

Around the green

Keeping in touch with news and comment from the Sections



Scottish Region
Peter Boyd
Tel/Fax 0141 616 3440

North

Nothing new on the membership front to report this month. Membership currently stands at 229, a number we must maintain and hopefully build on during the current year. The new Head Greenkeeper at Royal Dornoch is Bobby Mackay who returns to Dornoch after a 16 year stay at one or two other courses, the last of which was Prestwick St Nicholas in Ayrshire. We look forward to welcoming him back to the Section.

BTME was another resounding success, it seems to get better every year. I had the honour of presenting

a cheque from our Section to the BIGGA Building Fund for £1000 as unfortunately our Chairman, Hugh McLatchie, was unable to make it down this year. The Sunday night football match was a close affair with the Exiles coming out on top by 6-5. However, the evening was spoiled a bit by the bad injury that Robert Bruce, of RiteFeed, suffered. He ended up in hospital having an operation, we wish him a speedy recovery. Well done BIGGA for an excellent week! The banquet on the Thursday night was attended by 650 people and we were well entertained by Lee Hurst and Linda Nolan.

Apologies to Ian Gunn for printing the wrong phone number in the January report, he can be contacted on 01997 421718.

This month we have the Scottish Region Conference at Dunfermline Conference Centre on the 3rd, a day well worth attending I am sure.

Talking of Conferences, the Section one planned for November is beginning to take shape with a venue and several speakers in the offing, but not yet confirmed. I did not get any ideas from anyone so the sub-committee will try our best to put on a programme to please you all.

Have you returned your 200 Club money or do you require extra tickets? If so contact Stewart McBain as soon as possible.

Finally the proposed four ball better ball competition which Stephen Sullivan was hoping to organise this year has been abandoned due to insufficient entries.

Iain Macleod

Central

Well, I have no news of events at Harrogate this year as unfortunately I was unable to attend due to being in hospital at the time where, believe it or not, surgeons found

that I do actually have a heart! I bet that surprises a few people! Seriously though I would like to thank everyone who sent good wishes, cards etc during the past few weeks. I can assure you they all are very much appreciated and hopefully it won't be too long before I am back to work.

As part of their Patrons Award Stuart Sime, from Leven Links, and Kenny Duncan, from Dunfermline, attended BTME. and I have no doubt that they enjoyed themselves during their time spent in Harrogate. You never know, they might even write and let me know how they got on!

Another seven members have joined the Section in the past month and we extend a warm welcome to James Henderson, Bishopshire; Steve McOuan, Dunfermline; David Gray, Thornton and Kevin Black, Ian



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Dye, Scott Lee and Mark Leitch, all from St Andrews Links. Hopefully with the increase in membership we will start having better attendances at Section events.

As we head towards another season on the course we are also coming up to the first golf tournament of '98 which is the Spring Tournament/Ritefeed Classic qualifier at Ladybank GC, on Tuesday, April 28. Entries are flooding in for this event so if you wish to compete please get your forms (complete with the exact entry fee) to me as soon as possible as spaces will be limited.

I will give you an update on the visits to Scottish Grass Machinery's premises in Inverkeithing and Stewarts top dressing plant etc at Dalkeith next month.

In last month's report I touched on the subject of cutting down on Section running costs. As the biggest percentage of members do not participate in any of the events which are organised on their behalf, one way of saving a considerable amount would be to circulate any information regarding the Section to only those who take part in the events with the remainder having to read about them in the magazine. This would certainly reduce our costs considerably, but is this the way to communicate with each other? How would you feel if this were to happen, or don't you really care? You can let me know how you feel regarding this subject on 01577 865607 or write to me at the usual address.

John Crawford

West

This month will be short and sweet with only the basics covered. Firstly, the BTME, as a patron nominee I thoroughly enjoyed my trip and would recommend future visits to everybody, even if just to meet old

acquaintances. The size of the outlay is quite unbelievable but justifiable with regard to our profession. One day was spent just touring round talking and looking at what was on offer. I couldn't believe there were so many irrigation companies, all the big names for machinery, fertilisers and top dressings. The next day was spent at seminars and in between meeting old friends with the occasional refreshment plus a shot on the longest drive machine (which was definitely out of order!). The final conclusion - a must for everybody.

New members of the Association - David Hutton, Strathaven; Garry Swan, Mount Ellen; Kevin McGuire, Mount Ellen, and Simon Rothwell, Myerscough College. Welcome to the Section, we look forward to seeing you at future events.

Things to bear in mind for the coming months:- March 3 - Education Conference, Dunfermline College, price £25; March 17 - SGM day visit to Gleneagles. A talk will be given by Jim Kidd along with a tour of Gleneagles followed by lunch at SGMs new headquarters. A bus will be provided; March 25 - Head Greenkeepers /Conveners day at East Kilbride. All of these will be notified in the events diary which you should have received, if not then contact me on 0141 942 5554.

Just a point to note. Bobby Granger, Cawder GC, has just come out of hospital after a triple heart bypass operation and is looking to start back to work sometime in March. The Section wishes him well and that everything runs hopefully to plan.

Also if there is interesting information out there then please inform me. Thank you John Robertson for your information regarding a conservation talk at Hilton Park.

Stuart Taylor



Northern Region
Douglas Bell
Tel: 0151 431 0433

North West

I have just returned from the BTME show in Harrogate and once again it was a great show. This year even more companies were exhibiting and I do believe we had record attendance. The exhibition does not just happen and I must commend the BIGGA staff for their hard work and excellent organisation in putting together what must be the finest exhibition of its kind, certainly in this country.

The Mere seminar starts our year off on Thursday, March 19, so if you have not already registered contact me as soon as possible. In April we have the annual golf tournament against the North Wales Section and I will require a team of 16. By the time you read this the venue will have been confirmed so if you wish to be part of the winning team contact me.

People on the move - David Milbourne has been appointed Course Manager at Birchwood GC and Adrian Holt, as Deputy Head. Another greenkeeper on the move will be Antony Davies at Prestbury GC who will hopefully be moving the full 26 miles in the London Marathon to raise money to send a child to America for specialist treatment. If you would like to sponsor him call him on 01625 430724.

Any news, views or if you want to play in the match against North Wales ring me on 0151 724 5412.

Bert Cross

Sheffield

On December 4 we held our winter lecture at Rotherham GC. The lecture was given by Nick Lawson, from OCMSIS Irrigation. Our thanks go to Nick who gave a very interesting lecture on irrigation which was enjoyed by around 40 of our mem-

bers.

May I, on behalf of the Section, convey our thanks to BIGGA on an excellent exhibition at Harrogate, BTME 98. Well done, I think everyone who attended enjoyed the exhibition once again.

Congratulations go to David Milbourne on his appointment as Course Manager at Birchwood GC. Unfortunately David will be leaving the Section and I would like to thank him for everything he has done. Good luck David!

New members this month include Simon Brown, Worksop; Shane Williams, Renishaw; Joel France, Hillsborough; Arthur Ward, Brough; John Davis and Alan Sampson, both Dore and Topley; Paul Hague, Hallowes; Craig Bentley, Silkstone; Jason Williams, Sitwell, and Ian Benson, Rother Valley.

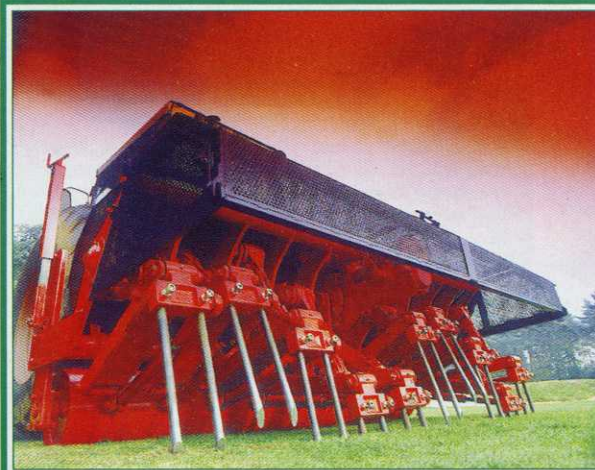
John Lax

North Wales

I hope everyone who attended the BTME enjoyed themselves. Again it was excellent and we also had a good turnout from our Section at the AGM. Unfortunately I believe some over enjoyed it and caused a problem on the coach. I am led to believe they weren't greenkeepers but from what I can gather it was unacceptable behaviour. I will keep you informed on the matter.

Bill Lawson has retired from Heswall and also been made a life member of the Association, a fitting tribute to a man that was instrumental in the setting up of BIGGA. I have known Bill for over 20 years and can tell you all that without him and a few other dedicated greenkeepers we wouldn't be where we are today. Thanks again Bill, somehow I think we'll still see you about. His position at Heswall has been filled by Guy Cannings who has been with Bill for many years. Good luck Guy!

Congratulations are in order to Andy Campbell, of Carden Park, on becoming a Master Greenkeeper. You've gone a long way since your



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apprenticeship at Chester, Andy. Well done mate!

There is a trip to the Mommersteeg factory in Holland around June 18, also taking in the new Ajax Stadium. I went on the last one which was excellent. If anyone is interested they should contact Terry Adamson.

The Spring Tournament which is also the RiteFeed qualifier is to be held at Porthmadog on April 21.

Finally I attended a meeting of the golf liaison panel at the Welsh College of Horticulture. It was a very positive and interesting gathering of every aspect of the industry including the GTC, WGU, SDA, BIGGA, Greens Chairman, Club Secretary, College Principal and trade. This is a fine example of all the various branches of the business working together for the one aim of raising standards throughout the whole industry.

The courses in the pipeline at the College and the proposed golf course auger well for golf in Wales. Watch this space.

Dave Goodridge

Northern

Another BTME flashes by and as always it was an excellent exhibition. I was pleased to see some old faces that I hadn't seen for some time.

Many thanks to Telford Jarvis, Dennis Cockburn and Ian Thompson for helping me out on the Northern Region stand. I think we probably had the quietest 'stint' on the stand due to being the first on the Wednesday morning.

Anyone still wishing to book places for this year's Annual Dinner Dance on March 14 must have their payment (£16 per person) in at least two weeks before the event. This will enable seating plans to be drawn up and the numbers to be sent to the fire officer so that in the unlikely event of a fire they are aware of how many are present.

At present I haven't many names booked in for this year's RiteFeed

Spring qualifier. The event is to be held on Tuesday April 14 at Bradley Hall GC - tee off from 10.30 am. Again, if you are intending playing in this event please send your name and £15 to me at the address below as soon as possible.

Anyone from around the Section with any news please contact me at 1 Cockley Meadows, Kirkheaton, Huddersfield HD5 0LA or telephone me at home on 01484 317813 or mobile 0411 601420.

Simon Heppenstall



Midland Region
Peter Larter
Tel: 01480 437507

East of England

I hope as I am writing this that Spring is not all that far away and we have a good start to the season.

I hope everyone from the East of England Section enjoyed their trip to the BTME which was even better than last year which takes some beating. Congratulations go to everyone at HQ who organised it and anyone else who assisted in the show, it just keeps getting better. Another pleasing aspect was meeting up with so many friends from other regions and hearing how they are all doing. It is good to hear college friend Tony McLure from the North East has taken an active role in BIGGA.

A welcome to new members of the Section - Karl Westen, Peter Murphy, David Burgess, Christopher Tuck and Simon Winters.

While speaking to the Area Manager, Ben Petitjean of Barenbrug, at BTME he told me he would be pleased to play a more active role in our sections. This was to include sponsorship of a golf day but also discussed was for the Section to organise a trip to Holland with a programme to include a visit to the Barenbrug Group

Headquarters to see the latest trial and breeding grounds and then on into Amsterdam for a meal. Anyone interested then please let me know so as to organise transport.

Graeme Macdonald

Mid Anglia

The Section will be visiting Brocket Hall GC on the 17th of this month for a course visit to see the initial stages of the construction for a further 18 holes. John Wells, the Course Manager, will be showing us around. Those who wish to attend please meet in the main golf club car park at 1.30 pm and please bring outdoor footwear.

I am sure that most people by now are aware that Chas Ayres is leaving Lodgeways to pursue a new career working for Richard Long. On behalf of the Section I would like to wish Chas every success in the future and to thank him for his support of the Section over a number of years.

Chris Rook, from Lodgeway, has expressed his desire to keep the four ball competition running. To this end Steve Mason, of Mount Pleasant GC, will be administering the event (Steve was elected to the Section Committee at the AGM). Entry forms will be sent out in due course and the closing date for entries is Monday 20th April. The full draw will then take place and members will have the relevant information at the Spring meeting at Lamerwood GC on April 23. The Spring meeting will be the Section qualifier for the RiteFeed National Competition (previously the Hayter).

It is likely that the format for the golf events this year will change slightly for the afternoon rounds playing greensome and Texas scramble competitions rather than all day Stableford/medals. Members should, by now, have received a full fixture card for 1998. Leighton Buzzard, Mill Green and Ashridge are the golf clubs being used to stage our summer, autumn and winter

events respectively. Neil Whittaker, who was also recently elected onto the committee has kindly accepted the role of Handicap Secretary for the Section.

Numbers of entries for golf events in 1997 were significantly lower than in the previous year.

While we all appreciate that it is not always possible for all staff members to play at events due to work commitments we rely on Head Greenkeepers/Course Managers to encourage this whenever possible in order to ensure the success of our golf days. It is expected that entry fees for all golf events during 1998 will remain at 1997 prices.

Paul Lockett

Midland

Last month I said I would in this month's report give you all the news and information that I have regarding competitions and the committee for this year. To start with the competition we now have dates and venues and these are as follows:- Spring Tournament - Ingestre Park (27 holes) Thursday May 27; Summer - Wrekin (18 holes) Thursday July 9; Autumn - Edgbaston (27 holes) Monday September 28; Winter - Copt Heath (Texas Scramble) Thursday December 10.

The serving committee for this year will be as follows:- Rhys Thomas, Eddie Stant, Peter Richmond, Trafford Stonebridge (Chairman), Jonathan Wood, Peter Holtham, Andrew Smith, Kim Blake and Tony Cheese.

During '98 we hope to arrange more visits to championship courses as those people who attended the trip to Sunningdale and Wentworth felt that it was very enjoyable and informative. There is a possibility that a trip can be arranged to Turnberry which will involve an overnight stop but we can get sponsorship for this and expect the cost to be around £30. It is expected to take place during April or May. If anyone is interested in attending

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Comment From Walter Woods
St. Andrews Links Golf Course supervisor

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COURSES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD



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please get in touch with me on 01384 292396 and we can get some idea of the interest. I have to point out that those members who supported last years trip will have priority.

I would like to point out on behalf of the committee that it is your Section so you should make the most of these events but if there is anything you think that we could arrange please give us your ideas as we can only do what we think the membership wants. If you have any ideas please call any member of the committee or me on 01384 292396.

Finally I would like to introduce some more new members - they are Karl Lans, James Boddington, David Couls, Anthony Hardy and Andrew Davies.

Jonathan Wood

East Midlands

This year's BTME was attended by several Section members with a good percentage staying for several days. Although I missed most of the first day because I was confined to bed with the flu it once again turned out to be another great BTME show. Three excellent workshops were on offer as well as the National

Education Conference for the first two days. The next three days produced some excellent seminars plus a great display of machinery, fertilisers, top-dressings etc at the Show. The social evenings provided great entertainment for everybody and it is a credit to all the staff at Headquarters for providing a very enjoyable and memorable week for everyone lucky enough to attend. Next year however it would be nice to see the support of more members.

The Section's next event will be the Spring Tournament and the RiteFeed qualifier at Beeston Fields on May 13. This year's Christmas Tournament will be held on Thursday, December 10, and not the 3rd as previously stated.

Antony Bindley

BB & O

The first committee meeting of the year was held at Harleyford on February 4. This traditionally is always a busy meeting with the forthcoming golf events to organise. The venues have been confirmed with only one date to finalise:- Spring - Reading GC, April 16; Summer - The Oxfordshire GC, August 3; Autumn - Harleyford GC,

no date; Turkey Trot - Whiteleaf GC, November 26. I am sure you will agree that the above venues are quite impressive. There are a lot of clubs in the area that we would like to hold an event at in the coming seasons but at present there are not too many volunteers. If you would like to host one of the events for next year then please get in touch as soon as possible so as to pick the prime slots! Along with your first invite of the season you will receive a report by our Chairman, Ray Clark, explaining several issues including the AGM and sponsorship.

I have mentioned on several occasions in the past about trying to organise some alternatives to the golf days ie go-karting or bowling. This unfortunately has never got off the ground, that was until recently when in conjunction with T. H. Whites, Rob Weir, from Wokefield Park, organised a go-karting night at the Woodley Centre in Reading. This proved very successful with about 35 people taking part. Despite some wreckless driving nobody was seriously injured!

It was great fun despite the lads from Wokefield being ringers and taking over the podium with a clean

sweep. I believe Rob and his team are planning the next social event (bowling) soon so if you want to swell the numbers get in touch as soon as possible.

Finally, David Gower, from The Oxfordshire, is looking for some volunteers to assist with course preparation during the week of the Benson and Hedges Tournament in May. If you can help out then please contact me. There will be free tickets on offer for the volunteers plus a goodie bag of sorts.

Lindsay Anderson



South East
Derek Farrington
Tel: 01903 260956

London

After attending the AGM at Porters Park I found myself volunteered to take over writing this column for the London Section. First of all I would like, on behalf of the Section, to thank Tony Dunstan for all the time he has devoted to this task over the last few years. The hardest part of writing this is, of course, to have something worth writing about and as we all like to know what is going on in

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Around
the green

the area please let me have your news so that it can be included here in the future.

Excellent news from Moor Park Course Manager, John Edwards. After some years, mutual agreement has now been reached between English Heritage, Three Rivers Council, Moor Park 1958 Residents Association and Moor Park GC on the design and construction site of a new greenkeepers' complex. The new site will be situated further away from the Mansion on the access road known as Watford Road. The work started in December 1997 by main contractors Leominster Construction will incorporate the machinery garage, maintenance workshop, chemical and fertiliser store and chemical washdown tank as well as the Course Manager's office and male and female cloakrooms. Completion is due Easter 1998.

A new appointment in the area is Gavin Kyle as Course Manager at Hendon GC. A good Scottish name disguises the fact that Gavin originates from South Africa although he has been in the UK for 17 years and was previously working at Sutton Green GC near Woking, where Laura Davies is the Touring Professional. A warm welcome to the area to Gavin, his partner, Marnie, and young

daughter, Katie.

Dates for your diary - Gentleman's Dinner at Walton Heath GC on March 6; London Section Spring Tournament - the RiteFeed Challenge will be held at Highgate GC, date to be announced.

Last but by no means least is the news that Chris Carpenter, Course Manager of Brookmans Park GC, is the latest recipient of the Master Greenkeeper Award. Chris was one of two greenkeepers to be presented with his award and Master Greenkeeper's Jacket at BTME 98 in Harrogate. Chris tells me that there are now five Master Greenkeepers in the USA and eleven in the UK. Congratulations on a magnificent achievement from all in the London Section.

Peter Hopkinson

Essex

New members this month include Ivan Chadwick, Three Rivers; Gary Coxall, Paul Gatland, Jeffrey Foulger, John Harston, Alan Cornell and Andrew Cook, Chigwell; Terry Edmonds, Braintree, and William Galway, of the Greenkeeping Supply Company.

Our next lecture will be held on March 17 at Writtle College, Main

Building, Room Y57 starting at 7.30 pm. Dr Alan Gange, of the Royal Holloway University of London, will give a talk entitled "The hidden truth beneath the soil".

Please note that the new date for the South East Regional Seminar at Hadlow College will be May 19.

We are holding a pairs knockout competition open to all Essex Section members. The cost will be £5 per pair and entries and cheques should be sent to Michael Fance, 235 Linnet Drive, Tile Kiln, Chelmsford CM2 8AZ (telephone 01245 6020980 by March 27. If you have not got a partner send in your entry and Michael will try to accommodate you!

I spent a very interesting evening recently in the company of Frank Newberry who gave a talk on "Essential management skills in greenkeeping." Anyone who hasn't been to one of Frank's courses should as they would find them very useful. 36 people attended and we thank Martin for his organisation and Writtle College for the use of the room. The main sponsors were Tuckwells and our thanks go to Neil. After the talk we retired to the College bar for the raffle and thanks go to Rigby Taylor, Avoncrop Amenity Products, Grass Roots and Kings

Horticulture for the prizes.

At the last count the Essex Section had 156 members so let's see more of you at the golf days and lectures.

Congratulations go out to Michael Oakes, Assistant Greenkeeper at Rochford Hundred GC, who recently became a father of a baby daughter, Hannah. Congratulations to Becky.

Please let me know if anything interesting is happening at your club call Dave Wells on 01702 522202.

Dave Wells



South West
and South Wales
Paula Humphries
Tel: 01363 82777

South West and South Wales Region

On Friday, January 9, I posted (first class) the travel arrangements to the delegates on the BTME Express to Harrogate then sat back and relaxed as all the arrangements had been completed and there was nothing else to do.

Some days later I received a telephone call asking about the travel arrangements, pick up times etc, then another, then another...



AD
REF
61

After roasting the Royal Mail alive for their inefficiency I then received a telephone call to say that the details had arrived at last but without a stamp and it had to be collected from the Post Office and 40p paid. Then I received another call, and another and another... How long before I live that one down!

However on January 20 the coach turned up on time, all the delegates turned up at their allotted pick-ups (even Robin!) and we made record time to Harrogate, where we were welcomed by our friendly hotel staff.

It was my first experience of BTME and I was very impressed with the whole organisation and the wonderful atmosphere in the halls. The banquet was most impressive and I thought the caterers dealt with 650 people in exemplary manner. Hats off to the organisers of the whole show.

On the way home in the coach the Regional Chairman, Ivor Scoones, presented an engraved barometer to Richard Whyman, who has just stood down after serving on the Regional Board for eight years. Ivor expressed everyone's thanks to him for his hard and dedicated work over the years and also to Bill Mitchell, who has also stood down this year but who has also been a very valued member of the Board.

I was very touched also to receive a bouquet of flowers from the lads on the coach as a thank you for organising the trip and tucking them up into bed with their hot chocolate and Enid Blyton stories (This is becoming a habit!).

Thank you it was a lovely gesture. You were great fun to be with.

Paula Humphries

South Coast

We had our first committee meeting of 1998 at Bramshaw GC. The main task of our meeting was to elect the various officers and the outcome was: Vice Chairman - Trevor Smith; Tournament Organiser - Trevor Smith; Regional Reps - Kerran Daly & Jeff Drake; Standby Regional Rep - Tony Gadd; Magazine - Ken Lodge. Trevor Smith is organising the First Aid courses. For those of you who are interested contact Trevor on 0410 835242. He needs at least 8 names for each course.

Trevor has arranged a match against the Secretaries at Highcliff GC. This is to be held at 2.00 pm on Tuesday April 7 and anyone interested in playing should contact Trevor. Last years competition was held at Alresford GC and was a great success.

Our Spring Tournament will be held at Knighton Heath GC on Thursday

April 23, not Wednesday 22 as in your programmes. The cost for the day is £15 which includes lunch and evening meal. The competition will consist of a 27 hole medal and will also be the qualifier for the RiteFeed Regional final. The National final this year is being held at Gleneagles. Trevor tells me there will be some very good prizes on the table however numbers are limited to get your entry forms in early. You should send your entry forms, including a cheque for £15, current handicap and your name and address to:- Fred Deamon, Golf Club Bungalow, Alton GC, Old Odiham Road, Alton GU34 4BU, telephone 01420 86679.

One thing I must stress is that all trophies are at Knighton Heath GC for presentation. If any of last year's winners have difficulties in returning your trophy please contact Trevor Smith as soon as possible.

Just another quick reminder for Westurf which is fast approaching. Make a note of the date - April 29. It will be a fine sunny day this year - see you all there on the day.

Our immediate Past Chairman, Alan Mitchell, has been at home with pneumonia for the last few weeks. June, his wife said that he is slowly improving. I am sure the Section

would like to wish him all the best and a speedy recovery.

The BTME at Harrogate proved to be a terrific success. The reports of the National Conference were of high quality speeches to packed audiences. The workshops were fully booked and greatly appreciated by all who attended. The AGM went off relatively smoothly and the Section sends its congratulations and best wishes for a successful year to Gordon Child, the new BIGGA Chairman.

The exhibition was hot and hectic. It had expanded into yet another hall but still retained the friendly atmosphere for which it is renowned. The seminar programme was well balanced and the facilities were a big improvement on last year. Among some excellent papers presented my special congratulations should go to Mark Jones, of Preston GC. Mark's talk on greens reconstruction at his course proved of great interest to many.

Although the South Coast Section were few in number on the coach there was good representation in Harrogate. It was pleasing to see so many friendly faces during the exhibition and out and about the town. The banquet was the social highlight of the week. The entertainment was



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not to everyone's liking but with 650 people sitting down for a meal and cabaret you are unlikely to please everyone.

The whole trip was a great success thanks mainly to the organisation and energy of the Regional Administrator Paula Humphries. Everything ran smoothly and there was always a smile and even cake for all aboard the coach. Congratulations Paula on an excellent trip, I can't wait for next year!

The BTME report was forwarded by Kerran Daly. It would seem that once again a great success for BTME and for BIGGA.

Ken Lodge

Devon and Cornwall

With no Section meeting in January it was nice to see so many of the Section's membership take advantage of the Region's Westurf sponsored trip to this year's BTME at Harrogate. On arrival at our hotel we were greeted with the usual warm welcome from the hotel's staff and after a few ales and a lot of discussions that night we awoke the next morning to the now accustomed snow as we walked to the exhibition halls. On arrival at the BTME show all our expectations were met and

past as the show was the biggest and best to date with the seminars running though the day giving us all an excellent educational opportunity. One of the speakers at the seminar programme was Section member Robert Brewer, Course Manager /Director of Golf at St Mellion International, who gave an excellent presentation on "Business Planning for Greenkeeping".

The long eight-hour journey home began on Friday at 12.30 with the coach leaving on time and arriving slightly ahead of schedule at Exeter services and even Mr Mole who suffers from travel sickness looked remarkably well after the journey! Congratulations must go to our Regional Administrator, Paula, who had organised the superb trip. Also I would like to congratulate all the staff at head office for organising the best ever BTME and seminar programme.

Our last meeting of the winter programme will be the Rhône-Poulenc and Supaturf meeting which will be held at West Cornwall GC on Wednesday April 1. The day will start as always with golfing members competing for the Supaturf Trophy (Head Greenkeepers) and the Rhône-Poulenc Trophy

(Assistants). As always non-golfing members will have a guided tour of the course and sheds. After lunch our sponsors Rhône-Poulenc and Supaturf will give members a presentation on their companies before we move to our educational talk which will be presented by Cornwall Wildlife Trust.

Westurf is now just around the corner and hopefully the weather will be as good as last year. This will be Paula's first Westurf so let's see a big attendance from you to show your support to our Region - without it the region can't help you.

REMEMBER - 29th April 1998 at Long Ashton GC, Bristol.

Richard Whyman

South Wales

New writer - same old info! The Christmas Golf Day and AGM was again a great success with 55 golfers and 75 sampling excellent catering at Pyle and Kenfig GC. The attendance is a reflection on the excellent condition we find the course in each year. A special thanks must go out to Mr P. Robinson and his staff for all their efforts and also to the Secretary Mr Rodger Thomas who we all wish a happy retirement to! Also thanks goes to the Caterers and the Club Captain,

Mr John Cattle.

A big thumbs up also goes to the trade for all their support, especially the sponsors Alan Stow, Vitax, and Kim Davies, Celtic Mowers. We were also graced with the attendance of BIGGA Vice Chairman, Gordon Child, his wife, Marion, and our Regional Administrator, Paula Humphries. The results for the day were as follows:- 1. A. Hatcher, 37; 2. J. Probert, 36; 3. P. Williams, 35. Well done to all three.

The evening lectures programme at Pencoed College is well under way now with some excellent speakers giving up their time to pass on some of their expertise. December was Duncan Stewart, Managing Director of Envirogreen, who gave an insight into special "Waste Regulations 96" which our whole region must be very up-to-date with as only five people attended.

Bruce Jamieson also gave up some of his time to bring us up-to-date on the latest improvements in Golf Course Management and we had a great evening with 26 in attendance. Bruce has an excellent background, he started out in '73 at Turnberry; from '83 to '88 he was at Royal Porthcawl and later became the European Tour Director of Agronomy. In 1995 he started a consultancy business. The 1998 Committee is:- Chairman - David

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Keeping in touch with news and comment from the Sections

Ward; Vice Chairman - Mike Jones; Golf/Social Sub Committee - M Jones (Chairman), A Panks, Peter Lacey (Secretary), J B Jones, A Hatcher, J Probert, C Solman; Education Sub-Committee - M Davies, A Macleod, R Hatcher, R Patterson, D Ward; Regional Board - D Ward, D Jenkins.

Movers and Shakers - Mr Tony lafrate has returned from over the bridge back to the homeland to take up the Deputy Head post at Cardiff GC, good luck.

Not to be Missed - Westurf is only a month away and its success relies on our support, please make a big effort to attend.

Any information for Movers and Shakers or Not to be Missed call me on 0976 307884 or 01222 549327.

Chris Solman

South West

January has come and gone and several of the South West greenkeepers are getting over the headaches brought on by the annual trip to Harrogate. When I say headaches I am of course referring to the information overload that one often seems to get at the BTME as opposed to ones brought on through alcoholic poisoning. Is it me or do we all go from one stand to the next convinced that we have just received free information on

miracle cures to all turf problems only then to be told at the next stand that the product we have just ordered is in fact an elaborate confidence trick and that they themselves have the product that will solve problems till eternity. To cap it all we then go to one of the excellent seminars and are told by some scientist from one of the American Universities that neither product has ever or will ever work. Very frustrating isn't it, but I suppose that is what is meant by the "Learning Experience".

Despite all this Harrogate was, as ever, brilliant. The show was the most popular yet and the speakers superb. Congratulations to Gordon on taking over as Chairman, you've certainly deserved it. I am sure it's going to be quite a year not only for yourself but for Marion as well. Also congratulations to Paula for her organisation of the South West coach, she did us proud and it was as usual the bargain of the year.

Not a lot coming up at the moment on the golfing front but if anyone would like to do a short education course in the future just give me a ring. Since having the pleasure of organising these courses we seem to have added an abrasive wheel course to the usual spraying, first aid and chainsaw and can now offer

manual handling and tractor proficiency to the list. So if anyone wants to have a go at the above or for that matter anything else you can think of (greenkeeper related that is) then give me a ring on 01380 828380 and I will try and sort it out for you.

Marc Haring



South East

The Section will have had its first Section meeting in early February so we will be able to notify everyone concerned of our plans regarding events for this year, hopefully during March when dates have been confirmed.

I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of our Section to give our sincere thanks to Janet Adamson, Membership Services Officer, Ken Richardson, Education and Training Manager, John Pemberton, Administration Manager, and Past Chairman, Pat Murphy, for their tremendous support and encouragement we received during our formation last year. They really are a credit to the Association.

On behalf of the Section I would like to congratulate our Chairman, Graham Wylie, on his new appointment of Course Manager at Malone GC. It is one of Ireland's finest parkland courses having hosted Irish amateur championships as well as professional tournaments including the Irish Senior Masters. We all wish him the very best.

I would like to welcome James Logan and Lyndon Idull, of Ledenmore GC, and Wolsey White, of Portadown GC, as new members to the Section. I have also just heard that William Smith of Bangor GC has just become the proud father of a baby son. Best wishes go out to William and his wife on their happy event.

Finally if anyone has any news from within the Section please do not hesitate to contact me, including greenkeepers in Fermanagh and Tyrone.

If there are any greenkeepers interested in joining the Section feel free to ring me at home on 01762 323348 any evening.

Ken Henderson



See you all next month!

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Attention to weed control and vegetation management is the key to successful tree establishment. Woodland Consultant Eamonn Wall considers some of the management options available.

Turn over a new

leaf

Cost effective tree establishment depends on many factors such as site conditions and the size of the area being planted. Over the past ten years the UK has experienced a large increase in the amount of tree planting on lowland ex-agricultural land, much of it now golf courses. These planting schemes once composed just the odd field corner and small shelter belts and have grown with the aid of the Farm Woodland Schemes to the point where a 100 acre scheme or larger is not now unusual.

Many of the smaller schemes utilised tree shelters with an after care herbicide regime consisting of propyzamide (eg Kerb granules or liquid) or glyphosate (eg Roundup). This is still a fairly robust and common practice as long as other pests have been taken into account such as hares and deer, either by correct choice of shelter size, fencing or shooting control. If the tubes haven't been pushed a wee bit into the ground, voles can gain access and kill trees by bark removal and shoot nibbling. However, usually tubes will provide adequate protection on the whole from voles. Care must be taken to remove tubes if they start to restrict tree girth and to screef all vegetation from the base of the tube before planting to prevent grass smothering the trees within the tubes.

Spiral guards with or without the support of bamboo canes reduce the cost of protection by about half. Again it is advisable to remove canes when their support is no longer required and check that the spirals are unravelling as the tree grows.

As planting schemes become larger, the use of individual tree protection is no longer cost effective and bare planting takes over. The skilled use of chemical herbicides becomes a greater issue and this also applies to the establishment of hedges now being greatly encouraged by such grant schemes as the Countryside Premium Scheme in Scotland.

When establishing trees into grass sward, spot weeding with a graminicide (ie grass herbicide) can turn the

field of grass into a field of nasty weeds. The removal of grass provides broad leaved weed seeds the opportunity to germinate, such as thistle, nettle, willowherb, docks and ragwort. Even though these generally don't provide trees with too much competition, they are disliked by farmers and their neighbours. However on arable sites, these weeds can overcome and smother trees and also provide stiff competition to the establishment of hedges.

Ground cultivation such as mounding provides the tree with an elevated planting position and a weed free space for the first growing season. This elevation can sometimes deter voles. When voles are a problem the use of tree shelters or simple 300mm vole guards are required. On larger ex-arable sites and Christmas tree plantations, a bare ground regime is usually successful in deterring voles as they have no cover from predation. Often one hears that it is preferable to sow a slow growing grass mix into the field prior to planting to exclude the influx of farm weeds. This is good idea but doesn't deal with the vole problem and would necessitate the use of vole guards. The annoying thing about voles is that some sites are much worse affected than others.

The effective use of chemical herbicides to (1) promote tree growth, (2) provide a bare ground space around each tree or throughout the entire planting scheme to deter voles, and (3) to keep noxious weeds under control, is best attained by the use of a small number of herbicides whose application is fully understood.

Types of herbicides

Herbicides can be divided into three broad groups:

1. Residual herbicides. These products act via the soil where they are taken up through the roots of weeds. It is important that these herbicides are applied to damp soil and that rain allows application to move them into the top 2-3cm of the soil. If these products are applied to dry soil and little or no rainfall follows

application, weed control will be poor. Residual herbicides must be applied to a firm fine tilth; if large clods are present at the time of herbicide application, these will weather and crumble, exposing untreated soil allowing prolific weed growth.

2. Foliar acting herbicides. These are absorbed through the point of contact on the leaf and stem and are independent of the condition of the soil. The timing of application will be determined by the growth stage of the target weed. Foliar acting herbicides give best results when they are applied to actively growing weeds.

3. Residual and foliar acting herbicides. These are herbicides which have a combination of the two modes of action listed here.

Pre and post planting use

Herbicides can be used effectively before or after planting. There may be opportunities to control perennial weeds in the previous crop, eg use of selective herbicides in pasture or the use of glyphosate pre-harvest in cereals and other arable crops. Such treatments can reduce the subsequent vigour of weeds such as creeping thistle or couch grass. Foliar acting herbicides can be used to clean up undisturbed stubbles before planting.

Where long-term weed control is required after planting the use of residual herbicides is the best option. It is vital to match the weed control spectrum of the herbicide to that of the weed species on the site. Many residual herbicides generally only control weeds pre-emergence and must therefore be applied to bare earth. If bare soil is to be maintained all year round, treatment may be repeated in the autumn and the spring. However, in practice, weeds resistant to the residual herbicides may require the use of foliar acting herbicides (sometimes applied as a tank mixture). As an alternative to a year-round bare-soil system, some vegetation cover may be allowed to develop in the autumn and winter when it is not competitive and then be killed by a spring applied foliar-acting herbicide. A spring applied

residual treatment will then delay reinvasion.

Chemical update

Some useful chemicals are as follows:

Glyphosate (foliar contact herbicide) which was originally only available as Roundup is now available in about 40 formulations. However with prices reducing, it now seems wise to use Roundup Biactive for best results and safety to those using it. The Forestry Commission has carried out trials overspraying conifers and broadleaves with glyphosate and can now recommend the practice. Such practice is common among Christmas tree growers as part of their regime for a year-round bare-soil treatment. During the growing season when spot weeding near birch extra care must be taken as it is very susceptible to glyphosate. As glyphosate is a contact herbicide, it should be noted that grasses treated in early April will invade and re-establish themselves by May/June if it is a warm moist spring. If this occurs, a second application will be required.

Propyzamide (such as Kerb granules or flo liquid) is a soil acting herbicide which slowly volatilises in cold soil and is taken up by germinating weeds and through the roots of existing weeds especially grasses. A limited range of herbaceous broad leaved weeds are also susceptible form germination to the true leaf stages particularly grasses. Such weeds which emerge late in the season, however, will only be partially controlled.

Propyzamide slowly breaks down in the soil, lasting for three-six months. All commonly planted forest trees are tolerant. Application via granules (using pepper spots) and liquids (using knapsack sprayer, spot gun, etc) can take place any time between 1 October to 31 January north of a line from Aberystwyth to London and to 31 December south of this line. In practice it appears that few extra weeks make little odds, presumably depending on sea-