



## JOHN'S CHARITY WHIZZ

John Hall, Golf Course Manager at Tewkesbury Park Hotel & Country Club, is running a half marathon for charity on October 6.

John's best friend has a son with Cerebral Palsy and is restricted to a wheelchair, and has been helped out by 'Whizz Kidz' - a charity who help kids who have mobility issues.

John said: "Seeing the cost of my friend's son's chair really opened my eyes. As well as paying for the chair they had to widen the door frames in their house to accommodate it, and also buy ramps. This charity helps by supplying everything from wheelchairs to toys."

He will be running the Royal Parks Marathon in London and there are various ways to donate. Either call John on 07900 620987, or text kidz96 then £1, £2, £5 or £10 to 70070 to make a donation to this hugely worthwhile cause.



## NEIL SALUTES 25 YEARS

Neil Fauble, Course Manager at East Herts Golf Club, has marked 25 years at the parkland course and says he's loved every minute.

Neil joined the club straight from school and served a four year apprenticeship. He continued to work at the course - and his career - before becoming Course Manager ten years ago.

He said: "I used to watch The Masters when I was a kid and marvel out how fantastic the golf courses looked. I thought 'someone's got to look after that, what a great job' and that's how it all started.

"I've loved every minute, the best thing about the job is there is a different challenge every day. Of course it's very, very hard work and there's so much to get involved with, for example today I've been painting fence posts. But when you get great feedback from

golfers it makes it all worthwhile - we recently had a members match versus a local club and the visitors said the course looked superb, which was so satisfying to hear.

"But my main priority is to keep the people who pay their annual fees happy."

He added that members had recently asked him where the club's finances had been directed, so Neil and his team made a point of putting all their machinery on show during a competition.

He said: "They generally only see one guy on a mower so they were amazed we had so much kit when they walked past, and began to understand where their membership fees were spent.

"It's all part of communicating with them, because if they don't like the club they will leave, simple as that."

## TORO FINALIST SAM IS RADIO STAR

Sam Evans, Deputy Head Greenkeeper at Oakland Park Golf Club, appeared on Radio One recently as part of a regular feature called "Here all week".

Early morning DJ Dev seemed fascinated by Sam's job and the fact he is a finalist for the Toro Student of the Year 2013.

But Dev seemed to be under the impression that greenkeeping was a matter of landscaping and occasional hedge trimming...so it was over to Sam to try and educate him! If you've appeared on TV, radio or in newspapers let Steve Castle know and spread the word.

# ROUTE 66 WINS SCOTTISH NATIONAL

This year's Scottish National Tournament was hosted by Largs Golf Club on Thursday 13 June and drew an excellent 62 competitors from all over Scotland who benefitted from glorious sunshine throughout the day.

A parkland course, it was originally designed as a 9-hole course before becoming a full 18-holer in 1953. Playing to its full length from medal tees it covers some 6150 yards with a par of 70 and a CSS of 71.

This year, we had our own version of Ivor Robson on the first tee to announce each player. John Sneddon has worked with the PGA on a number of their events and kindly agreed to participate adding a touch of class to proceedings. First on tee at 11.15am was a guest, Gordon Clarke from West Kilbride Golf Club. Subsequent games then teed off every 9 minutes until the very last game at 2.15pm comprising an East/West combination of Gregor Wilson (Turnberry) and Robbie Murdoch (Dundas Park).

The standard of golfer taking part was very high with more than half the field being single handicappers. Indeed it proved to be one of our lowest handicappers that turned in the performance of the day to win the Championship trophy. Gordon Sangster from Cathkin Braes Golf Club produced a magnificent gross score of 66 that included an eagle, 4 birdies and only 2 bogies. Gordon managed to get to the turn in only 29 blows narrowly missing out on a short putt for the 28.

Not to be completely overshadowed by Gordon, Iain MacDonald on his home course recorded a great score of 68 gross and less his 2 handicap won our Friendship Trophy with a nett 66. In addition to winning the trophies, Gordon and Iain will have their entries to the BIGGA National Tournament at Frilford Heath paid for them and will receive expenses towards travel and accommodation.

There was one common theme shared by all competitors on the day, their unequivocal praise of the golf course condition. Our whole-hearted congratulations are reserved for Iain Barr, Course Manager and his team for producing an excellent facility for the competition. Even the tricky position of the 18th flag,



Iain MacDonald

thanks to George Morrison for that one, didn't diminish the players' admiration of the course.

Throughout our day we were treated to a very warm welcome by Keith Howie (Secretary), Andy Fullen (Professional) and the other members of the team.

Andy O'Hara, Scottish Chairman, was on hand at the end of the day to thank the captain Brian Fulton, the committee, Keith and everyone else for the tremendous hospitality that was received and presented a Quaich to the club as a thank you for the courtesy of the course and clubhouse. Keith thanked Andy and reaffirmed the club's delight at hosting this event and for the hard work of all greenkeeping staff required at golf courses throughout the country.

Congratulations to all who took part and we hope to see everyone at next year's championship at Renfrew Golf Club on Thursday 12 June.

*John Young*



Gordon Sangster

## PRIZE LIST

### SGGA CHALLENGE CUP (SCRATCH CHAMPION)

Gordon Sangster Cathkin Braes 66

### FRIENDSHIP TROPHY (NET CHAMPION)

Iain MacDonald Largs 68 2 66

### RANSOMES TROPHY – 1st CLASS

1. Kenneth Mitchell St Andrews Links 77 5 72  
2. Dougie McIntosh Cathkin Braes 77 2 75  
3. Gary Tough Letham Grange 73 +2 75

### PATTISON TROPHY – 2nd CLASS

1. Martin Lothian Turnberry 82 12 70  
2. John Watson Downfield 86 12 74  
3. Iain Barr Largs 85 10 75

### STRI TROPHY (St. IVES JUBILEE) – 3rd CLASS

1. John Barr Cardross 90 16 74  
2. John Wilson Irvine Bogside 94 18 76  
3. Michael Maxton East Kilbride 98 22 76

### DICK AITKEN TROPHY – BEST HEAD GREENKEEPER

Derek Wilson Irvine Bogside 81 8 73

### M & M TROPHY – BEST ASSISTANT

David Simpson Crieff 71 +1 72

### SIGGA TROPHY – BEST VETERAN

Archie Dunn Auchterarder 79 5 74

### ST MUNGO TROPHY – AYRSHIRE SECTION

Iain McDonald Largs 66  
Martin Lothian Turnberry 70  
David Nelson Trade 72  
Derek Wilson Irvine Bogside 73  
TOTAL 281

### QUAICH – TRADE PRIZE

David Nelson Nelson Vecchio 77 5 72

### NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP QUALIFIERS

Scratch: Gordon Sangster, Cathkin Braes Golf Club  
Net: Iain McDonald, Largs Golf Club

# INNOVATION CORNER!

We're still hunting for the unusual innovations greenkeepers have on their courses – and Stuart Yarwood, Course Manager at Lymm Golf Club, has several!

He said: "When out deep slitting weekly during the winter we found the slitter removes the dew off the green but left a little strip one inch wide in between the rear rollers. One of our lads, Robert Cooper, fitted a scrap piece of astro turf to cover the gap, and brush the little strip of dew off as he went along, leaving the surface right for our visitors and members."

"The next is our drainage trench gravel filling machine, or 'Nellie' as we call her, (after the elephant).

"It's a piece of plywood attached to traffic cone with a length of hose bolted on. We can drop the tail board on the workman and fit this in seconds. Then when we have excavated our drainage trenches, and installed the pipe, we can back fill the trench, by straddling the trench with the workman, with large or small gravel in a fraction of the time by hand and without spilling a drop. Saves on shovels and backs.

"Thirdly, we found that some drains were capping over with grass clippings, wear and tear over time, and we needed to uncap these. We tried with half moons and by hand but it was very slow. We needed to uncap down to 6" till we hit the clean gravel then we could replace with clean sand and restore the effectiveness of the drain.

"So we purchased an old Sisis turf cutter (18" wide turfs) and chopped and rewelded the cutting blade so that it can cut 5" wide. We now mark the drain line by finding the gravel line in the ground with a probe, and mark the centre. We mark the centre of the tractor bonnet, we drop the implement into the ground and it shaves out the waste material on top of the drain live to a depth of 6" to clean gravel.

"This is simply forked off onto a waiting cart and away to our compost heap. Really saves a monumental amount of time in a soul destroying task. I feel it's hugely important to find an efficient way of doing tasks both from an operations and moral point of view."



## JIMMY LEAVES NORTH EAST SECTION

Jimmy Richardson has left the North East section after many years of service.

He said: "Having served as Section Secretary/ dogsbody I have decided to retire from all section duties and would like to thank past Committee members for their support over the years.

"Special mention to my other two helpers Steve Pope and Russ Black. Steve has also decided to retire but Russ is staying on as Section Chairman.

"Now we have a young energetic Committee taking over headed by Simon Olver of Percy Wood GC I would ask all members to give him a lot of support as he's working very hard on pushing the Section forward. Other members are Glen Baxter, Michael Gunn, David Wilkinson and James Parker.

"New competitions are being arranged as well as lectures and seminars for the Autumn and Winter so please support the North East Section as much as you can."

# CHALARA ASH LATEST

Dr Terry Mabbett updates us with the recent news about Chalara ash dieback



Chalara ash dieback has been firing warning shots at the UK government's management plans but the two latest salvos were right on target.

The first shot from Wales hit one of the three main planks of Defra's Chalara Management Plan below the water line, while the salvo from Devon was a top deck direct hit.

First main plank of Defra's Chalara Management Plan (March 2013) is the

creation of a disease free zone of counties along the western edge of England comprising Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, Gloucestershire and up through the West Midlands.

Underpinning the programme is assistance to forest and woodland owners of recently planted ash confirmed with chalara.

They will be given grants to dig up and destroy the ash trees and plant with

alternative species. General idea is to slow the westward spread of the disease from current hotbeds in East Anglia and Kent/ East Sussex.

Even if this 'generosity' had been extended to the amenity and landscape sectors including golf courses (Greenkeeper International May 2013), and used to cover all recently planted ash (healthy as well as infected), success was unlikely considering this pathogen is disseminated by airborne spores and the sheer ubiquity and frequency of its common ash host.

Recent events are proving this thinking to be right. In May 2013 Chalara ash dieback was found in the wider Welsh environment at Ferrybridge (south of Carmarthen town) in Carmarthenshire. This leaves the door wide open for spores to be picked up and carried eastwards into western England by strong south westerly prevailing winds.

But that is all 'red herring' thinking since chalara was actually identified in the west of England wider environment in July 2013 in woodland between Exeter and Tiverton in Devon.

Forestry Commission (FC) did not reveal the exact location, although BBC Devon said the outbreak was at Byway Farm near Tiverton. According to the BBC, FC said the disease must have been on these trees when they were planted in 1996/1997.

This is highly unlikely. After 16-17 years the disease would have already spread far and wide. In 1996/1997 Chalara ash dieback disease was still confined to Poland and Lithuania, and unlikely to have arrived that early in the UK on imported planting material. In those 16-17 years it has moved westwards from Poland to reach Pas de Calais in France.

## BLOGGING AT TRENTHAM PARK



This month's featured blog is from Leigh Swann, Head Greenkeeper at Trentham Park Golf Club.

He started the blog using 'blogger' in January and has already had over 7,000 views – plus it's improving the communication between Leigh, his team and the members.

He said: "After improving the club's website the year before I wanted a clear concise way of communicating out to the membership.

"I also wanted to give them a way, and means of asking questions, and for me to answer them honestly and truthfully.

"I often get members stopping me on the course telling me how much they enjoyed reading it, and comment on how easy it is to understand. I think they appreciate the honesty.

"The thing that has worked out

best is the ability for members to comment on the blogposts. So if they don't understand anything they can always ask!

"I think an important thing is not to ignore the complaints that come through. If the greens are bad, then explain why!

"I use 'blogger' which is free and enables you to post pictures and videos to it completely free. It's connected to your Google account so everything blends in well, and is easy to use."

What advice would he give greenkeepers thinking of setting up a blog?

"Take your time deciding on what you want. Try to get it integrated into the club's website, so it's easier for your members to find."

See for yourself at <http://trentthamparkgolfclub.blogspot.co.uk>