

Section Notes

Please email your notes to steve.castle@bigga.co.uk by the 15th of the month



All the latest news from your Section

Around The Green

SCOTLAND



CENTRAL

Congratulations to Stephen Jack who has been appointed Head Greenkeeper at Pitreavie GC. Stephen, who comes from Leuchars in Fife, started his career as an apprentice at St Andrews before moving to Loch Lomond GC. He then moved to England and worked at The Buckinghamshire and other courses in the London area before deciding to move back to Scotland.

Also new to the area is James Lindsay, the new Course Manager at Stirling GC who took up his position a few months back. Welcome to the Central Section to both of them. Congratulations also to Richard Colley of Dunfermline GC who got married in Lapland at the beginning of March. As I write this you could have stayed in Fife and got more snow Richard!

The Pairs competition is up and running again with over 20 teams which is an increase again from last year. There are a few new ones this time round so it should be a good competition again.

The spring outing is at Carnoustie on 17 April, entries close on 11 April and a report will appear in the May edition as well as on our website www.biggacentralsection.org.uk. Amazingly, out of 280 members in the section, over 80 have not supplied us with an email address. As this is the main method of communicating with members about education and other events 30% of members are missing out.

Gordon



EAST

Unfortunately due to work commitments I was unable to attend the Scottish Conference, by all accounts I missed out on a very good day with some great topics, well done to all involved with a maximum turnout on the day showing how highly this event is held in the greenkeeping calendar each year. I would like to welcome and introduce Jamie Martin (Gifford GC) as my Vice Chairman, I look forward to working with Jamie over the new few years. Various events may be held for our section over the year with a possible course walk at Muirfield prior to The Open this year, and we are also looking at holding a get together at Mussleburgh Races with the possible date of May 24, first race at 6.15pm. By the time this report goes to publication the Masters will be on our screens with the golfing world expecting all the golf courses to resemble the magnificent Augusta track, spare a thought for the poor greenkeepers fighting the elements - snow, rain and cold winds. G

ood wishes to Alan Lawrie who has taken over as Head Greenkeeper at Royal Mussleburgh GC - the section wishes you well Alan in your new post. We have had a good response for our spring outing to Seahouses (23 April) and at present we have 26 golfers (well 25 golfers and Charlie Allison) looking to attend so we still have some space for any latecomers, just get in touch if you would like to attend. If any members would like to volunteer to write a piece for GI drop me a line - till next month enjoy the spring weather.

Scott Corrigan scottcorrigan4@aol.com or 07877098237



NORTH

We would like to start of this month's report by saying congratulations to Steve Frost Deputy Head Greenkeeper at Royal Aberdeen Golf Club. Robert Patterson got in touch to say that Steve has been at the club now for over 30 years which is a great achievement in the modern age so well done and keep up the good work.

We also heard that Billy Craig has taken over from Jim McCormack as Head Greenkeeper at Kirriemuir Golf Club so best wishes to Billy in his new position and hopefully the weather will be kind to you in your first year in charge.

The Section would also like to pass on their best wishes to John Robertson from Aitkens who we believe has retired, John has been a regular at our section outings over the years so thanks very much for your support and hopefully it is not the last we will see of you.

Another section member in the news is Scott Davidson for Newmachar Golf Club who has been chosen in the final 20 delegates (only two in Scotland) for the inaugural Jacobsen Future Turf Managers Initiative.

Scott's looking forward to a very intensive two days of seminars and workshops at the Jacobsen Headquarters in Ipswich. By the time you read this report you will have your 200 club tickets and entry form for the Duff House Royal outing on 25 April so it will be good to catch up with everybody again.

Please remember to send in any news to no matter how big or small to Dale Robertson on mob 07784517534 or Robert Patterson on mob 07931639548



WEST

Not going to start with the weather just want to wish everybody a great season and hope this is a good one for a change.

We have the spring outing at Buchanan Castle golf club 25 April courtesy of Ronnie Mills and his council, secretaries match at Douglas Park golf club on 8 May, and a football match on Sunday 28 April at Fir Hill against a select team.

Congratulations to Gary Divers who has secured the job at Crow wood golf club. Gary used to look after Ralston golf club but moved off to pastures new, we wish him well.

The site visit to Loch Lomond has been cancelled as David Cole would prefer to conduct the tour at a more beneficial time for him and the club. David feels he can deliver a better talk when his workload is slightly reduced at the present time all guns are blazing to get things ready for the start of the season. November is the planned date but members will be informed well in advance, thanks to David and Loch Lomond for their help.

Finally John Robertson of Aitkens is taking early retirement after 26 years with the company this being due to ill health, John covered the East Section more than the West but I had bumped into him on a few occasions at the Scottish outings at one of those venues (Kingknowe) I remember him shooting 59, a remarkable score for anybody and I doubt if it will ever be matched. The West Section would like to wish him well and hope he enjoys his retirement.

Remember if you need to get in touch then call 07790823914 or e-mail me at stuart.taylor@glasgowgolfclub.com

NORTHERN



NORTH EAST

Congratulations to Michael Gunn Deputy Head at Tyneside GC and Ashley Marshall assistant greenkeeper at Matfen Hall who have been chosen for the Open Support Team. Also well done to Craig Kilgour Deputy Head at Ponteland GC who will be on the Support Team for the BMW at Wentworth in May good luck to you all.

Plenty of news from Close House to write about, four staff have recently completed formal qualifications and six more are currently undertaking either Level 2 or Level 3 in Sportsturf.

Deputy Head James Parker at the Filly course will be attending the Jacobsen Future Turf Managers Initiative for two days including Seminars and Workshops covering a range of subjects designed to equip them for success in their future careers.

Still on with Close House, it's baby boom time as four greenkeepers are about to become fathers congratulations to them. Also Paul Wright who used to work at Gosforth has joined the greenkeeping team, finally MJ Abbotts are about to start work on improvements to The Filly course work is expected to be completed by July.

We have a match arranged against the Cleveland section on July 3 at Durham City tee off time is 1pm, the team will consist of eight per side and play will be 4BBB. They have also asked if we could have a eleven side football match sometime in May, that should be interesting so if anyone is looking for a game please get in touch with me.

Jimmy



NORTH WEST

First of all my apologies for the lack of section notes last month. I had a family bereavement and certain things had to take a back seat. The Spring tournament is to be held at Lytham green

drive golf club on Thursday 11 April first tee time 14:05, please contact Phil Dewhurst for a booking. The summer tournament is to be held at Ormskirk golf club on Monday 1 July with a 1:30 first tee time. I am finding it increasingly difficult to arrange the fixture list as golf clubs understandably don't want to give prime tee slots to courtesy golf given the present financial climate. The north West v North Wales match is on Friday 31 May at Haydock Park golf club (TBC), I will be looking for a team to play in this very enjoyable fixture. The cricket match versus the North Wales Section is at Ashley cricket club on 24 July contact Nick Gray for details. The Bert Cross trophy and AGM will be at Wilmslow golf club on 12 November 2013.

From time to time I get asked to try and arrange training courses, recently we arranged one for operating excavators if you think you may be interested please contact me.

That's all for now, if you have anything of interest to our members please send it to me and I will put it in the magazine

Chris Sheehan



NORTHERN

As many of you guys will know Alan Gamble - former course manager at Pannal Golf Club - sadly passed away at the age of 83. A great supporter of the section and association, our thoughts go to his wife and family. This white stuff is starting to get on my nerves now, Monday morning it's -5 but with the wind chill its -10! Can't get on with things. A bit of tree work keeps me happy, a man and his chainsaw - what damage can I create this week?! All this freezing weather can get morale down but you can rely on those fully qualified greenkeeper members we work for to make me you smile. Picture the scene, Saturday morning I set off to work the car is clear, my garden is lush and green a hard morning awaits. Ten miles later I'm greeted with a Christmas card scene with two inches of snow covering the course. The first guys start turning up and

walk onto the first tee for a nosy and ask me "Is the comp on? It's sunny with blue skies - will it clear while I have a coffee?". Bless 'em for making me laugh. The first fixture will be on us shortly so dust off those clubs and get ready for a good season. Andy Andy.slingsby98@google-mail.com 07506407867



CLEVELAND

Well it's certainly been a wet 2012 for us all and challenging as a result. The weather is now improving and spring is in the air. Here at Dinsdale we are currently giving the course its first cuts of the year getting fairways, tees, greens and surrounds well presented for the season.

Over the past weeks continual verti draining has been ongoing on the remainder of the wettest areas - hopefully these will improve. Our winter programme is coming to an end after reconstructing and redesigning a number of new fairway bunkers with the aid of Nathan Stones. Certainly an improvement to our course.

Soon to begin graden work on greens, hopefully the weather will be kind. This work will be carried out by Marc Kerr whose contract work and advice has been invaluable so far in my career. I would recommend this operation and Marc's services to all greenkeepers.

I would like to thank Barry and Allie for all their hard work organising their annual quiz night at Teesside Golf Club, much appreciated by all who attend. With spring on the way, lets hope for a better, drier year.

James Taylor, Dinsdale Spa Golf Club



NORTH WALES

I'm hoping that spring has finally sprung now after winter held on so firmly to March and we can get on with the competitive season proper. Our season starts this month with the spring tournament and national

qualifier taking place at Bull Bay G.C. on Tuesday 23 April, please return your entries and cheques to Carl Crocher by 15 April. I have been asked if bank transfer as requested at the AGM has been set up for this year's competitions, but as of yet this has proved more difficult than first thought so it's still in the pipeline. Most competitions this year will feature a draw for partners so if you wish to play together as per your entry form please make this request on return of your form. On the education front Paul Lowe and Rhys Butler have fostered a very good relationship with Deeside College and we can confirm another half day seminar later this year followed by a full day seminar next spring, we are also organising a short talk and course walk for the autumn, dates and contents of seminars will be confirmed closer to the time. All the best until next month.

Pete Maybury 07756001187 e-mail petemayb66@aol.com Facebook North Wales B.I.G.G.A

MIDLAND



EAST MIDLAND

There are certain pivotal moments in your life, such as your first day at school or when you learn to ride your bike without stabilisers or the day your wife walks in the living room and says 'Darling, there's an allotment plot that's become available in the village and I think we should take it and grow our own vegetables like Tom and Barbara Good'. How much and whereabouts is it? '£8 per year and it's just behind the pub!!' 'We'll have it'. I can see this allotment needing a lot of attention especially between 7pm and 11pm on a Friday and Saturday. You never know after Leicester's recent car park discovery I may dig up another King...Edward?

Cold Ashby Golf Club was the venue on 7 March for Jim Croxton, Tony Smith and Tracey Maddison to present 'Working together for the future success of BIGGA' to the Midland, East Midlands, Mid Anglia, East of England and BB&O sections. A well attended afternoon high-

lighted the association's vision to improve communication between HQ and its members and move the professional status of greenkeeping forward. They also plan to further improve the level of education available to BIGGA members and to make the association a 'must join' organisation for greenkeepers. It enabled those who attended to engage with Jim and the BIGGA team and discuss issues and concerns that they had. The association's strategy is changing, reflecting the different demands that the industry is putting on it. BIGGA is moving with the times, get on board or get left behind...

So I'm just over a week away from my Brighton Marathon adventure. As my challenge was highlighted in last month's magazine you will know that I am running this year for Leukaemia & Lymphoma Research. I have a JustGiving page set up www.JustGiving.com/greg-skinner1 so anyone who would like to support me can donate via the JustGiving.com page. I am already grateful to those kind and generous souls who have already supported me with sponsorship or auction prizes. Ding ding tickets please...

Greg Skinner, 07970 095264, greg.skinner92@btinternet.com



MIDLAND

As I sit here in Stratford Towers pondering what news to report, the most important (and indeed all I have) is that of our calendar sponsors and the long running "Everris Doubles" Competition. Indeed, without our many sponsors the Section would be far poorer. Our thanks to all of our sponsors though out the year.

This month's calendar sponsor is Matt Gresty, Amenity Seed Specialist: matthew.gresty@limagrains.co.uk or Tel: 07767 278 335. Please consider his expertise regarding your seed requirements. And what a great picture it is.

Our long running "Everris Doubles" final is to be played at Wentworth. Please get your entries in before the Spring event. This is a wonderful opportunity to not only play one of best

course's in the country, but also to enjoy our great courses here in the Midlands on the way. Good luck to all.

Sean McDade



BUCKS, BERKS & OXON

As we move into April hopefully spring will get underway as the golfing season kicks in and courses get back to normal following the wash out that was last summer and a cold winter! The Section's first golf event will take place this spring please see the website for application forms, dates and times. An email will be sent out nearer the time so please make sure your contact details are up to date etc.

In other news thieves have been operating in and around the BB&O section with Berkshire being targeted most recently. Compact tractors, trailers and plant machinery have been taken from golf courses in the area so please be vigilant and take extra care with security measures.

Alec Macindoe Course Manager at Newbury and Crookham was fortunate to attend the GCSAA Show in San Diego care of John Deere. By all accounts the trip was a great experience with the highlights being the show itself combined with a tour of the San Diego Padres baseball stadium and a brief visit to Las Vegas to see some rugby sevens action. As ever the level of investment and resources required to produce the playing surfaces was phenomenal. Alec would like to thank all those who made the trip possible in particular the John Deere representatives who made sure everyone was looked after.

The Rigby Taylor Pairs Knockout competition has been well supported again this year with 32 teams entered. The first round of matches are due to be played this month so good luck all to those involved!

Frilford Heath Golf Club is this year's venue for the BIGGA National Championships which take place on 7 and 8 October, a week following the European Tour event. The finals will be played over the Red course and provide a fitting end to what will be a busy year for Course

Manager Sid Arrowsmith and his team.

If anyone is interested in or needs any training be it chainsaw or spraying courses etc plus funding then please get in touch with our Regional Administrator Sandra Raper sandra@bigga.co.uk As a reminder if anyone wishes to have their current e mail address added to the BIGGA HQ system then please drop Sandra an e mail with your contact details. If anyone has any news, views or ideas they would like to see for the BB&O section then please don't hesitate to get in touch: bboscribe@gmail.com or contact the committee/Matt Nutter: bbosecretary@gmail.com

Alternatively keep up to date with what is happening in the BB&O section by following us on Twitter, Facebook and the web site: www.bbogreenkeepers.co.uk

The Stick



MID ANGLIA

I trust all are in good spirits despite another onslaught of the awful weather we have once again been enduring? The poor run continues with no immediate sign of improvement on the horizon so we can only hope that we get some warmer days soon as by the time you all receive this the US Masters will be all over our TV screens and this generally signals the start of the golfing season for us in the UK. This is always a great watch seeing the world's greatest players being tested at Augusta.

The summer tournament will be held at Brookmans Park GC in Hertfordshire on Tuesday 6 August so please put this date in your diaries. I believe it will be a pm start but the finer details are still to be arranged. This is a venue that we haven't visited for a long time so will be a new challenge for all golfers on what is a fantastic course. That's all for this month, please get in touch if you wish to have any input for the column as it really would help.

Darren - d.mugford@rigbytaylor.com 07843 513387

SOUTH EAST



SURREY

Footgolf! A game played similar to golf, the player's intent is to introduce football into a hole with the foot, in the least amount of strokes possible. The field may well be a golf course, but the distance between the tee and the hole is flexible and may be adapted proportionally based on the full playing area. It's taking the country by storm, at least at Leatherhead GC anyway. Golf courses are starting to host these events, perhaps an Olympic sport of the future? No April fool here, patents are pending for FootGolf boots with adaptable striking angles enabling the footgolfer to achieve longitude when elevating the football with his boot. Sounds like a seven iron attached to your ankle, whatever next!

Last year's winner of the Surrey Bowl, Mark Harvey, welcomes you all to the Texas Scramble event at Epsom Downs GC on the 18 April. So stick it in your diary now and enter via the website for a great day out.

After more than ten years at Cophorne GC in Sussex, Richard Webb joins the Surrey section after moving to Purley Downs GC as Deputy Head Greenkeeper. We wish you the very best for the future and look forward to seeing you at some of the section events in the future.

Gary Ogilvy's blazer has taken some serious punishment this year, celebrating as Captain of Hill Barn GC in Sussex. Gary has played at the club since 1976 which to you and I is almost 36 years, nearly as old as me. The outgoing Captain has been hard at work and has raised a large amount of cash for Diabetes UK, a charity very close to his heart, Well done Gary.

Congratulations to Deputy Course Manager Iain Dyke who has taken over from Neil Baker as Course Manager at Tandridge GC. Neil is on the way north to Little Aston GC - all the best Neil.

Walton Heath is one of the world's most famous and prestigious clubs. The two excellent championship courses have hosted close to ninety amateur

and professional championships and events, including five European Opens, The Ryder Cup, the US Open qualifying and recently the Senior Open Championship. On March 8 the South East regional members and their guests prepared to test themselves on the Old Course.

However, it was simply not to be. The rain Gods had put the Old Course to the test and only after a prolonged deluge, the event had to be called off. John Paramour entertained the 100 or so well turned out golfers who listened to fascinating accounts of a chief referee on the European Tour as the catering staff served some of Walton Heath's gastronomic delights.

Clive Osgood organised this event with Swiss precision to ensure all departments came together on the day. Thank you Clive and thank you to all who attended.

Mark Day



KENT

I was hoping to be writing this report following a landmark day in the history of our section as we were due to be playing the one and only Royal St. Georges Golf Club on 12 March. Unfortunately, the day before the event, Mother Nature conspired to scupper things by unleashing the 'beast from the East', which brought snow, minus seven wind chill and general misery to most of the country. As I write this the snow is still falling as we are again reminded of the fickle nature of our seasons and that nothing can be taken for granted in so far as programming renovation works or golf days are concerned. This is the first event that we have had to cancel in the eight years that I have been section secretary so I suppose we should not be too downhearted.

There's not much else to report so I would just like to take this opportunity to thank all of our sponsors for their generosity this year. Your funding ensures that we can put on superb golfing, educational and other fun events for our mem-

bers. Your details our proudly displayed on our webpage to encourage as much extra business as possible. Please visit our webpage for up to the minute news and events. Hopefully Springtime is just around the corner!

Rob Holland 07545 424880
www.kentgreenkeepers.com



SUSSEX

I would like to start my report with the news that Ian Gosling has been appointed as Head Greenkeeper at East Brighton Golf Club. Ian has worked at the club as Deputy Head Greenkeeper for a number of years. I am sure that you will all join me in wishing him all the best in his new role. Also I would like to welcome to Sussex Nick Stevens who has just been appointed as Head Greenkeeper at Seaford Head Golf Club. Nick was previously the Head Greenkeeper at Carmarthen Golf Club in Wales, which was Welsh Golf Club of the Year in 2011. Again, I am sure that you will join me in wishing him all the best (as long as he doesn't bring the weather from Wales with him, we have had enough rain thank you!). Both courses would make smashing venues for a BIGGA competition!

The Spring Competition & National Championships Qualifier is now just around the corner - this event will be held at The Dyke Golf Club in Brighton on 23 May. Entry forms for this competition and the section's away day at Littlestone golf club in June will be coming out soon, so make sure that you have got this date in your diary as places on the away day will be limited and available to those attending the qualifier as priority. If you would like any further information, please contact Peter Smith or give me a call.

At the time of writing we have four inches of snow, and yet last year we were in the grip of the great drought, with record high temperatures in March and no end in sight to the dry weather, hosepipe bans were in place and drought orders applied for. Who would have thought the last 12 months would pan out

quite as they have! What will this season bring? Let's hope it's a boring and consistent one with nice average temperatures and rainfall, fingers crossed!

Finally, a funny story comes back from America where two of our members attended the GCSAA show followed by some down time in Las Vegas. After checking in at the hotel they returned to their courtesy bus to find the driver had broken the key off in the lock of the luggage compartment! Guests at the five-star Trump International were then entertained by the sight of two greenkeepers' ingenuity as they were forced to break into this "highly secure" vehicle, using just two screwdrivers obtained from the valet parking desk!

Chris Humphrey. Tel: 07912 669457 or chris@collier-turf-care.co.uk



ESSEX

15 members, sponsors and guests travelled down in very foggy and damp conditions to Walton Heath early last month for the South East Region Dinner and Golf Day. As the morning progressed, drizzle turned to rain and the course could take no more, unfortunately shortly after 1.30pm play was abandoned. We all enjoyed a fine meal, as always at this venue and were entertained by Walton Heath's Club Captain Michael Vaines. BIGGA CEO Jim Croxton and Guest Speaker; John Paramour. The Essex section would like to thank our Regional Administrator Clive Osgood for arranging yet another well supported day.

In the past few weeks the section committee have held two meetings the first a conference call and the second a full meeting held at Little Channels. Matters discussed were the future golf days for this season and education, the following fixtures have been arranged with one to be confirmed.

Spring Trophy, 16 May - Frinton Golf Club; Summer Trophy & BBQ plus National Qualifying, 15 August - Channels Golf Club; Autumn Trophy, (Blind Pairs) TBA; Christmas Team Event, 3 December - Orsett Golf

Assistant Profile

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



Name: Simon Reardon
Age: 38
Club: Kingsthorpe Golf Club, Northampton
Position: Assistant
Nickname: Pebble Eyes

How long have you been greenkeeping? 17 years

What was it about the career that attracted you? The opportunity to be involved in a game I revere

If you weren't a greenkeeper what do you think you'd be? Conservationist or arborist

Which task do you most enjoy doing and why? Changing holes - I enjoy setting up the course for both general play and competitions

Which task do you least enjoy doing and why? De-stoning bunkers. Would rather get to the route of the problem than go round in circles

What one thing - other than a pay rise - would improve the greenkeepers' lot? Free or heavily subsidised education, training and seminars

Hobbies? Golf, rugby, squash and socialising

Favourite Band? Crowded House

Which team do you support (football or otherwise)? Northampton Saints RFC

What is your claim to fame? Completed a cycle ride from John O'Groats to Lands End for charity

BIGGA welcomes the following new members

Scotland

Daniel Chapman, SRUC (Elmwood), Student
David MacMillan, East Kilbride Golf Club,
Assistant Greenkeeper
Jed Sigsworth, Cupar Golf Club, Assistant
Greenkeeper
Lewis Valentine, Moray Golf Club
Assistant Greenkeeper
Fergal Cushen, St. Andrews Links Trust,
Assistant Greenkeeper
Dave Beardwood, St. Andrews Links Trust,
Greenkeeper
John Bateson, St. Andrews Links Trust,
Greenkeeper
Stuart Lindsay, St. Andrews Links Trust,
Assistant Greenkeeper

Northern Region

Steven Grantham, Lees Hall Golf Club, Head
Greenkeeper
Christian Johnson, Chesterfield Golf Club,
Assistant Greenkeeper
Andrew Cuffe, Lytham Green Drive Golf
Club, Affiliate Member
Tim Baldwin, Amega Sciences plc, Affiliate
Member
Jonathan Carmichael, Eastham Lodge Golf
Club, Assistant Greenkeeper
Lee Whittaker, The Mere Golf Resort & Spa,
Greenkeeper
Kevin Fowler, Flaxby Park Golf & Country
Club, Greenkeeper
David Raper, Easingwold Golf Club,
Greenkeeper
Neil Armitage, Headingley Golf Club,
Greenkeeper
Steven Cockshott, Headingley Golf Club,
Assistant Greenkeeper
Jon Hall, Headingley Golf Club, Affiliate
Member

Midland Region

Richard Sheldon, Stonebridge Golf Centre,
Greenkeeper
Phillip Dick, Myerscough College, Student
Stanley Wallis, Myerscough College, Student
Steven Edwards, Harewood Downs Golf
Club, Greenkeeper
Connor Bodman, Woburn Golf & Country
Club, Assistant Greenkeeper
Daniel Quininn, Woburn Golf & Country Club,
Greenkeeper
Daniel Wright, Woburn Golf & Country Club,
Assistant Greenkeeper

South East Region

Luke Grounsell, Bramley Golf Club,
Assistant Greenkeeper
David Cameron, Wentworth Club (The),
Greenkeeper
Daniel Reading, Oaks Park Golf Club,
Greenkeeper
James Lumley, Sutton Green Golf Club,
Assistant Greenkeeper
Terry Carver, RAF Marham Golf Club,
Greenkeeper
Harry Cannon, Royal Mid-Surrey Golf Club,
Greenkeeper
Keegan Powell, Sunningdale Golf Club,
Assistant Greenkeeper
Paul Holmes, Hadley Wood Golf Club,
Assistant Greenkeeper
Harry James, Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club,
Greenkeeper
Keith Pooley, Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club,
Greenkeeper

South West/South Wales Region

Nick Stephens, Carmarthen Golf Club, Head
Greenkeeper
Tim Haycock, Carmarthen Golf Club,
Greenkeeper
Tom Easterbrook, Pyle & Kenfig Golf Club,
Assistant Greenkeeper
Jordan Jones, Pyle & Kenfig Golf Club,
Greenkeeper
Nigel Thompson, Cleeve Hill Golf Club,
Greenkeeper

Overseas

Etienne Scott Pillier, Student, France
Tryggi Olver Gunnarsson, Oddur Golf Club,
Iceland
Pierre Del Bono, Golf Club Villars, France
Gary Schweber, Rolling Green C.C., USA
Bradley Sim, Cape Kidnappers Golf Course,
New Zealand

Club. News and entry details on the section website.

Our new education officer Ben Scrivener outlined plans for an education program over the next months with some exciting ideas, more of these as soon as they are arranged.

Richard Freeman announced that plans are well under way for the Toro (Lely) sponsored football tournament, team details will be announced on the website. So if you would like to play please take the contact details from the website and get on the phone. The final is again at West Ham United's ground 21st May for your diary, but unlike past years this year there will be some knockout rounds to get through first. That's all for this month more details next month on education, golf and the football.

www.essexbigga.co.uk 07764 862337 or at essexbigga@talk-talk.net

Arnold Phipps-Jones

SOUTH WEST & WALES



SOUTH WEST

Maybe I spoke too soon last month but that sliver of spring that was on the horizon has vanished. A few superlatives come to mind; arctic blast... brass monkeys...all I know is that when I arrived at the shed the other morning it was -5C and that was before the wind chill.

Any of you who decided to go with an early season coring programme must surely be in position and poised for soil temperatures to rise and get the season under way, it is all about positioning!

A successful day was had by all at the recent presentation and course walk event hosted by Chris Sealey and Chippenham Golf. All four presenters including myself, Jaime Acton, Adam Matthews and Stephen Jack who came down from Surrey overcame heavy nerves and a Chippenham-wide power outage to present our audience of nearly thirty four talks on a wide range of subjects that seemed to keep everyone at full attention. Personally I really

enjoyed the experience and I am sure that Adam, Stephen and Jaime did too, well done to my co-presenters!

Coming up on Wednesday 24 April is the Am/Am at Minchinhampton Golf Club which will be in fine spring form, make sure that entries are in promptly as there is sure to be high demand on this event at a great club and venue. Following on, Wednesday 29 May is the Section v Secretaries match at stunning The Manor House, Castle Combe, that one is sure to be a cauldron of competition.

Finally a welcome to new section member Nigel Thompson of Cleeve Hill Golf Club in Gloucestershire who has recently joined BIGGA, good to see new members coming in to see the benefits of the association.

Keep up the support, see you all at the upcoming Section days and keep the news coming in. Jaey Goodchild (07984422295 j.goodchild@bowood.org)



SOUTH COAST

Hopefully by the time you read this the sun will be shining with golfers in shirt sleeves. We have come in today to a covering of snow and wind chill -8, it can only improve!

The annual seminar at Milton Abbey School was another huge success with 80 attendees treated to excellent speakers. Sadly I was unable to attend because of family issues but I understand the food was also outstanding.

Thanks as always to Alex for the hard work in organising the event, thanks also to Joe Cooper and Milton Abbey school for allowing us to use their facility. Last but not least our thanks go to the sponsors for the day Banks Amenity, Huxley Turf and E.G.Cole.

The first golf event of the year is on 16 April at the renowned Remedy Oak Golf Club, this will be very popular so if you haven't booked your start time do so quickly. Contact Kevan Glass at glassy2003@hotmail.com, the cost is £35 and that must be received before the day. As usual for our spring event Avoncrop will be the sponsors in memory of Colin (chalky) White.

Several people have asked me about the Management Trophy which sadly I have to report that this year we do not have a sponsor. Hopefully this will be rectified and this very popular event will continue next year.

Here at Barton on the "sunny south coast" I can only say we survived an appalling winter, more days closed than ever before. No golf, no members coming in means no-one is spending money-very hard times. We have in the last week managed to get out and punch holes in as many areas as possible, a light top dressing and a liquid feed and now things are looking much better. The next thing will be bringing the bore hole back on line and priming the watering system!

Hope you have a great Easter (I will as I am off to Cuba) with some warm sunshine and of course a light shower, see you at Remedy Oak on the 16th!

Tony Gadd



SOUTH WALES

With our weather patterns trying their best to destroy all our best laid plans thank God we have a rugby team to be proud of even if it is kick and clap (Mr Kinley). Our biggest ever victory over England has made my last few days visiting my English golf clubs very enjoyable...

Our Spring seminar will again take place on April 24 at Royal Porthcawl GC sponsored by Countrywide Amenity, confirmed speakers are Steve Chappell Gleneagles, Mark Hunt Headland Amenity, Tillers Turf, Sports Metals and Enviro-bunker. A great line up, I'm sure you'll all agree, booking forms should now have been received but for extra bookings please contact Gareth Knight on 07595 988512.

Our spring tournament should have taken place at Fairwood Park by the time you read this so please read next month's article for the results. Just before I leave congratulations must go out to Jim Jenkins the new Head Greenkeeper at Carmarthen GC welcome back mate we wish you all the very best.

Keep enjoying the spring guys Peter H.