



Scott MacCallum met up with Dave Sammels, Courses Superintendent at The De Vere Belfry to talk about the forthcoming Ryder Cup match

C Up for the Cup

You could make a strong case for arguing that the biggest sporting event of the year - and I haven't forgotten the Lions Tour, or the Ashes Series, or Wimbledon or the Super Bowl - will take place in Wishaw, near Sutton Coldfield, in the Midlands.

That is the home of The De Vere Belfry where the recently remodelled Brabazon Course will be the stage on which 24 of the world's finest golfers will compete for the Ryder Cup.

It may last only three days and have no prize money at stake but in each of the matches since the early 80s, it has never failed to produce drama which wouldn't be out of place at the Globe Theatre in nearby Stratford-upon-Avon.

The teams are now so evenly matched that every one of the 24 players, who tees it up during the two series of foursomes and fourballs and final day singles, knows that every single shot may prove to be of vital importance when it comes to tallying up the points at the end of the match.

With that in mind the condition of the course takes on almost mind numbing importance. What if a perfect 350 yard Tiger Woods drive finishes up in a divot... or a hole-bound Colin Montgomerie putt on the 18th green to win a match misses its target after being nudged off line by an old pitch mark? The fact that golf is an outdoor game and the rub

of the green is a major element wouldn't come into it. Perfection is what is expected and perfection is what is demanded.

You would think such a weighty responsibility would have the man in charge of getting the course close to that perfection waking up in a cold sweat at the very thought. Not so.

"I don't get sleepless nights thinking about the Ryder Cup and everything that goes along with it," revealed De Vere Belfry Courses Superintendent Dave Sammels.

"If I were to worry about it I'm sure I wouldn't sleep but I'm confident that we have everything covered and have contingency plans to cover all eventualities."

And if anyone is in a position to ensure every i is dotted and tee is cut it is Dave, who lives in a flat above his office and rarely leaves the gates of the De Vere Belfry during his working week.

He does admit, though, that the one thing that could go wrong is the one thing he can't control and that, as every greenkeeper knows, is the weather.

The problems that can cause were demonstrated dramatically at the Benson & Hedges International Open held earlier in the season, a tournament which acted as a dress rehearsal for the Ryder Cup.

Those watching the BBC coverage

on the final day will recall the heavy skies under which the last few matches completed their games. Minutes after the final putt was sunk the thunderstorm struck with such venom that lightning hit the television commentary box at the back of the 18th stand and pictures were lost.

"We were standing under the stand at the time and there was a huge bang and a bright light at the same time as the lightning hit," recalled Dave, who works closely with Brabazon Head Greenkeeper, Bevan Tattersall.

"It also struck a huge Scots pine on the main drive 12 feet from the top and completely shattered the tree, blowing pieces 50 yards in all directions. I'd never seen weather like it before."

Having said that, should the Weather Gods once again decide to turn their attention to the Midlands at the end of September the team will be as ready as they can possibly be.

"We have got plans in place for everything from getting water off the course to what happens if fog delays the start as happened in an earlier Ryder Cup match here," explained Dave, who is in charge of The De Vere Belfry's three courses, the Brabazon, the Derby and the recently-built PGA.

That planning has been underway virtually since the day Dave took over with meeting galore with the Ryder



Cup committee and European Ryder Cup Captain Sam Torrance himself.

"I've already had several meetings with Sam on how he would like the course set up for the match," revealed Dave.

"When I was in Boston for the last Ryder Cup I was interviewed by a television reporter who asked if I would be the 13th man on the team. I asked him if the Brookline Superintendent was the American's 13th man and although he didn't answer the inference was clear," revealed Dave.

"The set-up on the Brabazon will be done fairly... but in our favour," he smiled.

"Sam knows quite a bit about greenkeeping and he knows what he wants to give his guys the best chance of winning the Cup. For example, he knows how far the Americans can hit the ball and he knows how far we hit it. He knows the speed of the greens the Americans are used to and the speed of greens our guys are familiar with."

In short Sam will make sure the Europeans have everything in their

favour as much as possible with the longer hitting Americans perhaps finding the fairways narrowing the further down they go or the greens not quite as fast as they would expect on their own Tour - all of it no more than the Europeans expect when they are the visiting team.

The players will find the rough four inches long with the semi an inch and a half while the likelihood is that the greens will be stimping at between 10.5 and 12.

During the week of the match the greenkeeping team will comprise of the 13 permanent members of the Brabazon team, supplemented by the 15 from the other two courses - nine on the PGA and six on the Derby - six students, who do strimming and fly mowing in the summer, and six additional greenkeepers from Slaley Hall and Carden Park, two other De Vere resorts.

"Normally there is quite a bit of banter between our three teams - each team has a name, the Brabazon staff are called Brabwrackers, there is the PGA Scum and the Derby Dingles - but we will all be pulling together to make sure everything is right during the week," said Dave, hinting at the wicked humour that flies around the maintenance facility.

They will not be short of equipment to make sure the standards are met with John Deere, the official supplier

to the De Vere Belfry adding to the regular armoury of machinery leading up to and during the week itself.

"We will be hand mowing all greens and tees and will have 18 machines, plus a couple of spares, to do the job. We will also be using greens triples to cut the fairways," said Dave.

The team will begin at first light and cut the entire course. On the first two days, when there is a foursomes series followed by a fourball series, the greens, tees and fairways will be cut again midway through the day and all divots replaced. This will be repeated at the close of play.

"We can cut the entire course in around an hour with an individual green taking about 20 minutes."

While it is easy to appreciate the nerves the players will be feeling during the week it would also be easy to underestimate the pressure the greens staff will be under. With high in the sky camera positions and huge grandstands any less than perfect mowing lines will be blatantly obvious but Dave knows his team are up to the job.

"We have some of the best green-





keepers anywhere in Britain here - one of them is known as "Laser" Luke because his lines are so straight - and everyone is up to the job. They are all buzzing about the Ryder Cup," said Dave, who expects many of them to move on once they have the Ryder Cup on their CVs.

"I've told them I don't mind as long as they go away from here to be Head Greenkeepers - if they move sideways I'll kick them out the door. All are good enough to be at least First Assistants. We train them all on side here and I'm proud of our record for training."

While the course is being brought to a peak for the week of the Ryder Cup the general standard is something The De Vere Belfry strives to maintain day-in-day-out

"We operate a five day shift rather than a five day week so we've always got cover on the golf courses. It saves the courses going up and down and we can keep the standard high all the time," said Dave, who likes nothing more than getting out on to the golf course and doing whatever job needs done.

"People see the course on television and expect it to be the same when they arrive for a game. It is our job to make sure it lives up to expectations 365 days a year."

When Dave is not working he heads back to his home in Edinburgh, where his wife and brother run the family business, Edinburgh Landscapes.

It was through Edinburgh Landscapes that Dave first became involved with the soon-to-be four time Ryder Cup venue.

The company had worked closely with Dave Thomas, the original co-designer of the Brabazon with Peter Alliss, on a number of other golf courses including Westerwood near Cumbernauld and the Roxburghe in the Scottish Borders, and he asked Dave to give him a price for growing-in the new PGA course.

"At the end of that contract I was asked if I wanted a job here, initially as Course Manager of the Derby and PGA courses. I was asked as we walked around the course and the further we walked the more I fancied the idea. I can't tell you why I wanted to come here. It was a big challenge and

I suppose I was getting older as well and didn't want to lose what was a great opportunity for me," explained Dave, who took on the additional responsibility for the Brabazon six months later.

A visitor to this year's Ryder Cup, not having visited The De Vere Belfry since the last match was played there in '93 might be forgiven for thinking he'd shown up at the wrong venue such has been the number of changes to the course since then.

"It would be easier to say what we haven't changed about the course rather than go through what we have," smiled Dave, hinting at the extensive nature of the face lift the Brabazon had been on the receiving end of, costing almost £2.5 million.

With that he runs through a list which covers virtually every hole, sometimes fundamental amendments, other times mere tweaks. Indeed included among the changes are two completely new holes in the 3rd and 4th. The 3rd has moved from being a straight par-4 to being a dog-legged par-5 with a pond in front while the 4th used to be a par-5 but

is now a par-4, again with a pond guarding the green.

"The work has been done for the betterment of the golf course as a whole and not just for the Ryder Cup and now it is a mature course which is going from strength to strength," said Dave, whose personal input included the addition of 14 magnificent brick bridges around the course.

Pleasingly, both Dave and Bevan have been invited to all of the official engagements during the week, including the Opening and Closing ceremonies but Dave isn't fazed by the prospect of rubbing shoulders with the likes of Tiger and Monty.

"I think being a Scotsman you think 'A man's a man for a' that'. They might play golf better than me but I can do other things better than them so as far as I'm concerned we're equals. I do admire them though."

Such is the excellence of the work that has been done at The De Vere Belfry recently, coupled with that during the week of the match itself Dave Sammels and his team will have the admiration of all the players and the rest of the greenkeeping fraternity.



Soil analysis

Unravelling the mystery

Daniel Binns leads
you through the
confusing path
of soil analysis ...



Periodic soil analysis is important in order to review trends of pH and nutrient levels in the soil. There are currently a variety of testing alternatives available to the greenkeeper but few of these are independent. Furthermore the information they provide is often confusing and difficult to understand. The purpose of this article is to help interpret the minefield of information which can often accompany the results of your chemical analysis once it returns from the laboratory.

As far as we know there are 13 essential elements in the soil necessary for plant growth. These are

required in addition to three nutrients, which are not derived from the soil but from the atmosphere and water. These are carbon (C), oxygen (O) and hydrogen (H) and form the largest percentage of the plant, on a dry weight basis. The plant carbohydrates are composed of these elements. The only reason we usually don't think of these as being essential nutrients is because we do not have to supply them through fertilisation and they are not derived from the soil.

The 13 soil-derived nutrients are divided up into macronutrients and micronutrients. Macronutrients are

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Soil analysis

Unravelling the mystery

required in largest quantity and include nitrogen (N), potassium (K), phosphorus (P), calcium (Ca), magnesium (Mg) and sulphur (S). Micronutrients are present in very small quantities within the plant. These trace elements (micronutrients) are chlorine (Cl), iron (Fe), manganese (Mn), boron (B), zinc (Zn), copper (Cu) and molybdenum

attached to the negatively charged surfaces of clay and organic matter in the soil. When cations become attached to these cation exchange sites on clay and organic matter, they become temporarily retained by the soil. These nutrients can then be utilised at a later time by the plant.

There are also negatively charged plant nutrients. These include

we need to make repeated light applications of fertilisers under sandy soil conditions. The nutrients are not retained by sandy soil because it has a very low CEC. However, in heavier or more organic soils we find that the need for nutrients from fertiliser is lower because they typically retain a lot of these cationic nutrients. These nutrients remain in the soil and are available to the plant for a longer period of time.

Although CEC is of interest, it is not the most important factor in determining nutrient holding capacity of soil. It is the amount of organic matter present which determines the quantity of nitrogen and other nutrients held within the soil. For example the organic matter under a golf green has far more of an impact on the turf's fertility rather than CEC. It is the organic matter which holds the nitrogen reserves.

The majority of greenkeepers undertake routine soil analyses to monitor nutrient levels on their greens. Regular (perhaps yearly) testing has the greatest value especially on sandy rootzones where changes can occur rapidly. Ideally, samples should be submitted from each green on the course. Representative sampling may be appropriate if all the greens are constructed and managed the same way, also helping to keep analysis costs to a minimum. Identifying the best, worst and one average green.

Collect the samples at the same time each year, to the same depth and use the same laboratory - preferably an independent one. This process eliminates a few variables that can compromise the value of the data. Samples should be obtained at least three weeks after any fertiliser application.

Nutrients can be extracted in the laboratory in a number of ways but in sports turf we are now seeing standardisation of these extraction methods. It is the interpretation of the results that often causes confusion.

Commonly soil chemical analysis can be interpreted in two ways. The first is the more proven, traditional method of predicting the quantity of plant available nutrients in the soil. Basing a sound fertiliser programme on pH values and level of available nutrients will provide an accurate assessment of nutrient requirements in the rootzone.

The second method of interpreta-

tion uses the base cation saturation ratio.

Recommendations are made by ranking the calculated percent cation saturation with an ideal base saturation taken from research in agriculture. The percentage base saturations are those likely to be found in a soil of neutral pH. They are not necessarily the optimum ratios for plant growth and are simply derived from the natural element concentrations in soil.

As a consequence recommendations from this method assume a pH of 7.0 is desirable because nutrient availability is increased in neutral soils. Unfortunately this fails to recognise that most greenkeepers in the UK aim to have mildly acidic soils where favourable grass species will dominate, disease incidence can be reduced and weed growth inhibited. Having mildly acidic soil may have a detrimental effect on the availability of some nutrients, but it may be this very fact that gives the poverty grasses a competitive edge in a *Poa annua* dominated world.

As you can imagine this method can often highlight a number of anomalies in the soil, for example copper or boron deficiency. In reality, it is extremely rare to find deficiencies of any of the micronutrients on turf in the UK.

The only way to be sure that any soil test predicts nutrient availability for turf is to carry out the basic research. Interpretation of analysis results must be based on trials with turf grasses growing under varying nutrient regimes such that deficiency symptoms are actually induced.

There are now a plethora of green-keeping products available on the market and we are constantly bombarded with information on the latest development that will make all the difference to our turf. In terms of nutrition, try not to be blinded by science; instead keep resistant, disease tolerant turf are the physical maintenance of the rootzone and sensible nitrogen fertiliser applications.

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(Mo). All of these nutrients need to be present in adequate quantities for concentrations are measured in parts per million of leaf material.

Soil pH is, of course, the single most important chemical factor that influences turf management. It is a measure of the acidity or alkalinity of the soil, determined by the concentration of hydrogen ions in a soil solution. Acidic soils (pH below 7.0) have a high concentration of hydrogen ions while alkaline soils (pH above 7.0) have a low concentration of hydrogen ions.

In more acidic soils, certain nutrients become less available, namely nitrogen, phosphorus, calcium, potassium and magnesium. Potentially toxic elements such as aluminium and manganese are made more available through acidification. Many species of grass will not thrive under these conditions and as a consequence soil pH has a significant effect on the species that dominate the turf.

Most of the nutrients that we supply to the turf through fertilisers are positively charged ions. We call these cations. These cations can become

nitrate-nitrogen, phosphates, sulphates, chloride and molybdenum. Due to the negative charge, they cannot be held by soil clay organic matter and these nutrients tend to move more quickly through the soil along with soil water. Thus they are prone to leaching losses, and once they leach beyond the rootzone of the turfgrass roots, they are no longer available to the plant.

One essential plant nutrient is neutral, meaning it has neither a negative or positive charge. This nutrient is boron in the form of boric acid, but the plant requires it nonetheless, although grasses need much lower amounts than broad leaved plants.

The ability of a soil to retain cation nutrients is important. As the content of clay and organic matter in the soil goes up, so does the soil's cation exchange capacity. Cation Exchange Capacity (CEC) is an indicator of the nutrient holding capability of the soil and can be a useful indicator in its own right. The term refers to the ability of negatively charged soil particles to attract the positively charged ions.

Sands have lower CEC than soils containing clay. It is for this reason



Scottish Region
Peter Boyd
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North

At the time of writing the forms for the Section Autumn Outing were going out to all members, and by now the event at Keith GC will have probably been played. Results will be in the October magazine as will be the report from the Norrie Whytock Trophy at Auchterarder GC. Next month is the National Championships at Royal Birkdale and Southport & Ainsdale GC, I will be playing and hope to see a few members if you can make the trip.

I have a few details of the Seminar we are running in November. It will be held at McDonald GC Ellon on Friday November 9 in the early evening, confirmed speakers are Gordon Moir, Links Manager at St Andrews, Ronnie Bunting, Course Manager at Kilmacollm GC and Peter Boyd, BIGGA Regional Administrator for Scotland. One more speaker will make up the programme and we hope to be able to provide refreshments for delegates. All in the Aberdeen area are urged to support this Seminar and bring Greens Convenors etc. along as it should be very interesting and educational. A full programme and application form will be sent out in due course. Thanks must go to John Geddes and Hugh MacLachrie for setting this up.

Next month I hope to reveal the two lucky members of the Section who have won this year's Patrons' Awards of a trip to BTME 2002. Watch this space.

The Open Championship was great again this year and the Support Team did a great job as usual, I hope George Mitchell, Newmacher enjoyed his first experience of being a part of it.

This year has been one I will be glad to see the back of workwise as it took us so long to get going with the weather and such, so let's hope for a good Autumn to get all our end of season work done.

Iain Macleod

Central

This month we extend a warm Section welcome to Bruce Summerton, Bruce is Head Greenkeeper at King James VI Golf Club on Moncrieffe Island in Perth and as there are quite a few Section events taking place over the next few months, he will get a chance to meet some of his fellow members.

Here's a list of dates to add to the one you already have for the Autumn tournament on September 27 at Murrayshall, the Grand five-a-side Football Tournament will be held at Forthbank Stadium, Stirling on Sunday October 14, the AGM will be held at Celtic Park, Glasgow on Tuesday October 23. Incidentally no one came up with the answer to the puzzle set in the July magazine regarding the venue. Was the clue too cryptic or did no one really want to win a Club 2000 ticket? Tell the truth now! Surely with a venue like Celtic

Park for the AGM we will get a better turnout than the usual 10 to 12 stalwarts who always give us their support, just think about it some of you really staunch football supporters will get the chance to see the European Cup at close quarters for the first time! The first really social golf tournament or Turkey Trot, as Gordon Mitchell keeps calling it, will be held on Saturday, December 1 at Piperdam Golf Club in Angus. As before if you are going to attend any of these events would you please return the reply form at the bottom of the letter by the date given, it makes it a whole lot easier for catering etc. Thanks. Two men on the move are Stuart Smith, from Lundin Links, and Fraser Wright, from Lundin Ladies. Both have moved to the new course at Kingask, St. Andrews. Best wishes and every success for the future from everyone in the Section.

Stuart, I gave your bottle of vodka (from the Spring Tournament) to the "Heroes From Fife" and they have promised to replace it if they can get "Deek" to cash in some of the dollars he never spent in Florida!

A man who has been in the wars recently is one of our Patron's representative on our committee, Kevin Brunton. Kevin sustained a broken ankle while attempting to unload something from the rear of a trailer and ended up in hospital. Best wishes from everyone for a speedy recovery, Kevin! I thought because he was laid up with a broken ankle that I would get peace from his usual sales patter for a while, but no, he came hobbling in on crutches the other day "Just to see if there is anything you're needing." You can't keep a good man down!

John Crawford.

Phone a friend?
www.bigga.org.uk/contact.html

Ayrshire

Just a brief note this month to remind everyone that our Autumn Outing will be played at Brighthouse Bay Golf Club on Thursday, September 27. The format will along the usual lines. Our Secretary, Derek Wilson, will have a letter with you soon to confirm all the final arrangements and I hope to see a better than average turnout especially from our southern members with the venue in their locality. See you at Brighthouse. Any news call me on 01505 683278

Iain Barr



Northern Region
Douglas Bell
Tel: 0151 431 0433

Northern

Only a few days ago at the time of writing this report, it was with shock and great sadness that I was informed of Roy Spencer passing away. Roy will be sorely missed by the Northern Section members. He was a Past Chairman of the Section and main-

tained his links and supporting the Section right upto his passing away. As well as being well loved by the Section members Roy left behind a wife, Sylvia, eight kids and 15 grandchildren. A full tribute will appear in next month's magazine.

A couple of weeks ago the annual Roses match was played at Sandmoor GC. A match report and hopefully a happy one to follow next month.

September is busy month on the old calendar with Invitation Day next week and the Cumbria Cup at Penrith GC on the 19th.

Important changes to your diary concerning the AGM At a recent committee meeting it was decided to move the AGM to coincide with the financial year and also make the winter golf more of a fun day. Notice is hereby given that the Northern Section AGM will be on Thursday, October 18 at 11.30 am at Woodsome Hall GC.

The Autumn Tournament will follow with bacon sarni and coffee following the AGM from 12.30 with a tee off at 1.30 followed by the evening meal. Closing date for entries is October 10 with payment in full (cheques made payable to BIGGA Northern Section) and sent to my address please.

Tickets are now being sold for the Section's annual dinner dance on Saturday, November 10, at Bradford GC, Carvery + Disco 7 pm till late. This is an open event so bring along family and friends for a fun night out. The price for this is only £17. To book for this event contact our social man Dave Thackray on 01274 640739 or 07976 876264 or 16 Westwood Avenue, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD2 1NJ

Congratulations to John Studdard on making it through to the final of the Toro Student of the Year. John, from Leeds Golf Centre (Wike Ridge), will be going to the final in October after coming through the regional heats.

Matt Booth, from Howley Hall GC, along with his wife Alison are expecting a baby in January to add to their clan including Jack (8) and Matthew (14).

The Section website is now up and running, to log on just send me an e-mail and I'll give you it, as it is not yet registered at the time of writing this.

We welcome new members in Robert Herrero, Heworth GC; Paul Brown, West Bradford GC; Michael Dealtry, Skidby Lakes GC; Paul Gledhill, Halifax Bradley Hall GC.

That's all for now, if anybody as any then let me know.

My address is 67 Asquith Avenue, Morley, Leeds, LS27 9QS; Tel: 0113 2383188; Mobile 07790 678572, E-mail: andy_smith21@hotmail.com

Andy Smith

Section Event?
www.bigga.org.uk/events.html

North West

I have not long returned from a very enjoyable week at The Open at Royal Lytham and feel I must congratulate

Paul Smith and his staff on the fine condition of the course. Most of my time was taken up either in the porta-cabin, or at the 1st tee, so not seeing a lot of the course I decided to go divoting a couple of nights with a few of the Support team. This is the best time to see the course, as you are able to meander across the greens, which are in great condition, and see probably the best constructed bunkers in the country. Certainly none of the players took the course to pieces, even though the strong winds which were forecast never arrived. Last time The Open was played at Royal Lytham, Jim Macdonald was Head Greenkeeper, and although many years younger, Paul Smith has kept up the tradition of producing a first class course for The Open.

In the July issue of Greenkeeper International all members of BIGGA were given the opportunity to submit a personal profile to win a trip to Florida and the GCSAA Conference and show. The profile had to be submitted to me by July 31, and although the North West Section has 600 members I only received three applications. The trip is sponsored by Bernhard & Company, and two BIGGA members will be selected from each Region. This was a rare opportunity to go to America completely free of charge, and to find out what greenkeeping is like on the other side of the pond. Three out of 600 is not good enough, and I am sure that many of you would love to go but did not apply, well remember these opportunities are open to all members of BIGGA, so if the chance comes again, lets have a better response.

The next golf meeting will be the "Stewards" match at Hazel Grove Golf Club on Monday, September 10, and we need a team of 16 to retain the trophy. This will be followed by the "Whitelaw Bowl" to be played at Penrith Golf Club on Wednesday 19th September. If you are available for any of the above matches, or have any news or job vacancies please ring me on, 07761 583387 or 01517 145412.

Bert Cross

Latest news?
www.bigga.org.uk/news.html

North Wales

Apologies once again for lack of notes but I have moved house and for the last month have had no fixed abode, all my belongings are spread around North Wales and my life is a bit upside down at the moment.

Apologies go to Darren Anderson, who has been trying to track me down without much success. In saying that though he is the only one who has tried (C'mon committee, I need dates etc. of things to relay)

It is the first week of August and I should be moving into my new house this week when normal service should be resumed. I can still be contacted on my mobile on 07787 586084.

Dave Goodridge



Midland Region
Peter Larter
Tel: 01480 437507

The first of this year's Midland Region Golf Management Trophy events was held at Verulam Golf Club on Tuesday, August 7 when 16 teams comprising a greenkeeper, Club Secretary, Club Captain and Chairman of Green competed for a tonne of fertiliser for the winning golf club and other team prizes.

Many readers may not be aware that Samuel Ryder, a local seed merchant, Mayor of St. Albans, Club Captain and the instigator of the Ryder Cup, was a member of Verulam Golf Club at the time he had the idea of playing a match against the USA for which he donated the trophy, which is in everyone's minds in the lead up to this year's Match at the Belfry.

The event was sponsored by Scotts who in their fourth year of supporting these competitions, represented by Mike Jupp who was attending his first BIGGA golf event. Despite a dreadful weather forecast, most of the teams completed their round in the dry and the course was superbly presented by Head Greenkeeper Geoff Smith and his staff.

The winning club was Hartsbourne Golf & Country Club with a superb team score of 133, 11 under par, with the Mid Herts Golf Club a close second on 134 and Mill Hill Golf Club third on 136, on a count-back from the host club. An excellent day was had by all and our thanks go to all at Verulam Golf Club for their hospitality and cooperation in staging the competition.

Peter Larter

Phone a friend?

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Mid Anglia

The Section's autumn golf tournament is to be held at Letchworth Golf Club on October 11th. The format will be 18 holes of golf in the morning, followed by a meal and the Annual General Meeting in the afternoon.

Those wishing to attend the AGM only, should arrive for 4.00pm. Entries to the golf tournament should be sent to Richard, using the usual form.

Paul Lockett

Section Event?

www.bigga.org.uk/events.html

East Midlands

Not a great deal of news to report on this month. At the E.T. Breakwells golf day on July 25 several members were invited courtesy of Len Breakwell for a business day's game of golf. The winner was BIGGA Vice Chairman himself Richard Barker. Unfortunately the East Midlands team could only finish in third place. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Kevin Kinzer, of E.T. Breakwells, for helping to organise

this event. Please remember that this year's Autumn tournament is to be held on September 14 at Lingdale Golf Club. If you wish to confirm your Tee-Off time then please give me a ring.

Antony Bindley

East of England

Woodhall Spa was the setting for the Burdens Golf Trophy.

The members played over the new Bracken Course, which was in superb condition. It was well defined and manicured and an excellent test of golf. Sam Rhodes and Peter Wisbey were thanked for their efforts and asked to thank all of the EGU Headquarters for courtesy on the day.

Prize Winners:- 1. Richard Owen, Boston West, 39 pts; 2. Jodie Forster, Thorpe Wood, 38 pts; 3. David Hornsey, Woodhall Spa, 37 pts; 4. Brett Cornelious, Seacroft, 35 pts. Nearest The Pin, Richard Owen. Trade prizes went to Duncan Beall and Gary Cooper, the prizes were presented by Peter Warner and Chris Lee, of Burdens, and many thanks to them and all other sponsors on the day.

The Peterborough Garden Machinery Trophy was played at Spalding Golf Club. A good turn out of members played an excellent conditioned course prepared by head greenkeeper Tony Ward and his staff.

The winner on the day was new Head Greenkeeper to the section Ian Batty of Sleaford GC. Welcome and well done on winning the PGM Trophy.

1. Ian Batty, 35pts, Sleaford GC
2. Les Howkins, 34 pts, Cleethorpes GC;
3. Graeme Macdonald, 33 pts, Newark GC.

Trade Prize. Gary Cooper 34 pts
Longest Drive. David Hornsey, Woodhall Spa
Nearest the Pin. Simon Hedley.

Thanks to all sponsors on the day, especially Keith from PGM.

Others were:- Tower Chemicals, Greenpride, Aitkens, Boughton Loam, Alpha Amenity, Lincsgreen, Rigby Taylors, Mansfield Sands, Burdens and Midlube.

After the prize giving Gary Cooper, of Tower Chemicals, presented David Hornsey and Les Howkins with their BIGGA Blazers. Tower are now the Order of Merit sponsors which first prize is a new Blazer. Thanks to Gary and Tower Chemicals.

G Macdonald

BBO

Humblest of apologies for missing the last few months. It must have been all that sunshine going to my head - just not used to hot sunny weather especially down here at Costa Del Caversham. Anyway straight onto business and it seems that Colin Hutt is trying to do his own impression of Tiger Woods by winning all the Section competitions. Not satisfied with success at Caversham Heath back in April, he then went on to win at Maidenhead with 43 pts, closely followed by Carl Small with 41 pts and myself in the prizes (at last) with 37 pts. Many thanks to Maidenhead Golf Club for their hospitality and also to David Winterton and his team for producing

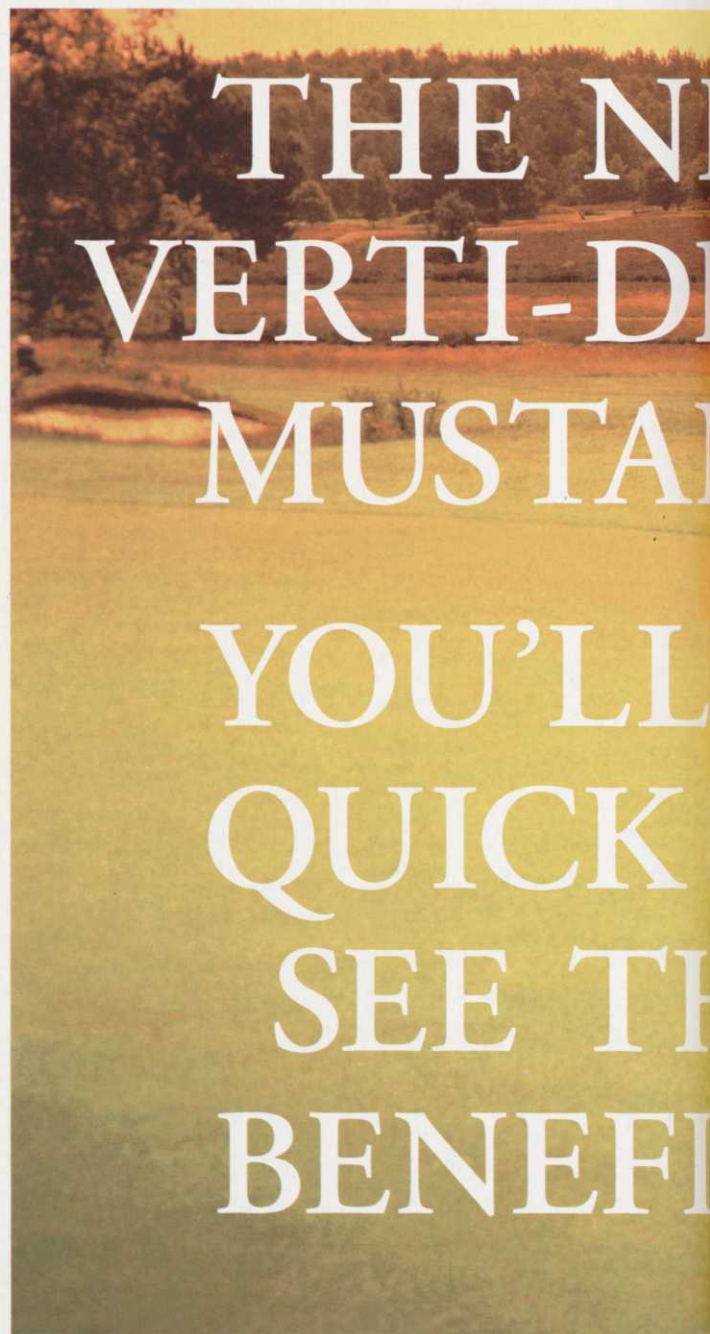
such an impressive course.

We would also like to thank Bernie Wall, of Gem, for sponsoring the competition. You may also be aware that the Rigby Taylor Pairs is in full swing at the moment, (no pun intended, honest) and at the time of writing is at the semi-final stages, which consists of the following pairings: Alastair Higgs & Simon Robinson, Calcot Park, v David Goodchild & Charlie Wright, Ellesbrough. Ian Robins & Carl Small (Defending Champions), Ellesbrough) v Tony Steven & Andy Reason, Castle Royle. Chris Lomas & Mark Hancock, The Berkshire. v Gary Armstrong &

Mark Steels, Cherwill Edge. Lee Bishop & Brian Payne, Burnham Beeches. v Lindsay Anderson & Simon Austin, Badgemore Park. Good Luck to those involved as soon as I can find out the results I'll try and get them in a report.

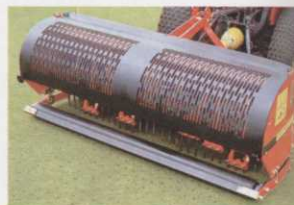
Well that's about it for this month. You would have thought that after three months or is it four? that I might have something interesting to write about but unless you want to hear about shooting myself in the thumb or the episode with Steph and the tattoos... no I'll stop there. Hopefully more next month.

Jon Scoones Tel: 01189 723334



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**South West
and South Wales**
Paula Humphries

Tel: 01288 352194

North Cornwall GC who will report back from his trip to Canada where he was a part of BIGGA's Bernhard's Scholarship earlier this year. The afternoon will hear from Dave Sammels, Courses Superintendent at De Vere Belfry, who will speak on preparing from the Ryder Cup. Question time will involve the listed speakers plus Neil Thomas, Executive Director of BIGGA and Past Chairman of the Association, Gordon Child.

Attendance at the seminar counts for three CPD points and cost is £17.50 for members and £25 for non-

members inclusive of lunch.

Further information is available from Paula Humphries Tel: 01288 352194

South Wales

The summer Competition was recently held at the Llanwern Golf Club in Newport. We were made to feel extremely welcome at the club by everyone and we had an excellent day all round. It was a first time visit to Llanwern for many of us and we found the golf course to be in excellent condition thanks to A Panks and his team. It's great when someone

goes out of their way to provide that little bit of something more, something different, something special!! Course Manager Adrian Panks certainly did this for us at Llanwern, I don't know how many noticed but for us the greenkeepers, Adrian cut the greens in backlap mode, yes really! Thanks!

Thanks Ade for this special treatment, you know what they say about a craftsman blaming his tools?

Results of the day: Winner of the Birdie Cup with a best gross was Peter Holmstrom from Newport GC; Winner of the Jacobsen Cup with a



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best nett was J B Jones from Dinas Powis GC; 2.nett. Chairman Adrian Panks; 3.nett. Steven Lloyd from Burghill Valley GC; 4.nett. Brian Jones from Pencoed College.

Longest Drive and Nearest the pin both went to Andrew Roach, of Haverfordwest GC.

Our sincere thanks to the committee at Llanwern for granting us courtesy of the course and to R S Bird Ltd our sponsors of the Summer Competition, to Steven Clifford, Julian Driver and Jeffrey Bird who all attended the day. The prize table was superb as always and we thank them for their continued support of what is our most established event/trophy.

On the 25th at the Grove GC, near Porthcawl our annual match Greenkeepers versus Secretaries took place. The weather was once again superb and the golf course was in excellent condition. This was our first visit to the Grove GC and everyone was pleasantly surprised at how good not only the course is, for it's only five years old, but the facilities that they have there are really top class. We were made to feel extremely welcome by all at the Grove but especially Directors Tim Jones and Mike Thomas, our sincere thanks to them for their splendid hospitality.

Grove Golf Club Captain, Mr David Jones paid special praise to Head Greenkeeper Henry Stead for his efforts in ensuring that the Grove GC is presented at it's best at all times and this was reiterated by everyone who was present. Well done Henry to you and your team!

The overall result of the day was a friendly half with the Greenkeepers retaining the Shield. My thanks to Ray Howells for organising the Secretaries team and for his kind words at the presentation.

Longest Drive went to - yes you guessed it? Andy Roach; Nearest the Pins went to: Steven Lloyd, Burghill Valley GC; Brian Jones, Pencoed College; Herbie Prober, Pontardawe GC and Jim Graham, Secretary.

Many thanks to Alan Abel, of Complete Weed Control, South Wales who kindly sponsors this annual event. It was pleasing for him (and me) to have a two full teams present after last years poor showing. Thank you Alan!

The Rigby Taylor Matchplay Doubles Competition is well underway. Through to the next round go :- Peter Lacey and Robert Hanford; Daryl Bray and Steve Mills; Robert Frater and John Borja; Henry Stead and David Morgan.

Kerry Jones and Daryl Jones; Jamie Probert and Herbie Probert; Adrian Panks and Julian B Jones and Russell Anderson and Angus Macloed.

The next round draw will have taken place and you will have been notified by now. Good Luck!

On Friday 13th of July, Paul Robinson, Head Greenkeeper of Pyle & Kenfig GC, officially retired. Paul was a greenkeeper at Pyle & Kenfig for over 35 years and was Treasurer for the South Wales greenkeepers for over 14 years. On Tuesday 17th I was privileged to be invited along to Pyle & Kenfig along with other BIGGA representatives, colleagues, friends,

greenkeepers and club members/officials to attend a retirement party for Paul. Our President, Colin Murphy, was invited to say a few words (if you know Colin, you know it won't be only a few) on behalf of our Association and Section.

Many kind things were said to Paul that evening and all were sincere, deserved and truthfull. Thanks to P&K and Steve Anthony for inviting us along. To Paul, we wish you well for a long, happy, healthy and well deserved retirement. See you soon!

Royal Porthcawl Golf Club greenstaff are just about recovering from a hectic fortnight of intense competitions. Firstly they hosted the Ladies European Tour event and then went straight into the Welsh Amateur Championships. I'm sure all went well for David Ward and his team and that Richard Hatcher will be fully recovered and ready to write next months notes.?

The Section would like to wish Jim McKenzie and the Celtic Manor Resort all the very best for the Wales Open which will have been played over the Wentwood Hills Course by the time you read this. Hopefully there will have been some very good news in relation to the Ryder Cup bid for 2009 for them and for Wales by then also.

On a personal note, I was unable to attend the Open Championship as a member of the Greenkeeper Support Team at Lytham this year due to the fact that Pennard Golf Club was opening its new clubhouse and there was a weekend of Competitions, frolicking and festivities. (those with keen hearing will have heard Peter Alliss mention the fact a few times throughout the duration of the Open). The Guest of honour was Open Champion Max Faulkner who opened the official plaque on the 50th Anniversary of him, winning the Open at Royal Portrush in 1951.

Gus Faulkner, Max's father was club professional at Pennard golf club and this is where Max Faulkner played his first golf and learned links golf.

One of my team members, Bob Hanford was present at The Open and had a marvellous time amid the sahara of bunkers around the Lytham golf course, (let alone Blackpool).

Congratulations to Paul Smith and his team for the brilliant golf course that they presented to the players. An excellent Open and I would recommend to everyone that to be a member of the support team is something that every working greenkeeper should do at least once, it's a great experience and one that you'll treasure.

Devon & Cornwall

The evenings are now slowly drawing in which can only mean autumn is once again around the corner, this year our Autumn and Winter meeting programme starts a little earlier than usual with the first meeting taking place on Wednesday 3rd October at China Fleet Golf & Country Club. The morning's golf competition will be a singles tabled competition for the D O Hunt Trophy, our non playing members will be able to enjoy the usual course walk which will leave the club house at approximately 10.30am, lunch will be from 1pm followed by our afternoon

educational talk presented by Richard Whyman on his experiences on the Bernhard sponsored Canadian Trip.

Golfing members please note entry details for our forthcoming meetings;

After receipt of your completed entry form which will have been sent out to you or your Course Manager.

Golfing members to receive starting times before meetings, pairings will be accepted for any foursome & greensome competition.

A levy of £2 will be added to each entry received after the closing date.

As some members have problems paying before meetings, they will be able to continue to pay on the day without being levied as long as the entry has been received before the closing date, any member who doesn't attend after entering will be invoiced if no payment is received.

Richard Whyman

South Coast

It's been quite a busy month with two golf fixtures being played!

The first was the Invitational Summer Tournament, which was played at a very well presented Broadstone GC.

The day received a good turnout, with 60 people taking part in the competition. Everyone was impressed with the standard of the course, so a big pat on the back to Adi Archer and his gang.

The day finished quite late, I didn't get back into the clubhouse until 9:30pm! So the meal was definitely needed by that time. A big thank you must go to the catering staff, who stayed on late to feed us all.

The results for the day are as follows;

1. 43pts Simon Ridland/Mark Davis. Rigby Taylor Trophy;
2. 40pts Alan Magee and Father. Course Care Trophy;
3. 40pts Bernie Emberley/P. Hector;
4. 39pts R.Wills and Father;
5. 38pts James Martin/Mike Cartwright. (Yes, that is me...)

The second event to take place was the Bigga Management Trophy, which was played at a truly magnificent Salisbury and South Wilts GC. (That's where I work!)

Twenty-five teams from around the Section took part. The teams comprised of The Course Manager, The General Manager, The Greens Chairman and The Club Captain.

The winning teams were; 1. Moors Valley GC; 2. Another GC; 3. Alesford GC. Some of you might not have heard of "Another Golf Club", I think it's one of those pseudonyms. I will investigate and reveal their true identity next month. I do apologise to all those at "Another GC".

So that's what has happened, now for what is yet to happen. The first is the Autumn Tournament, which is to be played at Petersfield GC, on Wednesday, October 3. The price for the day is £18. This includes 18 holes and a meal.

Cheques should be made payable to BIGGA and sent to Chris Sturgess at; 40 Kinsbourne Way, Thornhill, Southampton, Hants, SO19 6HB.

Starting times for the golf and the meal will then be sent to you once Chris has received your details.

Don't forget that if you need to cancel, you must give Chris at least 7 days notice. If you don't, you will lose your £18.

The second event is the Regional Seminar at Cannington College.

Everyone should receive details of prices and how to pay for the day in the post. But I will give more details in next months article, when I have more information myself.

Well that's it. See you at Petersfield. Mike Cartwright.



South East
Derek Farrington
Tel: 01903 260956

Kent

July 26 saw the summer Stableford at Chesterfield Golf Club. It was a rather hot day but the standard of golf not so hot. Well that's what I was told anyway. I was unable to attend so I don't have too much information about the antics of the day but I do have the results and reports back by my staff who did play and thoroughly enjoyed their day out. Well they don't get out much because I have them working so hard.

Right to the results. First place went to Andrew Guy, second to Lewis Till and third to Paul Larsen. Longest drive went to Chris Wright and Nearest the pin went to Keith Porter. Well done to all you guys. Not forgetting the trade who we thank for their continued support once again. And the winner of the trade prize was Derek (NOT SO) Keen of John Shaw Grass Machinery. Many people remarked that it made a nice change to see you out and about Derek. So on behalf of everyone who played at Chesterfield I would like to thank all of their staff for making the Kent section welcomed and I'm sure everyone enjoyed their day.

As I mentioned earlier I was unable to make the golf day because I had already excepted the great honour of playing in the exclusive Bob Cook Memorial Golf Day at Kings Hill Golf Club. Those who don't know Bob, would not know that his golf swing passed away several years ago after a long illness. A great day was had with some of Mr Cook's more colourful friends and drinking buddies. I had the pleasure of playing with Bob's good friend The 'King' say no more.

I have not been inundated with calls or e-mails from you guys but I did here from one Head Greenkeeper who is fed up with some of you reps who just turn up at his sheds without an appointment expecting to see him and I do think he has a point. So all you reps who travel around Kent please phone to make appointments.

No other news to speak of this month so please get in contact with me and tell me what's going on at your clubs or in your lives something must be going on somewhere out there.

My number is 01732 875020 or e-mail me at jbatkhgolf@aol.com please, not that I am desperate yet.

I look forward to seeing you all at