



Chairman's Word

National Chairman, Chris Sealey, gives his thoughts for the month

A momentous May

May was a momentous month for me and everybody at Chippenham – the culmination of seven years of blood, sweat and tears as our course redevelopment was completed.

As I've mentioned in previous columns, we've built four brand new holes and modified another three to improve the course layout and extend it by 600 yards. The initial plans were drawn up in 2007 and I feel like the project has taken up several years of my life!

In these situations, you find out how good your team really are. The expectations both from myself and of course the members were extremely high. It's a huge responsibility and the key was to ensure that these new holes were up to the same high standard as the rest of the course when they opened.

Achieving this took a great deal of forward planning, a lot of communication with our committee, strong and effective team management and a coordinated and professional team effort. I'm delighted to say that it all came together perfectly and the team were up to the task.

On the weekend of 17/18 May we held a Members' event with 200 members playing the new course layout on Saturday, and even more members and guests playing on the Sunday.

The feedback on the new holes was fantastic, everyone I spoke to was very positive.

The fabulous weather was a real bonus. It was perfect for the whole weekend, really bright sunshine with a cooling breeze.

It's no exaggeration to say if we had held it the weekend before it would have been a disaster as that weekend was incredibly windy with heavy showers resulting in branches, twigs and blossom everywhere. It was a huge relief that conditions played their part in such a successful weekend.

I'm very proud to see everybody's hard work come to fruition. We worked several 12 hour days and I did 14 on the Friday.

On Saturday, after a 5am start, I played in the competition with the members. I know that many of you have been just as busy at this extremely busy time for turf managers.



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We all know it's a tough job, but I'm sure you get the same feeling of satisfaction in a good job well done. When you see hundreds of golfers walking round the course in bright sunshine, having a laugh and enjoying the course, playing the holes you've spent years putting together and seeing the green stripes your team have mowed on the fairways looking lush, it truly does make it all worthwhile.

Away from Chippenham I headed over to Bowood for the Everris Turf Reward event. This is a great initiative for greenkeepers, groundsmen and their employers and I would like to thank Everris for their support.

I'm pleased to see the events touring a wide range of clubs across Great Britain and Ireland from Dublin to Wentworth to Loch Lomond.

This month I also presented a 'So You Want To Be Promoted' seminar at Chipping Sodbury Golf Club with John Keenaghan, which was a great success, and as this goes to press I will have visited the aforementioned Wentworth for the BMW PGA Championship.

As I'm sure you all know we have a larger BIGGA Support Team than usual offering a wider range of assistance to Kenny Mackay and all his team, and I'm very much looking forward to meeting them.

I know they will gain so much from the experience.

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