpeness (bit breezy!) Course, as usual, in excellent condition thanks to Ian and his men. The bunkers look fantastic.

A total of 128 Players took part in the annual Turkey Trot sponsored ably by CMW as ever.

After the bacon rolls and the launching of the Aldeburgh Lifeboat, battle commenced. The battle was against the wind, frostbite and trying to swing a club in a space suit!

However, some of us (the few) managed to score some points, they are as follows:

1. Titchells Terrors, 56.7 pts
2. The Fielders, 57.6 pts

3. The Usual Suspects, 58 pts
4. The Lemmons, sorry Lemmons Lads, 58.1 pts

Nearest the Pin 2nd: Sponsored by Aitkens – Nick Ashman

Nearest the Pin 7th: Sponsored by Symbio – Steve Crabb

Nearest the Pin 10th: Sponsored by Bartram Mowers – Andy Curson: Nearest the Pin 16th, Sponsored by Tomlinson Groundcare – Tom Melvin

Nearest the Pin in two on the 6th, Sponsored by Baileys of Norfolk – Trevor Hurn

Nearest the Pin in two on the 11th, Ray Foreman

Nearest the white line 5th Sponsored by Ransome Jacobsen Ltd – Alan Sharp

Longest drive 1st 14-28 Handicap, Sponsored by Ernest Doe & Son – Gavin Rayford

Longest drive 18th 0-13 Handicap, Sponsored by Lely UK – Nick Staff

Longest drive 8th Trade & Guest, Sponsored by Prime Irrigation – Eddie Jack

Longest Drive 14th Trade Mat le Benn, Longest Drive 13th Guest, Warren Goddard

The Ernie Hart prize for Outstanding Greenkeeper of the Year went to Glen Rayfield, of Felixstowe Ferry Golf Club. Well done mate. Colin Rushbrook, President of our great Section, presented this prize.

Some trade members not mentioned above but still as valuable to us were Rigby Taylor, Scotts, Headland, Collier Turf Care, Toro, Tacit and Ben Burgess.

We could not do this event without the tireless (and sometimes thankless) efforts of our exceptional Secretary, Ian Willett, and the support of our trade friends.

We thank you all.

Must mention the 'Halfway House'. Well supplied with warming sustenance and the usual banter. Thank you Bartrams/Ransome Jacobsen

Our thanks once again to Thorpeness and their Captain, Chris Scott, for a great venue and great hospitality.

By the time you read this you will probably have forgotten most of the AGM. I say most because although the minutes of the last meeting, the Chairman's report and Treasurer's report were all passed without too much fuss. The Secretary's report did cause some concern from at least three people. Ian was explaining quietly and

professionally why there had been an increase of £5 to cover rising costs of our golf days. These people wanted to upset a very tidy apple cart. They do, however, need to look back and see just how far we have come in the last 15 years. They also need to show some professionalism, and at least get enough people to form a new committee and call an EGM. Our BIGGA Regional Administrator, Clive Osgood, has also stated that ours is the best run and supported Section and we should be proud.

It was also very noticeable that when our President and Treasurer asked if anyone wanted to take over, no one stepped forward. Good Luck.

On a happier note, our fixtures for 2012 have already been sorted out. They are: Waldringfield, Royal Norwich, Haverhill and Ely. How many other Sections can say that. Cheers Colin.

Our present committee was also re-elected en-bloc.

Pause for thought: To build may have to be the slow and laborious task of years; to destroy can be the thoughtless act of a single day.

Are you listening?

Mick Lathrope



Kent

As I write this at the start of January, wind has become a real issue. Many of you, I'm sure, would expect me to follow this line with a throwaway gag about the underlying reasons being copious amounts of brussel sprouts at Christmas. However, having seen that there are people being killed by falling trees and weak building structures I won't be doing that. Please bear in mind the trees and structures that are on your courses. Regular surveys on both are essential in order to safeguard yourselves and your customers.

On to issues in our fair county. Well, as usual, no-one has contacted me with any news so I guess everything is fine. Harrogate would have been and gone by the time you read this. I hope those of you that made the trek up enjoyed the experience and feel suitably enlightened by the

seminars.

Our events calendar for 2012 has been in circulation for a few months now. If you want to see what we've got planned then please see our webpage. Also, Hadlow College are still running their monthly evening seminars on our behalf so please try to get to as many of these as possible. Thanks very much to John Millen for hosting these free evenings for us again.

Many thanks to those companies that have chosen to sponsor us again. Your support is much appreciated and we wish your businesses well for the coming year.

Don't forget to call me if you need any help with your courses. Details on webpage.

Best of British

Rob Holland www.kent-greenkeepers.com



Sussex

The Turkey Trot was again played at Worthing Golf Club and a big thank you goes out to George Barr and his crew for presenting a delightful course and also to the catering staff for their hospitality and a great meal. Many thanks to Dave Bush, and Ernest Doe, for the BBQ and drinks at the half way point. I know it was much appreciated. The competition resulted in a grand win in first place for Dave Allen, Simon Wells, Richard Evans and Tony Muzzal.

The Mitchells Grounds Care Sussex Bowl was won by Mike Gould and Richard, from Copthorne Golf Club, defeating George Barr and Gary Ogilvie. Well done to Mike and Richard. More support is needed for the competition this year so PLEASE ENTER. I am sure the entire Section would want to join me to once again thank our sponsors because without their help our events would not be as grand as they are. So please show your support for them and our section and support this year's coming events. Our thanks to: Darren and Scott, at Mitchells Grounds Care Machinery; Mark Day from Tacit; Gary Ogilvie, from Avoncrop Amenity; Dave Bush,

from Ernest Doe, and Steve Vogells and John Cole, from John Shaw Machinery.

Congratulations to Richard and Beth Evans, of Pyecombe Golf Club, on the birth of their son on Christmas Day at 3am. Jake weighed in at 6 lbs 8oz and all are doing well.

Conditions were calm and the sea smooth for the Mitchells Groundscare five-hour sea match held at Pevensey Bay. Twenty-seven anglers fished the competition which saw the whiting size limit raised to 30cm to save weighing in too many fish as there is a glut of whiting at this time of year. In 1st place (and now banned from fishing his own competitions) was Darren Mitchell, from Haywards Heath GC. Second place went to Steven Lusted, Third place to Keith Bean and Fourth place to Paul Giles. The biggest fish pool money went to Steven Lusted, which netted him prize money of £155. Darren honourably stepped down as overall winner and Steven Lusted was presented with the winner's trophy. Everyone weighed in at least one fish so a good time was had by all. Thanks to everyone that attended. A special thanks goes to Colin Martin, from Lewes GC, as he has fished all the matches, both sea and fresh water with a posse of five with him. The next Mitchells Groundscare Machinery course match will be in late June. Anyone interested should book in once a date is announced as numbers might be limited or a larger lake may have to be found. Contact Darren on 07533-476878.

Cheers for now,
Eric Green Beauport Park Golf Club
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South West and South Wales Region



South Wales

I hope everyone is well and

have enjoyed BTME. Please find reports and gossip in next month's edition. A warm but wet welcome to Mark Tucker, who has successfully headed north up from Saunton Sands, North Devon, as the new Head Greenkeeper of Neath Golf Club. We would like to wish him all the best in his new role.

I wrote in last month's magazine about the winter golf tournament being played unfortunately due to gale force winds and some extreme hails stone the event has been postponed until January 17 we are all hoping for better weather then! All results are to follow.

That's all from me this month please any news, gossip or any dramas please without hesitation contact myself at anytime.

Peter Holmstrom



South West

During December, the South West had its Christmas competition. This year we visited Burnham & Berrow GC and what an amazing day it was! Unfortunately the weather was awful, I couldn't say one nice thing about the weather, we arrived at Burnham for our pre round bacon roll and coffee and at that time, the rain was coming in sideways! I remember seeing about 30 greenkeepers standing looking out the clubhouse window, many of them thinking exactly the same as me! By the time it was our turn to go out, I must say the weather did improve slightly, and many of us had an enjoyable round of golf. With this said, the condition of the golf course was brilliant, many of you will know Burnham and will already understand this. We had just played a golf course in December, in awful conditions but I still left the 18th green thinking "Wow, that was an enjoyable to walk."

Many of you will know how popular the South West Christmas Golf Day is, this year was no exception... with over 45 playing golf 15 more for the course walk and sitting down with 70 guests for the meal, this really was a fantastic day! Many

Assistant Profile

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

Name: Tom Wood
Age: 23
Club: Outlane GC, Huddersfield
Position: Assistant Greenkeeper
Nickname: TomTom, Tomoose



1. How long have you been greenkeeping?
4 years

2. What was it about the career that attracted you?
Preparing sportsturf and being outdoors.

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

4. Which task do you most enjoy doing and why?
Course improvement projects and hand mowing.

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

6. What one thing - other than a pay rise - would improve the greenkeepers' lot?
Club managers and Course managers steering clubs forward would lead to improvements in all areas.

7. Hobbies?
Cricket, Football, Golf, Photography, Gigs and Dog walking

8. Favourite Band?
Right now. The Black Keys

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

10. What is your claim to fame?
None. Yet.

Are you an Assistant?
Please email scott@bigga.co.uk for a list of Qs...

Around The Green

thanks for Burnham & Berrow GC and special thanks to Richard and his team. The results of the day were – 3. Ollie Bruce 29 pts; 2. Chris Butcher 30 pts; 1. Chris Trott 35 pts.

Eco-sol, very kindly presented two prizes to the South West, Remedy Oak was successful first time round winning a free drill & fill operation to one of their greens. Chipping Sodbury had the joy of the second prize winning a free sand banding to one of their greens. I'm sure you'll all agree when I say two fantastic prizes! Further to that, as a Section we also raised £430 on our famous raffle, this money is to be split between two charities, Dorothy House Charity and Burnham & Berrow Captain's Charity.

Very shortly, the 2012 fixtures will be with you, looking back on last year, each event had such a great turn out, please do your very best to support at least one Section event during 2012, your support is the driving factor behind the whole section.

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.

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



Devon and Cornwall

Hello all and Happy New Year! Our Christmas meeting this year was held at Ashbury Golf Club, near Okehampton, Devon. A total of 70 attendees enjoyed either golf or a course walk. The golf was a Greensomes format playing for the "Ransomes Jacobsen Cup" and the "Irritect Winter Challenge Cup". In what were very testing conditions, 1st place went to Andrew Prouse and David Daw from Porthpean. It was testament to Steve Harris and the greenkeeping team that the golf was played at all, after heavy rainfall.

The Course Walk was led by Steve Harris, Course Manager; Pete Gross, Deputy Course Manager, and Stewart Partridge,

Head Greenkeeper, Kigbears Course. Steve started the walk with a tour of the facilities including all the various departments he is in charge of. Ashbury have 400 Electric Golf Buggies with a two storey indoor parking and charging facility. 90 of these are now fitted with full winter cabs to accommodate year round golf. These cabs have been designed and built in-house and they plan to convert another 60. These buggies are required to facilitate the volume of golf experienced at Ashbury, which can be close to 1000 potential golfers per day. Ashbury boasts 148 holes in total, including 3 x full 18 hole, 1 x 27 hole (these holes are rotated to provide 3 different 18 hole layouts) and there is a 18 hole par 3 course too. Steve is in charge of 29 staff including five full-time mechanics.

Thanks to our sponsors for the day MST and Irritect Ltd. A special thanks to MST for providing a halfway house to be enjoyed by the golfers and the course walkers. Refreshments including Pasties, coffee or something stronger if required.

After the golf and course walk, a 3 course Christmas lunch was served followed by our annual Christmas raffle and the presentation of the prizes. Congratulations to Mike Ellis from Lakeview GC for winning a trip to Harrogate with travel and accommodation met by the Section. On this note, congratulations to Paul Gerdes, Staddon Heights, and Neil Ivamy, Trevose, for securing their places to Harrogate nominated through Duchy College and funded by the College and the Section. Also, congratulations to Greg O'Reilly, St Mellion, for being selected by the Section for a place to Harrogate with the cost met by the Regional Board. It is great that these four members can attend Harrogate and I hope that they have enjoyed their experience.

After the presentations, the members made use of the many other facilities and activities available, including Ten-pin bowling, Indoor bowls and Snooker. There was "friendly" competition between the Devon and Cornwall members playing for a Cup kindly donated by Ashbury GC. A huge thanks to Steve and Pete for organising the day including the activities, it was a fantastic day enjoyed by all the members.

Our next Meeting is at Bigbury

GC, on Wednesday, February 8. The day will be the normal format of either golf or a course walk followed by lunch and an Educational presentation. The day will be sponsored by Mason-Kings and Reel Grinding SW. The Presentation will be delivered by Sibelco. Please contact me asap to secure a place.

Congratulations to Mark Tucker who has secured his first role as Course Manager at Neath GC, in Wales, moving from Saunton GC. Mark has always been a very strong supporter of BIGGA and the Section wishes Mark every success in his new role. Also the Section welcomes Jonathan Wood as the new Course Manager at Trevoise G&CC. Jon has previously worked as First Assistant Greenkeeper at Portmarnock Links Golf Club before spending the past five years as Deputy Course Manager at The Old Course, St. Andrew's – where he was also involved in the course preparation for The Open Championship in 2010. Again, the Section wishes Jon every success in his new role.

George Pitts, Section Secretary, Bigga Devon & Cornwall
07929 754401
gpitts.yelverton@gmail.com

BIGGA welcomes the following new members

Scotland

George Morrison, Student, West Section
Alistair Morrison, Student, West Section
Sam Allan, Greenkeeper, Central Section
Gerard Nicoletti, Student, West Section
Jamie King, Student, Central Section

Midland Region

Joe Frigot, Greenkeeper, Mid Anglia Section
Aaron Saunders, Greenkeeper, Midland Section
Chris Newman, Greenkeeper, Midland Section
Jack Foulds, Assistant Greenkeeper, Midland Section

South East Region

Robert Brewer, Affiliate Member, Surrey Section
Darren Mintern, Mechanic, Surrey Section
Darren Cuddihy, Greenkeeper, Kent Section
Kevin Woolgar, Greenkeeper, Sussex Section

South West/South Wales Region

Richard Morris, Greenkeeper, South West Section

Overseas

Michael Turner, USA
Nick Launer, Australia
Sean Duffy, USA

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

www.specialistmachinery.co.uk

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