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Where this is needed, a trencher will not only make the job faster it will also cause minimal damage to the surface. There are small units with their own engine or attachments for skidsters and tractors. The width of trench and depth they will excavate will depend on the machine.

Natural habitats

In recent years the importance of preserving natural habitats has been recognised, especially on areas such as golf courses where the levels of disturbance are minimal. These sites require a management programme that involves a degree of maintenance. If left unattended the stronger and more dominant plant life takes over at the expense of fragile rarer species.

Some of the equipment already mentioned is suitable for use in these areas but, depending on what is growing there, other machines may be required. Where wild flowers are

being encouraged, it will be necessary to mow at specific times and remove all the cut material, so a mower with good collection facilities is required.

Wheeled brushcutters are suitable for keeping pathways open and the hand-held models can be used for removing unwanted saplings and brambles.

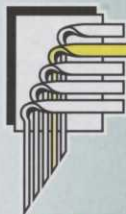
Where heavier growth such as bracken, heather or larger sapling has to be dealt with there are now ride-on brushcutters suitable for these areas.

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Over time these areas become ingrained with dirt, lichens, moss and algae. A pressure washer will quickly remove these deposits bringing the surface back to its original colour. In addition, these units are ideal for washing down machinery.

There are plenty of sweepers and vacuum collectors available for removing litter, leaves and other debris from these sites. These include hand-held, pedestrian operated, tractor-mounted and self-propelled models. Often these type of units are an attachment for another piece of equipment, so when deciding what to buy it is worth asking if one is available that will fit on your existing piece of machinery.

All the equipment mentioned in this feature is available to hire, so unless there is sufficient work to justify the capital outlay, this would be the ideal way getting that extra assistance in making your job easier.



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Nothing Kuts Like A Diamond





Neil Thomas reflects on Golden and Silver Key membership of the Education and Development Fund and looks to the future ...

The Key to Success

BIGGA's Education and Development Fund in 2000 is entering its ninth year. Launched in January 1992, Golden and Silver Key members, both companies and individuals, have contributed significantly to a Fund that, throughout the nineties, has greatly enhanced the education and training of greenkeepers and which is reflected in their ever growing professionalism. Greenkeeping has moved on in the intervening years and today's Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper enjoys a status and profile as the custodian of a golf club's most valuable asset, its golf course, which was rarely apparent a decade ago. Perceptions have changed within golf clubs. In 1992 it was quite normal for a golf club to view the clubhouse rather than the course as its primary asset. Now it is the course which is perceived as the number one priority. High maintenance standards are demanded, innovative practices and attention to detail. Professionalism is the order of the day and up front are many Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers whose education, training and experience renders them well suited to meet the expectations of the current generation of golf club members. Whilst much credit for this can be given to our national training system, it is in no small way due also to the utilisation of resources within the Education and Development Fund which, over the years, has

enabled BIGGA to provide wide-ranging training courses across the United Kingdom, as well as a myriad of publications, field guides, videos and training aids together with the refunding of fees for educational courses.

Since the opening of BIGGA HOUSE in October 1998, a purpose built, state-of-the-art training room has been available for training courses and it also houses the BIGGA library. Funding of £44,000 was provided by Golden and Silver Key company members through the auspices of the Education and Development Fund towards the costs of this training facility which was appropriately named 'The Key Room'. The room is available for hire both within and without the industry and is free of charge to Golden and Silver Key company members.

Much has been achieved then through the Fund and it is only right to pay tribute to companies who have supported the Fund through the years, appreciating the benefits which would accrue in enabling them to deal with trained, professional greenkeepers in the course of their business operations. Equally, BIGGA is mindful of its individual members who have contributed to the Fund in the belief that they are investing in their own futures. The achievements since 1992 would suggest that theirs was a wise investment.

Over the years some companies

have come and gone from the list of contributors to the Fund, maybe through mergers or changed priorities. We thank them for their past support. In 1999 there were 26 contributing companies with a total membership tally of 107 years as set out in the accompanying league table. In some instances this table reflects the prior merger of companies. A maximum of eight years is possible in support of the Fund.

These companies alone have contributed since 1992 some £277,000 to the Education and Development Fund. This is an outstanding figure which BIGGA members need to recognise and appreciate as fundamental to the education and training now available to them. The successful utilisation of the Fund can be measured by the increasing numbers of trained, qualified and technically competent greenkeepers now emerging as true professionals, who, year on year, are producing better quality and well maintained golf courses. Not everything in the world of greenkeeping is perfect, far from it. However, standards have improved considerably since 1992. BIGGA's efforts through the Education and Development Fund and in partnership with the industry are justly recognised as significant in this regard.

So to 2000, and we are pleased already to welcome Gem Professional as a new Golden Key member. We believe that the time has come for BIGGA to review the Golden and Silver Key scheme in conjunction with its industry partners.

Consultations have already started and during the year we will look to update and strengthen the scheme with a view to consolidating the Education and Development Fund during the first decade of the new century. The Fund has a major role to play in BIGGA's overall strategy for the education and training of its members and our partnership with the industry in this regard is vital. Whilst we are looking at a success story, we now need to have a vision for the future as the game of golf continues on its path of global expansion and greenkeepers are challenged to reach new peaks in their professional lives.

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Scottish Region
Peter Boyd
Tel/Fax 0141 616 3440

Annual Conference, Business Learning Centre, Lauder College, Dunfermline, Tuesday March 7

The Scottish Region is delighted once again to present their Annual Conference at Lauder College, Dunfermline.

As in previous years the speakers cover a wide range of greenkeeping topics with talks from Course Managers to a representative from the Scottish Golf Union - all with a positive viewpoint on the game of golf.

From Kilmacolm GC we have the Course Manager Ronnie Bunting, who will give a talk on "The Environment and Kilmacolm Golf Club"; The General Manager of the Scottish National Golf Centre, Neil Simpson, will present a paper on "The Scottish National Golf Centre and the Development of Golf in Scotland"; Brian Robinson, Senior Agronomist, Grass Science Services, will talk on "Grasses into the 21st Century"; from Rangers Football Club we have the Head Groundsman, David Roxburgh, who will talk on "Football Groundsmanship"; Alistair Connell, from Souters Sportsturf, will speak on "Drainage and Irrigation" - very relevant considering the weather conditions we are suffering at present; Head of Elmwood Golf Developments, John Quinn, will deliver his talk on "Beyond Head Greenkeeper." Finally, Simon Barnaby, of Scotts (UK) Professional on "Integrated Diseases. Turf Grass Management".

This year's Conference has a variety of topics which should appeal to everyone in the greenkeeping industry. The Conference has always been well supported throughout the years and hopefully this will continue. We look forward to seeing everyone at Dunfermline.

Application forms will be available in the early part of the January.

East

The East Section held its AGM at Kingsknowe Golf Club. We had a small turnout for the day which consisted of a lecture by Angus Fertilisers, a nod, and a nice buffet lunch which was provided by our sponsors for the day, Greentech Ltd.

The section committee would like to thank Greentech Ltd for sponsoring the day. The AGM took place in the afternoon, there is not a lot to mention about it other than that the committee remains the same as last year. The Chairman gave a full report on all his activities for the year, the Secretary did the same and also gave us a very healthy balance sheet yet again this year, so well done to everyone on the committee for a job well done. Information regarding next season's tournaments will be announced shortly.

On a sad note, Jimmy Paton, former Head Greenkeeper at Turnhouse GC, died recently after a long illness. I had the opportunity to work with Jimmy for nine years at Turnhouse a couple of years after coming into greenkeeping and he was a real character. He was also a Past Chairman of this Section and somebody who will be sadly missed by everyone who knew him. The Section's thoughts are with his family at this time.

The 1999 Patrons' Awards winners are Graham Wood, Dunbar, and Alistair Holmes, Seahouses. Well done to them both and we will see you at BTME 2000 in Harrogate in January. If you are going on the Scottish trip to BTME get your application forms back to Peter Boyd as soon as possible to avoid disappointment and I will see you there.

Chris Yeaman

West

Welcome to the first Section news of this century. I would just like to wish every member, a happy and prosperous new year and the best wishes for a good season ahead. A few items to mention this month, starting off with the AGM.

There were approximately 40

members in attendance. Newly elected members to the Committee were: Brian Bolland, General Committee; Cecil George, Education; Brian Hillen continues as Chairman for a second term, with Gavin Jarvis acting as Vice Chairman.

The nominations for Patrons' Award this year go to Joe Bell, Kilmacolm GC, and John Young, Dougalston GC.

The Scottish National Tournament will be played for at Newmachar GC, June 2000. Awaiting confirmation of date.

The last draw of the 100 club, £50.00, was won by Stuart Tay ... sorry Alistair Taylor.

Following the AGM the evening carried straight on into the games session, five games played in total.

The victors of the evening were I. Smith and S. Mckittrick, with a total of 15, winning by three clear points. Well played guys.

Thanks go to Nairn Brown for their gift voucher drawn at the raffle.

Thanks also to Claremont Bowling Club for use of their facilities and also to the bar staff in attendance that evening.

As usual, many thanks to John Scott for expanding my waistline!, with his culinary delights ... the pies were good, well done John.

Finally, I was at Victoria's for the Annual Dinner on Friday, November 19. A good evening was had by the majority of people who attended.

Personally I found the evening quite enjoyable and good value for money. The selection of food was good and was of a reasonable standard. The cabaret, apart from the delay at the start, was very entertaining, although it could have lasted a while longer.

If any members would care to express their views about the current format for the annual dinner, please feel free to speak to the Committee.

Once again, please send me any information you have regarding anything! Well just anything.

0141-776-1532 M:07050-173080
Gavin Jarvis.

North

Two new members to start off the year 2000. We welcome Ewan Cameron, from Elgin GC, and Shaun Macdonald, from Royal Dornoch GC. Welcome back to Carole Ross, who returns to work at Royal Dornoch after taking time off to have a baby.

Members might like to know who does what in your Section, so here is a list of your Committee and their duties. Chairman, Magazine and Education, Iain Macleod, Tain 01862 894402. Vice Chairman and Treasurer Wilson Morrison, Alford 01224 826289. Secretary Dougal Duguid, Westhill 01224 740329. Outings and Trophies Hugh McLatchie, Peterhead 01779 470173 and Iain Gunn, Strathpeffer 01997 420155. 200 Club Stewart McBain, Aberdeen 01224 733347. Raffles John Geddes, Ellon 01358 723034 and Kevin Peace, Inverurie 01467 625125 and last but not least Handicaps Stevie Sullivan, Craigie Hill 01738 632003.

Of course all are on hand at events to ensure smooth running and will help members if at all possible. The Section is in good hands and all we ask is that members support the outings and 200 Club so that we also remain financially solvent. Hughie McLatchie has some 50th Anniversary badges left from the Downfield outing and they are available at £4.00 each to anyone interested, a nice memento for members of the Section.

This month we have BTME at Harrogate and I look forward to seeing Section members there. John Geddes, Ellon, and Gordon Moir, St Andrews, are our two Patrons' Award winners and will be present as a result. Remember, support your Section and Association and next year it could be you. We must thank all the members of the Trade in Scotland who support the Patrons' Scheme and make this award possible. See you in the Majestic on the first night!

Happy New Year to all at H.Q. See you at BTME.

Iain Macleod

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Ayrshire

A guid New Year and Millennium to all our members and friends. I hope everyone achieves their targets in 2000 and it provides good weather for successful greenkeeping after the recent difficult couple of years we have encountered.

The Section AGM was held recently in the Parkstone Hotel, Prestwick. A small turnout was in attendance, surprise, surprise. Peter Boyd, our Regional Administrator, was also in attendance to see all the business conducted very smoothly. With no changes the following office bearers were elected to serve in 2000. Chairman, Duncan Gray, The Pines, Vice Chairman, Iain Barr, Largs Kelburn, Secretary Derek Wilson, Irvine Bogside, Committee, Jim Paton, West Kilbride, George Brown, William McMeikan, Jimmy Johnstone, All Turnberry, Brian Finlayson, Barassie, Harry Diamond, retired and Trade, Robert Bruce, Ritefeed.

There are still vacancies on committee and come next year it will be essential to introduce new blood to the committee. If any member is remotely interested in joining the committee, please come forward. The Section outings were discussed for 2000 and arrangements are being made. We hope to confirm these venues at the next committee meeting which is on Monday February 7 at 3pm. Usual venue of the Parkstone Hotel.

News has reached me of a special public services award won by Troon Municipal Golf Courses of South Ayrshire Council. This award is a tribute to the fine work carried out by Head Greenkeeper, Billy Fletcher and his greenstaff, on the Fullerton, Oakley and Lochgreen courses. Congratulations from the Ayrshire Section on this award. Congratulations also to Bobby Bennett who takes up the new position of West of Scotland Sales Representative for Thorntrees. Bobby will take over from Mike Dooner who will move North and East to expand his empire.

All roads lead to Harrogate this month and I look forward to joining Peter Boyd with the Scottish Region party on this trip to meet friends old and new and take in the seminars and exhibition.

Any news call me on 01505 683278,

Iain Barr

Central

Well, I hope everyone has recovered from celebrating the start of a new millennium and are ready for the season ahead. At the time of writing, December 3, some of our courses are covered in frost and snow which is a change from last winter when it seemed to rain all the time. Still the course will get a rest and we will have to work harder in the next couple of months to catch up with the winter work before opening day comes around again.

We are up and running already on the new members front with Alun Wotherspoon, Glenn Campbell, Andrew Clark, David Key, Malcolm Low and David MacGregor all from Murrayshall Golf Club, along with Charles Webb from Callander Golf Club joining the Section. As before, welcome to the Section lads and we look forward to meeting you in the near future.

Congratulations go to Albert Arnott, from Dunninger Golf Course, on his recent achievements at Elmwood College. Albert is a strong supporter of the Section, which is much appreciated by the committee as he has to take a day from his holiday allocation to attend any events. Well done Albert.

The first draw for 'Club 2000' will take place this month and the name of the winner of the £50 first prize will be in next months magazine along with the names of all those who failed to sell or return their two tickets. Thanks to everyone, members and patrons who made the effort to support this venture, it is very much appreciated by your committee and the funds raised will be put to good use.

I know it is only January, but the first golf tournament of the season will be taking place at St Andrews on Tuesday, April 11, the scores from which, along with the Autumn Tournament scores will determine the Section qualifiers for the BIGGA National Championship, so if you wish to compete in this event, remember to get your entry in early.

Entry forms for the Inter-Club Tournament will be with you shortly and I would ask you to get your entries in as soon as possible in order that we can get the tournament underway before the Spring Tournament and completed before the Autumn Tournament. PLEASE.

I am looking for venues for next year's two tournaments, so if you fancy hosting one on your course, or there is a particular course you fancy playing on, let me know and I will make the necessary approaches. Hopefully there will be more to report next month.

John Crawford



Northern Region
Douglas Bell
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North East

December 2 at South Moor Golf Club was again the venue for the AGM and the presentation of the years trophies. Well, what a turn out. Seeing was believing, I just could not get over it. The day went well, but very cold and windy, however, that did not stop Mal Lathan, of Hexham, knocking a round of 72 gross less 1 = 72 net, bottle of Bacardi and to runners-up, Mark Pagan and Alan Ainscough, both of the host club, a bottle of vodka each.

Just a memo to members that a repeat of this year's talk will be in operation in February, March 2000. All members will be notified by post. Thanks to Terry Charlton of Turf Care.

Jimmy Richardson

Sheffield

Happy New Year and Millennium to you all.

On 29 November we held our Christmas competition at Rotherham Golf Club. It was a perfect late autumn day for golf, especially after the winds we had the day prior to the event. Our thanks go to Rotherham Golf Club once again for giving us the courtesy of the course.

Rotherham was again in excellent condition and our thanks go to Dave Chappell and his staff for an excellent job done. Well done Dave!. Thanks also to Brian Booth from Rigby Taylors who was the main sponsor of the competition. Thanks to all other trade members who provided prizes. Finally, thanks go to the catering staff who provided an excellent meal which was enjoyed by everyone.

There was some excellent golf played in very good golfing conditions.

The overall winner was Simon Brown, from Worksop Golf Club, who played some very good golf, even chipping in a couple of times for a par! Well done Simon, not bad for a new member.

Results: 1. Simon Brown; 2. Stuart Pygett; 3. John Dorach; 4. Alan Sanson. Well done to all the prize winners.

Finally congratulations go to Rother Valley Golf Club, and Head Greenkeeper Alan Halfyear, who were recently in Today's Golfer magazine, voted third best club in Great Britain in the category of £20 and under green fee, and for best overall value.

Rother Valley has been open for three and a half years, June 1996, and Alan has been Head Greenkeeper for the past two years and is gradually improving the course and still has a further three years of his initial programme to carry on the progression.

Hopefully things will go from strength to strength. Alan and good luck in the future. Well done for getting Rother Valley on the golfing map. Keep up the good work.

John Lax

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North Wales

I hope you have all recovered from the effects of the millennium bug! The government didn't tell me it affected the eyesight and balance. It also made me talk rubbish - nothing new there then!

Back to the real world. The lecture at the college on pesticides and CDA sprayers was attended by over 40 delegates, those sort of numbers makes it worthwhile. Excellent. Thanks go to Paul Clifton, of Rhone Poulenc, and Danny Jones, of ALS, also Graham Wright and the Welsh College for the use of their facilities.

A moderation meeting for NVQ assessors was also held at the college on the same day, Howard McCauley gave us all the updates and how the GTC are pushing forward after the TSC report. If any assessors need help or guidance, please get in touch with me.

The Christmas tournament and AGM was held at Royal St Davids, Harlech. A total of 65 competitors took part in what was a fantastic day. Our thanks go to all the officials and members for allowing us the privilege of playing their world class course. To Roger and his team for the presentation of undoubtedly one of really true tests of golf anywhere and to the Secretary, David Markill, for

making us so welcome and presenting the prizes.

The winner was, for the second year running, Shaun Pritchard of Chirk, with 31pts who not only received the Toro Cup, he also is the first recipient of the Bill Lawson Shield which is awarded to the best score from an under 21 - he is in fact 18, while Roy Hamer, of SDA Training, donated a golf shirt.

I think it's great that our Section's only life member, a man with a life time of greenkeeping under his belt and SDA training are helping to encourage the younger greenkeeper. Thanks go to you.

In second place was another youngster, Marc Brite, the current DGU champion, with 29pts and third, also 29pts and definitely not a youngster, Dave Parry. The winner of the Rigby Taylor Cup for best aggregate over the year went to Allen Lewis. The best score of the day went to Trade member Terry Adamson with 34pts and the best guest with 33pts was David Austin. Longest drive, member Jeremy Hughes, guest Francis Cripps. Nearest the pin, member, Allen Lewis, guest Dave Austin.

Thanks go to Aitkens, ALS, Acorn, SDA Training, Sportsworld and Walker Engineering for their support.

Back to education. Remember

the lecture on Soil & Water Management on Wednesday 12th January, 2.30 - 4.30 at the college. If you didn't go last time, make sure you do this time. It's an eye opener. Honest!

Coach to BTME 19 January, Slaters Abergele 7am, Welsh College (Northop) 7.30 am. Sainsburys Petrol Station Cheshire Oaks 8am. free to members, £10 to guests.

The college seminar is taking place on 23 February. I will inform you of speakers next month.

At our AGM your committee has been re-elected, the faces are the same, however, Jeremy Hughes will be taking over the duties of Match Secretary from Trevor Johnston during the year. Our Education Officer, Phil Davies, would appreciate any ideas from you as regards lectures for the coming year. If there is any subject you would like, let us know and we'll try our best.

One final note, my ex boss, the man who put up with me from 1973 - 1979, Len Sproxtton has just had a hip replacement operation. Knowing Len as I do, he'll be chomping at the bit to get back to work. Take it easy, OK. Watching the Reds will take your mind off it (bet that can be painful at times).

Dave Goodridge

Cleveland

This is my first column and I would like to thank Kevin (Scoop) Heslop for writing the column for the last couple of years. He has made very little news into a very amusing and informative feature. Highlights from Kevin's past columns can be found at www.scoop.co.uk!

Richmond Golf Club have a new space cadet on their staff. Oliver Shepard started straight from school in August. He's a mad Star Wars fan and has seen the new film ten times. His first Cleveland Section Golf Tournament was at Wynyard in October. He came second, winning a CD player. So Richmond also have a new bandit.

The Autumn tournament at the Wynyard Club seems a long time ago now but here are the results. 1. Martin Woods, Wearside GC; 2. Oliver Shepard, Richmond GC; 3. Steven Jaques, Wynyard. Longest Drive, Martin (Tiger) Woods, Wearside GC. Nearest the Pin, Barry Walker, Wearside GC. The booby prize was highly contested but was eventually won by Craig of Bedale GC.

Thanks to Gary Munro, Course Manager at Wynyard, for allowing us courtesy of the course.

The event was a big success. Good

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weather, good food and good company helped in this success, but good organisation from the section Golf Committee was the key. They are already on to the spring tournament. Watch this space for more details. Hopefully the spring event will be well supported by greenkeepers. If you have never been to a tournament or haven't been for a while, an extra effort to attend would be appreciated. You will be made welcome and remember, a bad days golf is better than a good days work.

On the 11 November at Darlington Golf Club, Andy Veltman of Par 4 Irrigation gave a talk on new and future developments in irrigation technology. It was an interesting and informative talk. Thanks to Andy for coming to see us.

If you have any news contact me on 07808 196558.

Steven Jaques

North West

On 25 November we had the AGM, Christmas dinner and played for the President's Cup at Wilmslow GC. The weather this time was dry and sunny and the golf was good. The course which is a great test of golf was in superb condition, thanks to Steve Oultram and his dedicated staff who had been out mowing

greens by hand in the early hours of darkness. This has become a popular tournament over the last few years with more members turning up each year. This year we had 53 members playing and of course 53 members attending the AGM which is a great improvement over recent years. The winner of the "President's Cup" was Mike Davie, the N.W. Chairman for the next two years. The longest drive was won by Paul Pearse, and the nearest the pin was won by Mike Bottomley. The two beautiful cut glass bowls were donated by Rufford Soil Technology, so at last Mike Bottomley got to take home a prize for his wife. All competitors had to bring a bottle for the prize table, so that everybody left with a prize.

The golf was followed by the AGM and that did not take long as all members seemed happy with the accounts etc. Steve Oultram, who had been Chairman for the last two years, handed over the Chairmanship to Mike Davie who will hold office for the next two years. The committee chose to serve for a further year and Mike Bottomley was voted onto the committee.

The AGM was followed by the Christmas dinner which was beautifully prepared by Gwen Chason who

had just returned from a holiday in Florida and the bar kept everybody well watered. I would like to thank Steve and his staff for getting up so early and preparing the course, the caterers for keeping us well fed and Wilmslow GC for allowing us courtesy of the course.

That seems to be it for now, so I wish you all a happy new year and will see you on the Northern Region stand at Harrogate.

Bert Cross



East Midlands

This year's AGM and Golf Tournament was hosted by Radcliffe-on-Trent GC on November 3. The day was blessed with pleasant Autumn sunshine, with the format for the day being a three ball Texas Scramble. All seven teams were able to produce very respectable scores in the conditions and once again, this proved to be a very popular format for all those who participated. The eventual team winners were Gary Thurman, Gavin Robson and Brian

Booth. Gross 69 Nett 64. Second Ian Needham, Pete Larter and Darren Moody.

I would like to thank Radcliffe-on-Trent GC for extending courtesy of their excellent golf course and also to our very generous sponsors Vitax Ltd for providing a grand prize table. Also I would like to thank Richard O'Hara, Head Greenkeeper and his staff for a very well presented course, not forgetting the Steward & Stewardess for a fantastic evening meal.

Moving onto the serious business of the AGM, there is very grave concern about the lack of numbers that are now attending Section events and the committee will be sending a questionnaire to all members to find out what comments and opinions they have on this matter. I would like to thank our retiring Chairman, Dave Leatherland, who during the last two years has done a lot of sterling work for our Section, and I would also like to welcome our new Chairman, Gavin Robson.

The rest of the committee is as follows, Vice-Chairman, Adie Porter; Secretary, Antony Bindley; Treasurer, Richard Barker; Committee Members, Dave Leatherland, Ian Needham, Tim Allard and Jeff Dickinson. Regional Board



Members, Richard Barker & Antony Bindley. May I once again remind all members that if they wish to attend any Section event, your form and remittance must be returned to the Secretary before the closing date.

If any members are interested in a four day chainsaw course at Ramsdale Park GC next March, please contact Course Manager, Steve Levers on 0115 965 5600 for further details.

Three dates for your diary. May 10 Spring Tournament, Chilwell Manor GC. 20 September, Autumn Tournament, Market Harborough GC. and 1 November AGM Tournament, Park Hill GC. Also the section hope to organise the following activities in the near future. A visit to Pride Park, home of Derby County FC. A trip to Toro Lely UK and a Go-Kart evening.

Antony Bindley

Mid Anglia

The Midland Regional Seminar was held in our Section once again at Mentmore Golf Club towards the end of November. It was good to see an improvement in numbers attending this year, with 60 members on the day.

A number of interesting topics were covered by the speakers, notably bio-organics, computer aided greenkeeping and rules of golf relating to greenkeeping. The Course Manager of the Buckinghamshire, Phil Chiverton, also gave an excellent presentation on the maintenance of a high profile golf course. Neil Thomas, the Executive Director of BIGGA and Gordon Child, Chairman were welcome guests for the day.

Peter Larter, our Regional Administrator, organised the day superbly. It is disappointing that the Region will be losing Peter shortly, but we wish him well in his new appointment and thank him for his hard work over the last three years. Our thanks go once again to Mentmore, for providing us with excellent facilities during the day.

Our last golf event of the millennium was our ever popular Texas Scramble event, which this year took place at the exceptional Bocket Hall in early December. As ever, the event was oversubscribed. Twenty-six teams competed over an immaculately presented golf course. Course Manager, John Wells, and Head Greenkeeper, John Moorhouse, along with all the staff at Bocket Hall must be thanked for their efforts in making an enjoyable day for all concerned. The hospitality shown by Bocket Hall was superb and our thanks for allowing us courtesy of the course.

The top three teams are as follows: 1. M. Whittle, R. Howson, B. Healy, S. Coulson, Woburn, 59.5; 2. S. Aiston, N. Pestle, G. Shield, A. Males, Mid Herts, 59.9; 3. J. Moorhouse, L. Cant, J. Hatton, D.

Wright, Bocket Hall, 60. Nearest the pin: J. Woodward. Longest Drive: C. Yeomans.

A presentation was made to Chris Brook, who won "Golfer of the Year" as well as Frank Scullion and Duncan Seiling, who were victors in the Lodgway Four Ball final.

Chris Rook, from the Lodgway Company, was in attendance and pledged his support for the competition next year. Avoncrop Amenity products were the main sponsors for the day, along with a number of other companies who once again supported the Section. Many thanks to you all.

Finally, I'm sure we are all looking forward to Harrogate once again, whether attending workshops, the National Conference, seminar programmes or the trade show. Hope to see you there!

Paul Lockett

Midland

On December 8 at Little Aston Golf Club the Christmas Tournament and AGM was held. The results were as follows:

Winning team were: Nigel Couchman, Alan Cutler, Eric Thomas, John Walker.

Nearest the pin was David Brazier with a fantastic hole-in-one. Longest Drive was won by Tony Cheese. Many thanks to Steve Hanlow from Burrows who was our main sponsors. Congratulations on behalf of the Section to Little Aston Golf Club and especially to Andrew Borraston for presenting the course in excellent condition.

The new committee elected at this AGM will be as follows: President, Alan Kit. Chairman, Peter Richmond; Secretary, Jonathan Wood; Members of Committee - Rhys Thomas, Eddie Stant, Peter Holtham, Andrew Smith.

Finally I would like to wish Tony Cheese all the best in his new role as Rigby Taylor Representative for the Midlands Section.

Jonathan Wood

Berks, Bucks & Oxon

The Turkey Trot was held at the Lambourne Club on November 25 and was a superb day.

The sun was shining like it was July and incredibly the majority played in short sleeves.

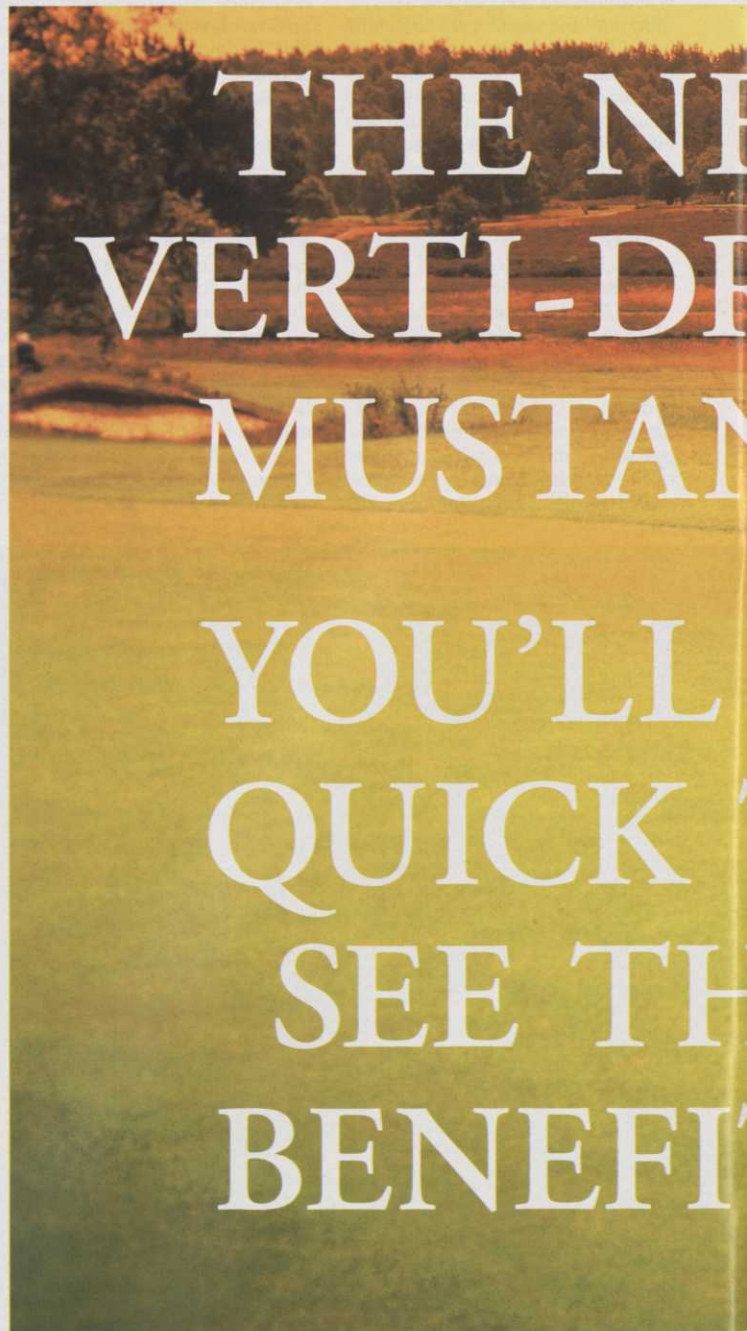
Congratulations to everyone connected with the Lambourne, especially to Tony, Geoff and the team. The course was in excellent condition. Thanks also go to the catering staff who provided a lovely meal, the members who gave us courtesy of the course for the day and also to the Avoncrop Team who sponsored the event.

The committee would also like to thank F.T.T. Richard Fontmeuller has attended the majority of this seasons events and the company have donated raffle prizes throughout the season.

The results of the day were as follows: 3. 81 points, D. Goodchild, C. Wright & C. Small; 2. 83 points, V. Riches, M. Ely and C. Evans; 1. 86 points, J. Brooks, D. Scillachi & L. Bishop.

L. Bishop also won nearest the pin and, thanks to his new driver, J. Bowness won the longest drive. To think we used to call him Nancy Lopez. Well done to all the winners,

the scoring was excellent. The AGM followed the golf day and was pretty painless as far as AGM's go, although there were a couple of important points brought up. Some members are still not receiving invites to the events and some are not receiving magazines. It was explained that the mailing lists come direct from HQ and enquiries on these points will be made before



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the next meeting. Some of the members are also having difficulty finding event locations, including myself, so it was suggested that it may be an idea to put a contact number at the given Club on the competition application form. The trade have been a big help financially this year and this is showing in the end of year closing accounts and we as a Section value your contin-

ued support. Last, but not least, congratulations to Ray Clarke on two counts.

Firstly on his marriage the day after the Turkey Trot and secondly, for keeping it a secret from the whole Section. We wish you and your new wife all the best Ray.

Happy New Year to you all.

Ross Wilson.



South East
Derek Farrington
Tel: 01903 260956

South East Region

Due to the generosity of sponsors, the Region was able to keep fees extremely low for this event held at

Writtle College, Chelmsford in November. This coupled with the impressive array of speakers arranged for the day accounted for such good support with around 120 members and associate members attending.

The theme of the Seminar was "Greenkeeping - The next Millennium" and covered aspects of greenkeeping, past, present and



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future. Chaired by Regional Chairman, Raymond Day, the Seminar opened up with Dr Tim Lodge speaking on Top Dressings and Rootzone Materials. Tim was followed by Mark Hunt, on Fertiliser Requirements and the morning closed with an interesting talk from Giles Wardle on Golf Course Irrigation.

Dr Alan Gange kicked off the afternoon session with Biostimulation that was itself stimulating and the last lecture was from Brian Robinson on Grass Seed Technology. There then followed a lively question and answer session.

The Region is most grateful to Martin Forrester, Carl Crocher and the Essex Committee for their work which contributed to this event and, of course, to our sponsors:- Gem Professional, Avoncrop Amenity, Bailey's of Norfolk, Driving Force Leisure, Payne and Sons, Rigby Taylor, P. Tuckwell Ltd, UAP Ltd and Ernest Doe and Sons.

Derek Farrington

Essex

I would like to start by wishing everyone a Happy New Year and hope you all enjoyed the hectic festive season, indulged in the ritual of Christmas food and drink, sounds like a TV programme? If the weather has been kind to us our stress levels of 'fuz' attack to our greens over the holiday period will be minimal.

Our AGM and Christmas Golf Competition took place mid December at Rochford Hundred, kindly sponsored by Ernest Doe & Sons. Any changes and results will appear in February's Around the Green.

Two reports outstanding from November are the South East Seminar and Go Karting. The Seminar held at Writtle was a great success with 120+ people attending the day and as a Section I would like to thank the guest speakers, sponsors and Writtle College for their hard work and contributions on the day.

A little reminder from Ian Willett to make a note in your '2000' diary that this year's Seminar takes place on November 14 at Thorpeness Golf Club and hopefully a coach will be laid on, but more details later on in the year.

The Annual Go-Karting event was once again held at the Indikart Track, Colchester on November 26. Nine teams entered the three hour endurance race with the 1998 winners, Stapleford Abbots managing only fourth place this time around.

The new champions are Chelmsford who completed 490 laps in a close competition with

only two laps separating them and third place.

Race classification after three hours. 1. Chelmsford, 490 laps. 2. Colchester, 489 laps. 3. Abridge B, 488 laps. 4. Stapleford Abbots, 478 laps. 5. Abridge A, 478 laps. 6. South Upminster, 478 laps. 7. Rolawn, 477 laps. 8. Swans, 474 laps. 9. Does, 470 laps. For the success of the Go-Karting to continue, we will be looking for a sponsor or two.

Anyone interested please telephone Martin Forrester on 01245 603131.

The next two Section events will be the return of evening lectures at Writtle College, starting at 7.30 pm. One in February and the other in March. Our man John Sinclair, as ever, will endeavour to find quality guest speakers, so please attend to make all his efforts worthwhile.

Our First new member to the Section in this Millennium year is Peter Montague, Head Greenkeeper at Belhus Park Golf Course. Welcome Peter, hope to see you in the near future at one of this year's events.

Well that's all from me now. See you at BTME.

Dave Wells.

London

Since the retirement of my boss, Fred Plumeridge, in the spring, life has been very hectic and I have not had time to chase enough news for a monthly column. However, there has been some news to report and this is a brief summary of the Section in 1999.

Mervyn Downing, of Aldenham, had a good day at The Gentleman's Dinner at Walton Heath - he won the putting competition, came 4th overall and won the Greenkeepers and Guest prize with Freddie Hague with scores of 38 and 36, winning a Waterford Crystal clock.

John Kerr, of Enfield, successfully completed NVQ Level 4 at Oaklands College. He started in September 1998 and completed it at Easter 1999. Dave Watts and Spencer Wood, also of Enfield, completed Level 3.

The BIGGA qualifier was held by kind permission of Hadley Wood Golf Club and prepared by Craig Handyside, the Course Manager, his deputy, Rob Washbrook and the rest of the team. The course was in super condition and we were very lucky with the weather, having a lovely bright day. Thirty attended and best nett score was by Larry Eden, best gross score was by Ian Semple and the best score of the Guests was by Mark Day.

The London to Brighton Bike Ride on 20 June was graced by a team from Highgate Golf Club.

Team training consisted of 600 miles of pedalling around the area, using golf clubs as boundary markers around the routes taken. Team Captain, Derek Mason, plus Russell Ling, Richard Andrews, James Seisun, Tony Lashmar and Ben Mason were the greenkeeping contingent and they were joined by three other members of staff and three Highgate Golf Club members. Departing from the club car park at 5.30 am the lads pedalled to the start at Clapham Common and set off for Brighton at 6.30 am. The journey was completed in under four hours and everyone finished! All proceeds were donated to The British Heart Foundation. Any remedies for saddle sores, please forward to Highgate Golf Club, for the attention of Mr Russell Ling.

The Summer Tournament was hosted by Dyrham Park and prepared by Course Manager, Don Wilson. The course was in excellent condition and as ever, the facilities and food were of the highest standard. 1. Mark Talbot, 2. Ian Semple and 3. Paul Clark. Nearest the Pin won by Ian Semple and longest drive by Alex McIndoe. The Trade Prize was won by S. Headley and the King Pin Prize sponsored by Mark Pyrah.

In September Assistant Greenkeeper William Long, of Aldenham Golf Club, was sadly killed in a road accident. Travelling home after a night's rabbit shooting, William's vehicle left the road and he was killed instantly. Condolences to his family and all who knew him.

The Turkey Trot was held at Old Fold Manor, on November 11. The turn out was a disappointing 25. Those who did not make it missed a great day. The course was in fantastic nick, Johnny Beck provided excellent refreshments at The Halfway House and the catering was superb. Special thanks to Sean Downes, Old Fold's Catering Manager, and all the dining room staff for making a very entertaining evening. The winner was J. Palmer, Stockley Park, with 45 points and 2. was J. Haynes, of Northwood, with 36 points. The winner won a Christmas turkey supplied by Rigby Taylor, who were represented on the day by Dennis Smith and Mark Stidwill.

The AGM was also held on the same day and there are some changes to the Committee. After six years hard work, Don Wilson has decided to step down from the committee and on behalf of the Section I would like to thank him for all of his time and effort. Elected to the Committee were: Robert Phillips, of Sandy Lodge, and Kenny Mackay, of Hanbury

Manor, with Tony Dunstan, Ian Semple and Craig Handyside continuing to stand.

These men need your support. Do not take the golf days for granted, they take a lot of organising! A higher level of attendance is required by you, the members, to make the golf days a success and new venues are required. Has your club hosted a BIGGA event?

Peter Hopkinson

Surrey

Congratulations to Brian Turner for winning the Toro Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping. Having played in the McMillan Tankard Competition in August at Sunningdale with 40 + greenkeepers, we all saw then why this award is truly deserved.

Golf World magazine has recently published the 1000 best courses in Britain and Ireland and this time it's congratulations to Andrew Hall and his greenkeepers for being part of the team at St George's Hill that made it to 17th place, the highest for a Surrey Club. Other Surrey placings were 19th Sunningdale Old course, 26th Hankley Common, 41st Walton Heath and 88th Sunningdale New. Thanks to Andrew who overcame his natural modesty to point this out to me.

Surrey Section played its last golf competition of 1999 on Tuesday, November 30 at West Hill. Thanks to Terry Huntley for arranging the day which a massive turn out of 80 golfers thoroughly enjoyed. Thank you to West Hill for courtesy of the course and the catering staff for an excellent meal. The results were 1. Bob Rogers 41 points; 2. John Davidson 37 points; 3. Steve Holmes 37 points. 4. Mark Harvey, 36 points; 5. Gordon Bell 36 points; 6. John Mathis 36 points; 7. Gareth Roberts 36 points. Thank you to Patissons for sponsoring the prizes.

The winners of the Huxley Bowl this year were Tom Smith and Richard Penley-Martin, from Merrist Wood Golf Club, and they were presented with the trophy by David Luxford and John Welling from Sisis, the new owners of Huxleys. This competition will in future be sponsored by Sisis.

The Surrey Section AGM took place at West Hill and minutes were recorded for circulation next year. Tom Smith was voted on to the Committee and all current members will continue to stand.

Brian Willmott

Kent

There is plenty of news to catch up on as there has not been anything printed for a little while - my apologies. Let's start with the golf day held at Tandridge in October.