

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 Paul Armour of Lochgelly GC who has recently become a dad, a good excuse for not making the spring outing as he's still trying to get caught up on his sleep. All the BIGGA members at gWest are also in for a change shortly as the course opens for play this month. It will be strange to have golfers out there after an extended grow in, welcome to the real world guys!

We have an education event planned for 7.30pm on Thursday 6 June. The venue is likely to be Elmwood College and the speaker is Mike Jouson of Clear Communications. Mike is a regular presenter at the GIS show for American Superintendents at their February events and the seminar will be suitable for all categories of members from students and people starting out in the industry to Course Managers. Full details will be emailed out to everyone nearer the time.

Finally, we had 40 members participate in the spring outing over the Carnoustie Burnside course on 17 April. 38 members braved the constant rain and principal winners were: scratch – Scott Thomson, Strathmore, best net – Richard Jenkinson, gWest, class 1 winner, Shaun McNaughton, Auchterarder GC, class 2 winner, George Pendrich, Scotsraig GC. A full list of prizewinners is on our website www.biggacentralsection.org.uk, thanks to the trade for their full support and Carnoustie Links Management and green staff for the course which was in great condition.

Gordon Moir



EAST

Good to see that spring has actually started to arrive, better late than never I say as the weather has been wreaking havoc - if it's not snow it's the wind blowing tons of sand over our courses. I received a picture recently taken at North Berwick west links after sand had blown onto their 1st fairway to create a massive new temporary bunker! Think it was a hard shift to get the area back to normal by all accounts.

I can confirm we have the opportunity to attend a get together at Mussleburgh races on May 24 for some banter and a catch up (and I have been reliably informed that our new Vice Chairman has got us two red hot tips for the night also!). The first race is at 6.15pm on the night, please contact the section if you are interested in attending.

The first spectator stands have started to go up at Muirfield and I'm pleased to say that our secretary Stuart Ferguson has been successful in his selection for the Open Support Team. By the time this report appears the spring outing will have been completed at Seahouses, report to follow next month.

Last month I was fortunate enough to write a small article for GI (sorry about the picture guys, but that's my best side!) again if anyone fancies writing a piece then please get in touch and this can be sorted out - it's good fun guys so lets give it a go. Until next month, keep your blades sharp and remember to apply lots of suncream with all the sun that's coming...

Scott Corrigan scottcorrigan4@aol.com or 07877098237



NORTH

Hope this report finds you all well and getting those greens into shape for another busy season.

Again not a lot to say at this time of the year but by the time you get this report we will have had our outing at Duff House Royal and the winners and losers will all have been sorted out and also the winners of the 200 club. All the results will follow in the next issue.

Warren Beveridge is sadly leaving Peterculter Golf Club after seven years and leaving greenkeeping so we would like to wish him all the best for the future. Paul Sharp has replaced Warren with Stevie Cocker from Inchmarlo Golf Club so we would like to wish him all the best in his new job and just in time to learn how to operate all that wonderful new machinery.

Robert Patterson was saying that his squad has started a five a side football team and is playing at Goals on a regular basis they call themselves the turf technicians but they were soundly beaten in their first match by a bunch of oil workers.

Were it not for a great goal-keeping display from Mike Braidwood the ref would have lost count by half time. I bet Barcelona are running scared. So if any other clubs want to give them a game feel free.

Hughie McLatchie is now getting over his hip operation and well into the golf again so best wishes to him. That's it for this month please call with any news big or small - call Robert Patterson on 07931639548 or Dale Robertson on 07784517534.

NORTHERN



NORTH EAST

Right we have no shortage of news this month for a change. I mentioned last month that two greenkeepers had been chosen from the section to work on the Support team for this years Open, well there's a third going which I didn't know of until recently and that's David Wilkinson from Whitley Bay GC sorry about that David.

On Thursday 11 April at Tyne-side GC we had a seminar which was reasonably attended and by the feedback received it was well worth it. Greenkeepers from the following golf courses attended: Tyneside, Ponteland, Whitley Bay, Hexham, Close House, and a couple of retired ones as well, Associate member Keith Cann-Evans formerly of Hunter Grinders, Glen Baxter of Rigby Taylors. My thanks to Sandra Raper our Regional Administrator for choosing the speakers. John Nicholson did a first class talk on Woodland Management, followed by Andrew McMahon of Rigby Taylor on Recovery, when to fertilise and why - another first class speaker.

There would perhaps have been a handful more if Newcastle hadn't been playing Benfica but we have had that date booked for months - we were able to see the second half in the clubhouse, thanks to Tyneside Golf Club for that.

Ryan Blemmings has just started his level 3 and Andrew Digirolamo has recently started level 2 both with Myerscough College who I think are doing a first class job here in the North East on bringing greenkeepers through their training, credit to the assessors. On April 17th we played our Spring Competition

at Heworth GC, this been our first visit for a very long time. What a joy to play there the course was in great condition especially the greens as they were quite firm and slick - a credit to the Head Greenkeeper and his staff and not forgetting the catering staff and Bernie Craig the Club Administrator for looking after us very well, I'm sure we will go back there in the near future.

Not a bad turnout for the Spring outing numbers were up slightly with one or two regulars missing but a couple of non-members came to sample our day out and are joining next week. Now for the leading scores: Best Gross David Wilkinson, 80, Whitley Bay GC, Best Nett Steve Pope, 89-16 -73, Tyneside GC, JS Richardson 75, Hexham GC, S Olver 77, Percy Wood GC, G Lee, 79, Tyneside GC. I would like to again thank Sandra for doing the cards and looking after the section members, and to the following companies who once again donated prizes - Rigby Taylor, Rickerbys of Hexham, Greenlays and T.S.L. Michael McKenna is about to take up the position of Assistant Golf Course Superintendent at AL Badia GC in Dubai, we wish him well in his new venture. Lastly Jon Watson of Burgham Park GC has become a proud father of a baby girl, that's five greenkeepers in the section who have had babies in April.

Jimmy



NORTH WEST

The spring tournament took place on Thursday 11 April at Lytham Green Drive Golf Club. There were only thirteen of us who sat down for the meal and only twelve played in the tournament, I can only put this down to our members fertilising or top-dressing as rain was expected that day. The golf course was fantastic and in great condition considering the sub zero temperatures we have had, many thanks to Doug Chilton and all of his green staff.

The meal was probably one of the best meals we have had at a tournament, thank you Paul and all of your staff for looking after us. The winner was Chris Gibson vets prize went to Dave Macevoy. The nearest the pin

was Paul Walker, the longest drive went to Chris Harding and last but not least the guest prize went to Dave Weir. Nick Gray met up with Steve Dunn when he was in New Zealand and Steve is doing very well working for a company called Parkland, many of you will remember Steve and we wish him well.

The next tournament is at Ormskirk Golf Club and this will be very popular so please put your name down early. After people saying they would turn up at Lytham and not doing so, it was decided that if you put your name down and don't turn up you will have to pay for your meal as we had to pay extra at Lytham. The tournament at Ormskirk is on the 1 July first tee time 1.30pm please contact Phil Dewhurst on 07768 180604 for details. The cricket match against the North Wales Section will be on 24 July please contact Nick Gray for details. I can be contacted on 07840706738 or at jsheehan@blueyonder.co.uk
Chris Sheehan



NORTHERN

I'm sat aching after my first knock of the season and have finally shaken off the doom and gloom of the horrible winter weather. After watching the masters over the weekend I'm waiting for the comments from our lovely members...also really looking forward to our first golf day at Hornsea if the weather stays good. The list for Hornsea is filling up nicely and considering it's a bit of a trip for us hardcore members from the Leeds/Bradford area it's great to see. Short and sweet but I'll report the results from Hornsea next month - please get in touch with any gossip for me and get cutting!

Andy 07506407867 Andy.slingsby98@googlemail.com



SHEFFIELD

Unfortunately I start these notes with some bad news depending on how you look at it! I'm sure many of you are aware that I have taken up a

new position in the industry which means that I am not a full greenkeeper member. This means I am no longer able to serve as section secretary. I have to admit that this is a big disappointment to me as I'm happy to continue in the role and I feel as a section we are moving forward and have some good years to look forward to.

But rules are rules whether we agree with them or not, as a result of this the section is looking for someone who is willing to take on the role. I would support someone in the role as much as possible initially and it can be a very rewarding position. The section cannot run without a secretary so we need somebody to step up to the plate. If anyone is interested then please get in touch.

Right, on the section front our fixtures are complete and everyone should be receiving fixture cards or already have received them. Here is a list if them anyway: 16 May Bondhay GC; 9 July Dore & Totley GC; 25 Sept Hillsborough GC; Christmas TBC.

We are currently organising a section visit for November and it is almost finalised so we should have something to report next month. There will also be the Northern regional conference in November and we are looking at a seminar in early 2014. We are also looking to increase the prize table at our competitions and playing a two tier system to allow everyone a chance of winning a prize all of which are exciting changes.

That's as much as I have for you this month. If this is the last time I write these notes it has been a pleasure to entertain you over the last five years and I will miss you all!

James Stevens, Section Secretary(Just) 07738719614

MIDLAND



EAST MIDLAND

Wednesday 10 April saw Beedles Lake Golf Club host The East Midlands Section Spring Golf. Having just come out of the coldest March on record Tim Needham and his team produced a golf course in excellent condition with fantastic slick, firm greens. A

very big thank you to them from the committee and everyone who played. It was great to see so many faces, old and new, attending and enjoying themselves and the hospitality at the club. Overall the greenkeeping winner was Jordan Baker from Beedles Lake with 38 points. In his category second place went to James Burberry (35) and third Derek McJannet (32). In Category 2 Antony Bindley returned 36 points to win with Richard Needham (36) and Shaun Bullin (36) being placed second and third respectively on count back.

The Trade prize was won by Roger Lupton of Toro with 38 points. NTP for greenkeepers was won by Jordan Baker and for Trade and Associates by Mick Marvel. Will Slater won longest drive for greenkeepers and Carl I keep milestone birthdays a secret Chamberlain taking the prize for The Trade and Associates. Nearest The Pin and Longest Drive prizes were sponsored by Tacit and the overall day was supported by Banks Amenity, Farmura and Countrywide.

I finished the Brighton Marathon in 4hrs 6mins 34 secs, so I didn't quite break my sub 4 hour target but I know a man that did, Asa English (fellow greenkeeper and committee member) achieved 3hrs 52mins 55secs even after picking up an injury at the 12th mile.

A great achievement Asa and plenty of money raised for your chosen charity 'Miracles to Believe In' - for more on this turn to this month's newsdesk. After the Marathon we had an auction for some incredible lots donated for Leukaemia & Lymphoma Research and we raised over £4000 on the night. Thank you to everyone who donated or sponsored me, www.JustGiving.com/greg-skinner1 is still open for donations. Right, I'm off for a massage...

Greg Skinner M: 07970 095264 greg.skinner92@btinternet.com



MIDLAND

If by some miracle you are reading this month's edition of our news, then it is only by the grace of Steve Castle, GI's Editor - sorry Communications

Around The Green

Executive! As usual I'm late with my notes. Let me tell you a little story, but with a warning. I often have with me a bottle of orange squash made up in a proprietary pop bottle, at the horror of my work mates, gained from the bins.

Decadence has never been my forte, or indeed financial ability. Whilst feeding the greens I stopped for a good swig of the said juice, only to find after a good mouthful had been ingested, that it was full of petrol that had been carried to clean a pond liner for repair.

I recall going to the lav that evening, after it smelt like a petrol station, don't light that smoke Paddy (such will humour some, but not me). As we have been taught, never put pesticides (or indeed fuels) in pop bottles. By God it caused amusement though. All's well that ends well.

Now we come to our excellent calendar, this month's is the 11th at the Belfry, and is sponsored by ESD Waste 2 water. We have such a system here at Stratford and it works well. They can be contacted on: 01782 373 878. or email: info@waste2water.com .

There may just be time to get your entry in for the spring tournament at Robin Hood G.C. 14 May. You'll have to grovel to Gary though: 07780 953 764. Also don't forget the Everris Doubles first draw will be held at the spring tournament. Good luck to all.

Sean McDade



MID ANGLIA

I'm pleased that at long last Spring seems to be showing itself giving us the opportunity to get our courses back into shape and get on with some proper greenkeeping tasks. Due to the numerous snowfalls we have had over the winter I have never seen so many pristine workshops, offices and machines that are all raring to go after servicing and will now be out for the first time in months.

We are pleased to announce that the Spring Tournament and Qualifier for the National Championships will be held at Bedford & County GC on 21 May with a pm start. The cost

will be £20 so very reasonable and we hope to see as many of you there as possible.

Our thanks go to Geoff Fenn for arranging this at short notice. Frilford Heath GC is the venue for the National on 7 - 8 October 2013 after hosting a Tour Event the week prior. So it should be in great condition and is bordering our section meaning travelling to the event should be far easier for our qualifiers.

Let's hope we can produce another Champion after Oly Browning captured the trophy in 2012. Following on from this we are visiting Brookmans Park GC on August 6 and Berhamsted GC on October 16, and the Texas Scramble will be held at Stocks GC in December.

Please get your entries in early for these events and also join the BIGGA Mid Anglia Facebook page to stay in touch.

Please ensure we have everybody's up to date email addresses and contact details so you receive the information for all events.

After a recent committee meeting we're happy to organise educational courses for members. In the past we've hosted chainsaw, first aid and spraying courses amongst others. If you're interested please contact Gerald@berkhamstedgc.co.uk and he will try to set up venues and dates.

We may also have the opportunity to visit Arsenal's training ground for a tour of their facilities one afternoon after an invite from their Head Groundsman Steve Braddock so if interested please contacting either Gerald or myself asap as there will be a limited number of spaces. If you have any news for the section please get in touch.

Darren - d.mugford@rigby-taylor.com - 07843513387

SOUTH EAST



SURREY

April showers bring May flowers - or so they say. So far, it has been the odd perennial topped with frost and a dusting of snow. But at long last, welcome to spring!

Kevin Boxhall is on the move, after several years at Guildford

GC as Matt Lawrence's deputy. Old Thorns GC has a new Head Greenkeeper who takes charge of a magnificent course set in 400 beautiful acres of countryside on the border of Surrey, Hampshire and Sussex. Kevin has been match secretary for the section for a number of years and is standing down whilst young Scott Roberts from Hankley Common GC will become the new golf match organiser. Thanks Kev from all the committee who wish you well in your new post.

The draw for the Surrey Bowl has taken place, sponsored by Winchester Garden Machinery, always a very popular event. The Final will be held at Foxhills GC on 1 October.

Later in the year, we have the Wee Jocks versus England or Scotland versus the Sassenachs - a wonderful competition held at Hankley Common GC. Jim Russell with a highly polished sporrán, chewing on a dried piece of haggis and probably dressed in a brightly coloured kilt are one of the many creatures one might see amongst the heather at Hankley.

If you are interested in playing in this event, check out the surrey website and choose your tartan, don't forget your heritage or your under armour, you may need it, there may be a thistle about.

Mark Day



KENT

How good is it to see The Masters on telly again?! After our seemingly endless winter the magnificence of Augusta is just the tonic we need. At last spring has decided to limp into view. Emulating Augusta may be a pipedream to most but our own professionalism will always ensure we push ourselves to the limit to achieve the best out of the land we are charged with.

Importantly, golfers seem to have come back in their droves too. Only the hardcore members have been brave enough to play over the last couple of months but at least they have seen, and on the whole seemingly appreciate, the works we have completed whilst conditions were against us.

Let's all hope and pray now for

a decent summer to fully restore our courses, club finances and our faith in the British weather!

We have another golf day fast approaching here in Kent. As you know our first event at Royal St. Georges was, unfortunately, cancelled due to deep snow but there is no danger of that this time (we hope!).

On 16 May we shall be heading to the delightful and historic Chislehurst Golf Club. Please let us know if you are able to attend or not in order for us to give the club as much notice as possible.

An invitation to the event has already gone out via e-mail and our new Facebook page (Kent Greenkeepers) so no excuses!

After our fantastic victory against Essex section in the Toro/Lely Football competition last year at the undisputed home of football that is Upton Park it seems everyone now wants a piece of the action!

This year's Toro/Lely comp will involve all six South East sections with Kent, as cup holders, being given a bye for the qualifying round but taking on the winners of Surrey and Sussex.

Our game at Upton Park last year was probably the best day of my life and would recommend the experience to anyone. Even if you don't support West Ham!

None of us are Spring chickens any more but fitness not a key issue as long as we get enough players. It would be a massive achievement to retain the trophy we did so well to win last year. Please get involved in this. You will not regret it!

As ever keep up to date via website or slightly less formally at Facebook page (Kent Greenkeepers).

Rob Holland



ESSEX

At long last and after a delay of two months we have managed to hold our Christmas team event and AGM.

Thursday 31 January dawned to a cool and windy day, overnight rain had left a few puddles around the course but few would complain. The snows of the previous week had gone and play was underway. The Essex Golf & Country Club was the venue and our

President Martin Forrester and his team had turned the golf course out in great condition. Seventeen teams of four should have ventured out on the course but unfortunately six teams withdrew, through work and other commitments. A Texas Scramble format was played with some interesting results, as always!

1st Stoke by Nayland – 2nd Colchester Golf Club – 3rd Frinton Golf Club – Golfer of the Year, Liam Springett – Trade Golfer of the Year, Neil Peachey.

The AGM was held before we played golf and was attended by a good number of section members.

Outgoing Chairman Mark Stopps gave an emotional report thanking all the section for their support over his period as Chair. He also stated that with the help of the following, our golf and educational days had been a great success.

Amenity Technology, Baileys of Norfolk, Banks Amenity Products, Billericay Farm Services, Blade, CMW Equipment, Collier Turf Care, Ernest Doe, Everris, Farmura Environmental, GM Amenity, Irrigation and Water, Limagrain UK, Otley College, Paynes Turf, Philip Liverton Ltd, P Tuckwell (John Deere), Premier Plan, Prime Irrigation Ltd, Rain Bird, Rigby Taylor, Chaingreen Ltd (Sea Nymph), Tey Farm Systems, Toro (Lely) and Writtle College.

The election of Officers to the committee resulted in Ian Wood taking over as Chairman, Martin Forrester (President), Tom Smith (Treasurer), Arnold Phipps-Jones (Secretary), Antony Kirwan (Competitions), Ben Scrivener (Education) and Richard Freeman (Toro UK, Lely) (as Sponsors Representative).

Our thanks for the hospitality and good food we enjoyed from The Essex. It was a great day, with the rain staying away, just for once!

In February we held a First Aid training day at Upminster Golf Club. It was filled well before the closing date, which shows there is a need for such courses. More information can be gained from the website, on the training course we will be putting on in the near future.

www.essexbigga.co.uk Contact details 07764-862.337 or at essexbigga@talktalk.net

Arnold Phipps-Jones

SOUTH WEST & WALES



SOUTH WEST

I am writing this from a pool-side in sunny Singapore - mornings like these do wonders for the optimistic side!

Both congratulations and commiserations must be voiced following a spectacular end to this year's Six Nations. A most unexpected result and, as it turned out, the cause of a major traffic incident as a large, broken chariot was towed back down the M4 causing delays for hours. Now we all have the upcoming Lions tour in Australia to look forward to, c'mon you Wallabies!

Back to business now. Adam has been keeping the information coming for our upcoming events, next up following the ever-popular AMAM at Minchinhampton GC are Section v Secretaries and the Summer Tournament, get your entries in early to ensure you are on the start sheet. As this column goes to press the AMAM has not yet come about but we will get the results out next month as I am sure the proud winners will be happy to have their achievements recognized.

Special mention must be made of an additional patronage partner who has offered support to our section this year. Greensman Ltd offer specialist waste disposal and lubricant supply services and although this is the first time support to the South West Section has been offered, Stewart Clayton and his team have been dedicated and valued supporters of other BIGGA sections throughout the country for some time now. Continued support from our existing patrons must also be recognized, many thanks to all. Good luck with the late spring flush, let's all have a strong year and keep up the good work.

Jaey Goodchild



SOUTH COAST

At long last a few dry days and

a feeling of spring in the air!

Sadly I was unable to make it to the spring tournament because of a bug I picked up on my recent holiday to Cuba. If you ever get the chance to visit do it – it's a little bit of paradise in an unspoilt country.

Back to the tournament, a great day was had by all 47 players, from the hospitality on arrival through to evening meal a truly excellent day. Thanks go to Remedy Oak for allowing us courtesy of the course, to Robert Hogarth and his team for the great condition of the course, considering the appalling conditions they had to endure in preparation, well done to all. Thanks to our sponsors Avoncrop for their ongoing support and to the caterers for a truly memorable evening meal. Finally a special thanks to Kev who had to cope without yours truly as his right hand man.

Winners Cat 1: Colin Pardy 37pts, Sherbourne 2 James Wright 36, Romsey 3 Chris Bland 35 Ferndown, Winners Cat 2: 1 Beverley Blair 34pts Southwick Park 2 Mike Lake 29 Blackmore 3 Alan Smith 28 Crane Valley. Nearest the pin John Mathis, Longest drive Kevin Tigg.

Our next event is the annual match against the Secretaries this year to be held at Ashley Wood Golf Club on 5th June, if you are interested in playing please let either Kev or myself know well in advance of the date.

The summer competition is at the Army Golf Club, more about the fixture in next months issue, but just a reminder it is no longer an invitation day! Courtesy will only be given to BIGGA members.

Tony



DEVON & CORNWALL

Our Spring Seminar held at St Mellion on 13 March was again very successful with 55 attendees including many students from Duchy College. First up was Dr Simon Watson from Syngenta who focussed on the new XC Nozzles. Simon went through the research and development of the nozzles along with results from field trials. The attendees were then shown a practical demonstration of the

nozzles in action, showing the comparison between the new nozzles and flat fan nozzles. The results were very impressive with obvious reduced drift and more even distribution of spray pattern. After coffee, it was Roger Davey from Irritech. Roger went through the possible pitfalls regarding irrigation water sourcing and in particular the Health and Safety implications. In the afternoon, Mike Bush MG (Course Manager at St Mellion) went through the results of a recent members survey he had conducted in conjunction with Syngenta – read more about this in this month's feature.

Roger Davey followed his morning workshop with a further presentation on Irrigation practices, followed by Iain MacPherson from Rainbird Renewable Energy, who enlightened us all with how energy from wind turbines could not only reduce your energy bills, but also give a source of income to the business. Finally, Paul Lowe and Dr Su Hodgson from Symbio gave a presentation on how to manage your thatch levels by improving soil biology and encouraging natural degradation.

A massive thank you to all our speakers for the day and in particular to Iain MacPherson and Rainbird Renewable Energy for also sponsoring the day. Also a big thank you to Mike Bush MG for allowing the Section to stage the event at St Mellion once again and for his team for assisting in the organisation of the day.

Our next meeting is at "The Point at Polzeath", North Cornwall, on 22 May. The Tee is booked from 11.30am and the Course walk will commence at approx 2pm. The golf will be playing for the Section Championships and a chance to represent the Section at the National Tournament. Invites should have been received by now, so if you contact me asap to secure your place.

We have a further Summer meeting on 2 July at Teignmouth GC. This event will be the Annual Devon v Cornwall Match. There will also be a course walk for those not participating in the golf.

Here's to a great season and hopefully an improvement in the weather this year.

George Pitts MG, 07929 754401, gpitts@yelvertongolf.co.uk