



The full cast of winners



Hesketh Captain, Malcolm Cruickshank, presents Noel Crawford with the Best Gross Trophy



Malcolm presents Ian with his prize



The victorious South East team with non-playing Captain Derek Farrington (on left)



Some of the Championship Sponsors enjoying the dinner



The top table



The Irish Contingent



Past Chairman Barry Heaney



Sid Arrowsmith drives off



The start of a successful round

**BIGGA National Champion Best Nett Score/BIGGA Challenge Trophy**  
 Ian Semple, The Old Fold Manor GC, 148

**BIGGA Scratch Champion / BIGGA Challenge Cup**  
 Noel Crawford Royal County Down, 157

**Gross/36 holes**  
 2. Dave Goddard, Sunningdale, 157 (B. 2nd round)  
 3. Gareth Roberts, Hankley Common, 157

**Handicap/36 holes**  
 2. Kevin Humphreys, Croham Hurst, 149  
 3. George Brown, Turnberry, 150

**Hillside**  
 Scr to 7  
 Chris Ball, Hillside, 73

**8 to 15**  
 Tony Bremer, Dorking, 69

**16 to 28**  
 Charles Tadge, International Member, (retired), 76

**Hesketh**  
 Scr to 7  
 David Murdoch, Liphook, 74

**8 to 15**  
 Dan Wheeler, Roehampton, 72

**16 to 28**  
 Gary Crawford, Royal Co Down, 71

**Nearest the Pin**  
 Sid Arrowsmith, Frilford Heath

**Longest Drive**  
 Dave Blank, Newcastle Under Lyme

**Regional Trophy**  
 Winners South East Region, 601  
 Tony Bremer  
 Ian Semple  
 Gareth Roberts  
 Kevin Humphreys  
 Raymond Day  
 Dave Goddard  
 Adrian Locke  
 Chris Wells

**Runners-Up Midland Region Total 619**  
 Mark Whittle  
 Jamie Bedford  
 Ian Needham  
 Barry Holt  
 Sid Arrowsmith  
 Antony Bindley  
 Mike Hughes  
 Mark Ellis

**Sponsors**  
 TurfTrax Ground Management  
 European Turf Technology  
 Evenproducts  
 Textron  
 Gem Professional  
 Roger Barker  
 VIPs - George Charnock, Captain of Hillside & John Graham, Secretary of Hillside

Scotts UK Professional  
 Hunter Grinders  
 Rufford Soil Technology  
 Toro/Lely  
 Jim Fry



Defending champion, Chris Ball, started well



Vice Chairman, George Brown, launches one



Chairman Richard Barker booms one down the 1st at Hesketh

# NEW PRODUCTS

## SISIS

Following requests from customers who wish to core more frequently with tines that cause minimal surface disruption and need less top dressing, Sisis have developed a new 100mm (4ins) hollow tine with a 12mm (1 / 2 inch) diameter.

The new tine is for use with all Sisis vertical action and drum aerators, including the Auto-Turfman, Technicore and the new Dart and Javelin 1500.

For further information Tel: 01625 503030

## RYETEC

Anyone who needs to cut heavy grass and scrub can now do so with the latest Contractor range of heavy duty flail mowers from Ryetec. The Contractor range is available as standard with front and rear mounting options and cutting widths of 1.6/1.8/2.2/2.5 and 2.8 metres to allow maximum choice and flexibility.

With double skin frame thickness of 14mm and a heavy duty rotor shaft with a wall up to 16mm thick, the Contractors are able to tackle almost any grass cutting work. Helical mounted hammer flails optimise tractor power even in the thickest material and an opening adjustable rear hood not only allows for easy access when changing flails or removing foreign objects but ensures quick and easy ejection of the cut material over the large diameter height adjustable rear roller.

Hydraulic side shift is standard, as are front skids, internally mounted rotor and roller bearings, hinged belt guard with protection plate and a quick and simple belt tensioning system. All these features make the new Contractor a straightforward mower capable of reliable and constant service in any application. Prices start from £3868 + VAT.

For further information Tel: 01944 768232 E-mail: info@zrvetec.co.uk



Rear mounted



Front mounted

## CGCS (MIDLANDS) LTD

CGCS (Midlands) Ltd have been appointed distributors in the UK and Europe for The Screen Machine (USA).

The MIGHT Mini Trommel Screen is targeted at the golf and landscape markets. It is unique in its size, it is fully mobile weighing 2360kg, and is powered by a 20hp John Deere diesel engine. It can produce up to 35 tonnes of screened material per hour and is fitted with a high speed shredder that pulverises the material before being screened through a trommel drum. The size of the screened material can be anything from 6mm - 30mm. It is fitted with a self cleaning brush that will enable wet materials to be processed.

It is priced at £24,950 plus VAT.

For further information Tel: 01522 869100



## RENAULT

Renault displayed a CERGOS 355 tractor fitted with an Envirosafe exhaust emission filtration system capable of reducing harmful pollutants by up to 95%, making this the first tractor in the UK to be fitted with such a system.

Working with Pyroban Envirosafe Ltd, Renault has combined a catalytic converter with a diesel particulate filter.

To achieve this, the existing silencer has been replaced by a Diesel Oxidation Catalyst which can remove up to 95% of CO and HC elements in the exhaust fumes by converting these gasses to carbon dioxide and water.

For maximum efficiency, the Catalyst is close coupled to the exhaust turbo under the bonnet of the tractor. The Catalyst is sized to ensure there is a free flow of exhaust gasses through the unit, so avoiding any back-pressure that might affect engine performance.

The system is mounted on the right hand side of the engine and does not intrude on the drivers existing range of vision.

Total Particulate Matter is trapped by the filter, which will provide up to eight hours continuous use before it needs to be cleaned using a regeneration base unit.

Conversion time is about two days and the catalyst and filtration system is suitable for use on any tractor in the Renault range or can be retro-fitted to tractors already in use.

"We have made this conversion available in response to concerns from local authority contractors who in the tendering process are keen to show that they do meet emission regulations and are making efforts to reduce greenhouse emissions," said Robert Merrall, of Renault.

For further information Tel: 01608 665154

## TERRAIN AERATION SERVICES

Power and speed are the hallmarks of Terrain Aeration Services' New Hydraulic Terralift, developed from last year's prototype.

The new 4-wheeled machine is driven by a 40hp Kubota diesel engine supplying 2 Siamese hydraulic pumps and a 300-psi compressor. The hydraulic system takes care of the drive to the wheels, the rams that raise and lower the probe and the JCB hydraulic hammer that drives the probe into the ground. Over one tonne of down force back be applied to the probe, which means that even the hardest compaction pans can be penetrated, without disrupting the surface.

Capable of speeds up to 7mph, giving an increased work rate of up to 2,000 square metres per day, the new machine uses the original German designed Terralift injection and blast system, which relieves compaction by injecting compressed air through the probe to a depth of one metre on a 2 metre staggered grid pattern. Dry nutrients, fungal spores, seaweed and beneficial bacteria are then blown into the newly created underground fissures during the final stage of air injection.

For further information Tel: 01449 673783.



## KAWASAKI

In a significant departure from what has become almost an industry standard, Kawasaki has introduced a gleaming red option to its line-up of impressive green machines.

The Japanese manufacturers newest model arrivals, the KLF250-A, the KVF360-A and the KVF650-A, the flagship within the ATV range, will all be available in either the new Aztec Red livery or the existing Hunter Green with which Kawasaki has become firmly associated over the years.

"Beneath the new-look the machines offer the same high level performance, reliability and rider comfort, but we wanted to give our customers more choice in terms of colour," explained Robert Rees, UK Field Sales Manager for Kawasaki.

"Although the existing Hunter Green has been extremely popular over the years, we think the red is a classy addition and is going to prove particularly suitable for some of our market sectors. Those that have seen it already have been very impressed and the comments have been complimentary," he added.

The new model colour was unveiled on the opening day of Saltex and was available from the UK dealer network from last month.



## EARTHQUAKE TURFCARE LTD.

An inexpensive instrument capable of saving greenkeepers and other sports turf managers thousands of pounds in wasted energy, lost time and costly soil damage is now available direct from turf decompaction equipment specialist, EarthQuake Turfcare Ltd.

Known as the QuakeMeter, the instrument is art hydraulic soil penetrometer designed to reveal soil compaction problems before they become visually apparent, enabling remedial action to be taken in good time and, most importantly, at the correct place and depth.

The QuakeMeter comprises a slim, stainless-steel probe with a pair of handles and a dial-type pressure gauge at one end. The other end is pointed, enabling the 610mm probe to be pushed easily into the turf at appropriate places on sports grounds, golf courses, stadia and other high-use playing surfaces. As the probe moves down through the soil, the resistance to movement is transmitted hydraulically from the probe to be displayed instantly on the dial of the calibrated pressure gauge.

In addition to accurately displaying the level of soil resistance in lbs/sq in and bar, the gauge is divided into green, amber and red bands, enabling zones of low, medium and high soil compaction to be pinpointed instantly as the probe moves downwards. By noting the places and the depths at which compaction is most severe, turf managers, ground staff and contractors are able to set and operate their

decompaction equipment with great accuracy, eliminating costly, unnecessary and inappropriate remedial treatments.

"The QuakeMeter is an essential instrument for anyone involved in the management, care or maintenance of quality sportsturf," points out EarthQuake Managing Director, John Reynolds.

"It takes the guesswork out of a vital operation, enabling regular decompaction treatments and remedial work to be carried out at the most appropriate depth and place. By pricing the QuakeMeter at a realistic level, we hope that it will soon become part of the essential equipment of all turf professionals, both in the UK and overseas."

Cost of the QuakeMeter is £199 (plus VAT) delivered to any address on the UK mainland.

For further information Tel: 01889 271509  
or e-mail: johnreynoldseq@aol.com



## DENNIS

Dennis, the specialist manufacturers of mowing machinery and grounds care equipment, have expanded their range of tools and accessories, resulting from their appointment as exclusive European distributors of products made by Better Methods (Australia) Pty Ltd.

This means Dennis can now offer their professional turf care customers a full range of products for specific groundsmanship and greenkeeping tasks. Tools offered include samplers, lutes, lawn levellers up to 3.5m wide, corers and golf hole cutters, amongst others. This expands the existing Dennis tools offering, which includes the popular Bray Seed Slotters range, acquired in 2001, which allow optimum overseeding and turf repairs to be undertaken.

"The Better Methods line-up means we have even more to offer our existing customers, who look after surfaces for soccer, bowls, cricket, tennis, golf and other fine turf facilities at all levels," says Dennis' Managing Director, Ian Howard.



# Hell is a WET PLACE

By Steve Isaac, STRI

Summer 2002 has been a nightmare for many Greenkeepers and golfers in certain parts of the country. The extremes of rain over such a prolonged period have severely disrupted course maintenance, often making it impossible. Many appreciate the problems such extreme wet weather poses and many Greenkeepers are grateful to committees for sterling support in times of stress. However, it is always disappointing to hear of campaigns against Course Managers, the management programme for the golf course and the Club's Agronomist when presentation and course condition suffer in times such as these. It is usually a vocal minority of Members that conduct such campaigns, but they should address the facts of the situation before trying to incite dissatisfaction within the Club.

I can understand their frustration at the standard of playing surfaces and presentation this summer. However, the negative criticism, and sometimes abuse, aimed at the Course Manager helps nobody, especially as it obviously stems from ignorance of the facts, or a lack of acceptance of the realities of the situation. Let us present some of the facts behind the poor performance this summer, with particular emphasis on Scotland, and then with a greater understanding we can all, perhaps, go forward with some positive ideas.



## GOOD WEATHER FOR DUCKS

1) In Scotland, from April to the end of July, there was a staggering 63% above average rainfall. The months of May, June and July saw 423 mm of rain, compared to the average of 260 mm. These are Met. Office figures and locally there may have been even more. I was at a Club recently and was informed that the rainfall measurements they keep showed that by mid-June 2002 they had seen as much rain as had fallen through the whole of 2001!

2) The number of rain days over this period was 59. That's 59 days out of 91, with little drying weather or sunlight in between.

3) Figure 1 (shown on the opposite page) shows the monthly rainfall figures for 2002 up to July, compared to average figures. Every month has been wetter than the average, quite a few show considerably more rain per month.

All of this has a cumulative effect. Also bear in mind that over the winter months there is usually significant drainage through soils. Over the spring and summer months there is usually less drainage, with surface water moving up into the atmosphere through the forces of evaporation and plant transpiration. In a year such as this, moisture can get trapped at the turf/air interface. This results in boggy surfaces, humid conditions above the turf that can promote disease, yet reasonably dry soils from an inch or two under the surface. I have lost count of the looks of amazement on the faces of Committeemen during visits when plugs from bogs have revealed dry soils underneath.

4) The sheer quantity and frequency of rain has had a direct impact on turf quality. Turf needs to breathe and waterlogging over a period of time "drowns" the grass. Try sticking your feet in a bucket of cold water for a few days and see how healthy they look afterwards.

5) On courses that are prone to flooding as a result of the rising level of nearby rivers, drains alone cannot stop the river level from rising, but good drainage systems can get water away in hours of the river water receding rather than days or weeks as might be the case pre-drainage. This more rapid evacuation can significantly reduce damage.

6) The amount of rain and rain days has limited time when machinery could safely be taken out on the course without causing damage. This means there is more grass to cut when machinery can be taken out.

7) There have been very few opportunities to take a clean dry cut, resulting in piles of wet clippings left on the course. This can be dealt with if you have the right machines and staff level, though bear in mind the potential damage from taking more equipment onto the golf course.

8) Because greens have been soft, due to the large volume of rain, hand cutting has been necessary to prevent the risk of damage from use of the triple mower. This has reduced the man hours available for other work on the golf course.

This year has seen a catalogue of horror stories:

- Fairways being mown with pedestrian rotary mowers because the ground could not take machines.
- Courses having to close for weeks on end (one in Glasgow reportedly closed for 56 days this summer).
- Temporary greens being used more than the main surfaces.
- Complaints about untidy courses with clippings left lying and tyre ruts to fairways and semi-rough.
- Most ridiculous of all, Greenkeepers being blamed for all of this!



As if this were not enough to cope with, things could get a lot worse before the year-end. To the end of July, we had seen 72% of the average annual rainfall. That is getting on for three quarters of the year's rain in the first seven months of the year, which includes all of the spring and half the summer months. Figure 2 (shown opposite) shows how the average amount of rain recorded each month has fluctuated over the past decade compared to the previous 30-year period.

The important thing to note is that the amount of rain falling through the August to January period has increased by around 25% in the last 10 years in comparison to the 30 years before, i.e. our autumn and winter months are getting much wetter!

Such patterns obviously impacts winter play on golf courses considerably but it also affects the conventional approach to undertaking drainage and the main aeration operations. September and October have been the months for coring, Verti-Draining etc. The data, and our own experience, suggests that this cannot remain the case – it may simply be too wet to get machinery onto courses or to produce a positive result from such work should these rainfall patterns continue.

Having set such a gloomy scenario, what general advice can we give to Clubs suffering under such high volumes of rainfall?

#### FIGHTING THE TIDE

I would offer the following advice but note that recommendations should be considered in relation to the specific situation of each site.

- Members must be aware and accept the limitations of the site on which their golf course stands. If you are a Member of a parkland course based on clay then you cannot expect it to drain anything like as well as a links. Some inland courses may have coped better than others but this is more likely down to location and site conditions, e.g. elevated greens and freer-draining soils, than anything else.
- Turn to hand cutting greens, collars and tees if you have the staff. If you don't, the time spent hand cutting greens may be worth it if it reduces damage to these vital areas of the golf course, even if it means neglecting other areas. Miss out perimeter cuts with the triple to avoid tyre tracking, or worse. Bring greens in if softer areas can be incorporated into the surround satisfactorily for a time.
- Implement sound thatch and compaction management programmes throughout the golf course. Look at the alternative approach of deep scarification and sanding to thatch management. I can see another situation for potential conflict at Clubs this autumn, where the Greenkeeper wants to get in and undertaken some intensive renovation work and the Members want him to leave the greens well alone so they can enjoy any "Indian Summer" we may see. With thatch density likely to have increased through a wet summer and soil structure impaired by saturated conditions, we would strongly support the Course Manager in this matter.
- Carefully consider the best time for aeration programmes. Late summer or spring may well be a better option than the conventional September-October. With modern equipment very little disturbance is created so there is no real reason why this adjustment should not be accepted.

Figure 1. Rainfall for 2002 to July compared to average values

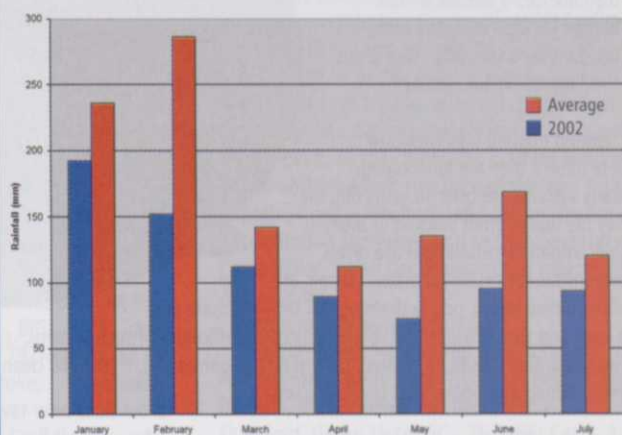
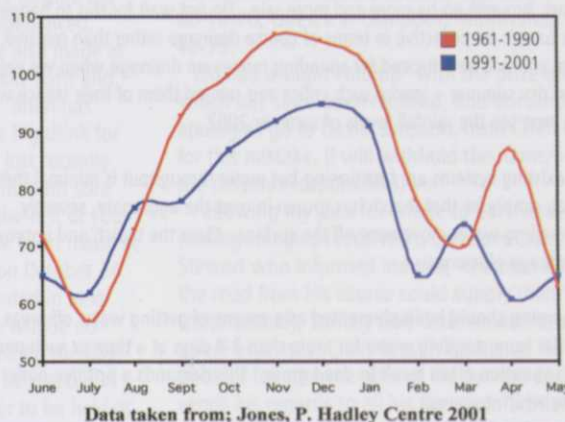


Figure 2. The difference in monthly rainfall during the periods 1991-2001 compared to the data from 1961-1990.



- Consider turning to straight sand top dressing of greens. Such a move must be site specific, as it should not be contemplated unless a decent irrigation system is available and it is complemented by regular slit/solid tine aeration.
- On greens, some of the best results with feeding this summer have been with liquid fertiliser. The reason? The liquid is absorbed into the plant more rapidly, with less chance of it being washed away or leached out. That is not to say that liquids are the best choice for spring or autumn feeds.
- The greens often tend to be the firmest areas on most golf courses. Why is this? Sometimes it is down to their construction but for most well established courses it is due to decades of aeration and top dressing programmes. Extend these programmes to aprons, collars, tees and landing zones and you will gradually see these firming up as well.
- Green reconstruction may have to be considered if poor drainage is the result of poor underlying soil condition, e.g. greens developed on clay or silt soils. For inland courses we would advise reconstruction to the USGA guidelines. Those who attended the joint SGU/STRI workshops on green construction in 2001 will realize that this is perfectly feasible, even on a fairly tight budget. Most of the courses we visit might be looking to rebuild up to half a dozen greens, the others responding well enough to timely aeration, thatch management and top dressing programmes.

# HELL IS A WET PLACE



9) Ensure that there are adequate outlets for drainage. Consider opening up and cleaning out old ditches or creating new ones.

10) Address fairway drainage. If wet fairways cause the course to close then allocate a decent annual budget for pipe drainage and aeration/sand dressing. Under this heading we would include:

a) Checking existing pipe drains to determine if they are functioning. Many systems are over 50 years old, the clay tile drains often blocked or broken. Later irrigation installations are often responsible for smashing drains. Often, the return of the native heavy, poorly draining soil over the drain pipe is seen and this, obviously, severely reduces the efficiency of such systems. Blocked drains should be cleared, broken ones repaired and, if feasible, clean free-draining aggregate used to replace soil.

b) Install new systems where necessary on a priority basis.

c) Initiating heavy sanding of wet areas in conjunction with aeration and plastic pipe drainage.

d) Learn a lesson from the deterioration in course drainage seen over recent years, brought on by more and more rain. Do not wait for this to happen in the future: be proactive in terms of course drainage rather than reactive. I am sure you will be criticized for spending money on drainage when we enjoy the next dry summer – ignore such critics and remind them of their stance when we next see the rainfall levels of summer 2002.

11) If existing systems are functioning but water throughput is minimal then it may simply be that thatch has grown in over the aggregate, severely impeding water movement off the surface. Clear the thatch and improve drainage efficiency.

12) Pumping should be implemented as a means of getting water off areas that suffer from standing water for more than 3-4 days at a time as such periods of saturation often result in dead grass. This demands a positive outlet into which to pump.

13) If low-lying areas are prone to almost permanent flooding then consider the option of developing additional water features. The input of a golf course architect, hydrologist and ecologist might all be required to assess the feasibility/desirability of such a scheme. I know that many of the site visits that Jonathan Smith and Fiona McIntyre, the Golf Course Advisors from the Scottish Golf Environment Group (0131 660 9480), have undertaken this year have been to discuss this option for drainage water management. The services of SGEG come free to Scottish Golf Clubs, this body being part-funded by the Scottish Golf Union and the R & A.

14) This year, in particular, has been a nightmare for mowing fairways and rough. High levels of rain over the summer create far more problems than through the winter period, simply because there has to be more machinery traffic over the course through the growing season to cut grass.

What do you do in such a situation? Ignore the growth because you know the damage you will do taking machinery onto the course, or mow on regardless? In either case, you are damned if you do, damned if you don't. It is all well and good saying wait until conditions improve so you can safely take machines out onto the course. If you said that in May, you would still be saying it at the end of July this year! Improving drainage and surface firmness through some of the ideas above would be our advice for the medium to long-term but those facing this situation might also consider using growth regulators to slow down growth, thus reducing the need for mowing.



Damage done by taking machinery over wet ground

15) In wet years, heavy worm casting creates muddy surfaces and directly impedes drainage. Steve Baker, Head of STRI's Soils and Sports Surfaces Science Division, has done extensive research on the control of casting worms. With ever decreasing chemical options, aeration/sanding is the most promising option with careful use of acidifying materials such as aluminium sulphate or sulphur for heavy soil sites a possibility. This latter approach has to be site specific in terms of application rates, which have to be evaluated through use of trial plots before implementation on the golf course, as severe turf burning can result from too high a rate of treatment. Boxing off clippings has been shown to reduce casting by up to 60%, though this may be impractical on many courses beyond greens, collars and tees.

You could already be implementing much of the above, but may need to expand current programmes to address the changes in the climate. If this is the case and you are still having a nightmare year then question how bad the course might have been without the investment in such procedures over the years. I can guarantee that it would have been a lot worse, though the "experts" in the Clubhouse would probably not agree.

## DRY DREAMS

None of this comes without a cost and some of the approaches can be very expensive. However, I do feel that if golfers want better year-round playing conditions then they are going to have to be prepared to pay for them, particularly if they happen to be Members at Clubs whose courses are based on heavy soils or in flood plains. The weather data suggests that if you have not started these programmes already, where appropriate, then you had better start soon! This does pose something of a "Catch 22" situation. Wet courses mean less golf, so Members expect to pay less. Take this negative approach and you will get a decreasing return on play year on year, invest properly in the course and you should see improvements. Many Clubs think they are investing heavily in the golf course but, in reality, they are not. This really strikes home when a major refurbishment is needed to the Clubhouse and the money for this is found quite readily, often amounting to many multiples of the sums put aside for on-course investment. Golf in Scotland, at least, is generally not that expensive. Indeed, the cost is low enough for many to be Members of more than one Club! No golfer will gladly reach into his or her pocket, but a £40 levy on 500 Members should bring in enough to more than adequately drain one or two fairways.

I would reiterate the point about the need for site-specific advice very strongly. We cannot give sound advice without some experience of the course. We are always delighted to hear from Course Managers and Committeemen but our first advice would be, "take a site visit".

For many Greenkeepers and golfers 2002 will be a summer to forget, particularly across the Central Belt and the West of Scotland. With general rainfall levels of 60-70% above average and some local figures well above that, May to September was a period fraught with problems. It has been gratifying to visit clients where the Greenstaff have received support and understanding from within the Club. Unfortunately, we have also seen instances of Greenkeepers being blamed for the soggy and sometimes unplayable condition of their golf course. Nobody feels the pain of poor conditions on the golf course more than the Head Greenkeeper. Course condition is a reflection of his professionalism. You will not meet a more dedicated profession than Greenkeepers. Few Members would put in the hours or work in conditions that have faced many Greenkeepers this year. Criticism of any Head Greenkeeper, based on a lack of information or thought, has to be disheartening. In a year such as this, the Greenkeeping staff needs as much encouragement as you can give them. Provide them with more resources and a lot more could be done. Investment in drainage, machinery and staff will have to be revised (upwards!) to cope with a wetter and milder climate. Let us hope that 2003 sees no more than average rain, which the majority of Greenkeepers will be able to cope with and produce the general high standard of surface and presentation that golfers have come to, sometimes complacently, expect.

Steve Isaac is STRI's Area Manager for Scotland and Ireland



Don't wait for ditches to clean themselves!





**SCOTTISH REGION**  
Peter Boyd  
Tel/Fax: 0141 616 3440

As in previous years the Scottish Region offers members a subsidised package deal for BTME/ClubHouse 2003.

The package includes: coach to Harrogate; entry to all Seminars and Exhibitions and three nights bed and breakfast in en suite twin rooms in the Moat House Hotel, Harrogate, on January 21, 22, 23 2003.

Package costs £160.

Partners are welcome at a cost of £135 for travel and accommodation.

For booking forms call or fax Peter J. Boyd, Scottish Regional Administrator, 10 Meadowburn Avenue, Newton Mearns, Glasgow, G77 6TA. Tel/Fax 0141 616 3440

Peter Boyd

## North

Two new members to report this month. They are Neil Young, from Kenmay GC, and Alan Anderson, from Hazelhead GC.

Scotsturf Exhibition is upon us again this month, and if the weather last year is anything to go by, then winter is not far away. The dates are November 6 and 7 and I hope the roads are a lot safer than they were last year. The show is a well established part of our working year and is a good chance to meet the companies involved with our industry all under the one roof. So hopefully it will be well attended.

The AGM has been and gone at Stonehaven GC but too late to include in this report. I will include it in my next report.

The proposed golf match which I had mentioned in a previous report is still planned for sometime in November, the layter part I think, and basically it involves the Aberdeen side of the North Section playing the North side. Anyone interested in playing for the Aberdeen side please phone Robert Hardie on 01224 783201 and anyone interested in playing for the North phone myself on 01997 420155. It is a bit late in the year and maybe short notice, but if it does not come off this year then maybe next year. There will be good hotel accommodation available and at a very good rate for those who want to stay over and make a full day of it.

The Northern Counties Cup was recently played over Tain golf course and was won by Fortrose GC. It is a well supported event and the course at Tain was in excellent condition, and was well praised by the golfers, who are among the best players the North and North East has to offer. The talented team from Strathpeffer were put out by last year's winners, Inverness. A major shock there!

Well, nothing to report this month. I hope the weather holds up and allows everyone to get all their autumn maintenance work finished. The last month or so has been a lot better so I hope it lasts

Iain Gunn

## West

Welcome to this month's newsletter. First a report on our Autumn outing held at Drumpellier GC on September 26. The winners on the day were Scratch. Dougie McIntosh, Cathkin Braes CC. 74. First Class. 1. Brian Hillen, Drumpellier GC, 66; 2. Sandy Bulloch, Fereneze GC, 72; 3. Stuart Taylor, Killermont GC, 75. Second Class. 1. Drew McKechnie, Douglas Park GC, 66; 2. Sandy Brawley, East Kilbride GC, 68 (BIH); 3. Ian Wilson, Hamilton CC, 68. Third Class. 1. Kevin Bell, Balmore GC, 66; 2. Colin Kearney, Drumpellier GC, 76; 3. Chris Scott, Balmore GC, 77. Visitors Prize. Peter Boyd, BIGGA, 76. Trade Prize. Derek Duthie, Aitkens, 73. Nearest the Pin, Sandy Brawley; Straightest Drive, J. Steadward, Douglas Park CC and the player who took more divots than any other player, Cecil George, who received some practice balls. Well done to you all. Thanks must again be passed on to the Council and membership of Drumpellier GC for the use of their facilities. A special thanks must also go to Brian and his team who had the course in fine condition on the day despite the awful summer we have all just experienced.

Two draws of the 100 club were also made at Drumpellier the winners being Cohn Scott and, would you believe it, Brian Hillen. Brian has promised to buy all the bar staff a big drink for drawing his ticket. Brian has also just recently got married, so congratulations and I am sure the wife will find a good use for the rest of your winnings. The final draw will have been made at our AGM held at Nairn & Brown on October 24.

A report on the AGM will be printed in next month's letter but I am sure there will be no need, as you will all have attended on the day!

After the AGM the next date to be marked in your calendar is the Annual Dinner to be held at Victoria's night spot on Friday November 29. If you do not already have your ticket then you are running out of time as these tickets sell like hot cakes. As always early payment for tickets would be much appreciated.

Well, that's all I have to write about this month. As always if there is anything you would like added to the column please do not hesitate to call me on 013552 66862.

Brian Bolland

## Central

This month we extend a warm welcome from everyone in the Section to Stuart Smith, Paul Wilt, John Jardine, Andrew Cruickshanks, Findlay Forbes and Scott Winton, all from St. Andrews Bay Golf Resort and Spa. Hopefully it won't be too long before we get the opportunity to meet them at some of our events.

The final golf tournament of the season was held at Dullatur Golf Club, Cumbernauld, in September, when some 35 members enjoyed golfing on one of the very few days we have had this year when there wasn't any rain! A welcome return to the tournament scene was made by Joe Oliver, from Pitreavie GC. Joe was a founder member of the Central Section and was in fact our very first Chairman. Perhaps Joe's return will encourage some more of our "older" members

to make a return to the golfing scene and we could start a Seniors' category.

Our sincere thanks go to everyone at Dullatur for the courtesy and hospitality which was extended to us on the day, especially Lachlan, Bobby and staff for the excellent condition of the course despite the atrocious summer we have experienced, to the clubhouse staff for keeping us fed and refreshed throughout the day. Club Captain, Charlie Flochart, who did us the honour of presenting the prizes and to Club Secretary, Carol Miller, for all her assistance in making the day possible.

Prize winners were as follows:

Best Combined Nett Spring and Autumn. A. Crawford, Green Hotel GC, 142; Best Scratch. D. Leith, St. Andrews, 69; Best Nett. A. Crawford, Green Hotel GC, 75-9-66; Cat 1. 1. C. MacDonald, Crieff GC, 73-4-69; 2. K. Mitchell, St. Andrews, 78-5-73; Cat 2. 1. T. Harris, Cupar GC, 84-11-73; 2. S. Pearson, Aberdour GC, 85-11-74 (BIH); Cat 3. 1. J. Oliver, Pitreavie GC, 95-20-75; 2. A. Arnott, The Meadows GC, 102-19-83; Patrons. G. Howat, Souters, Sportsturf, 86-10-76; Guests. J. Campbell, Murrayshall, 85-10-75.

We had a slight "hiccup" with the prize giving, which has since been rectified, and our sincere apologies go to David Simpson, from Crieff GC, for this mistake. (I will withhold the name/s of the person/s responsible!)

Following my plea for where to purchase roofing shingles I received a call from Craig Stewart who informed me that "the man down the road from his course could supply them". Unfortunately, Stirling Golf Club wouldn't pay my travel expenses. Craig lives in Germany! He is another founder member of the Section and sends his regards to all his friends in Scotland.

I hate to go on about "Club 2000" tickets but why send them back anonymously? I have the names and number of every member who received tickets. So E. Grant thanks for returning your tickets!

The proposed football tournament planned for Forthbank Stadium last month had to be cancelled led due to the lack of support, so what happened to all you budding football stars? Even the holders of the trophy failed to enter a team to defend their title, still thanks to Carnoustie and Dullatur for entering teams.

News of last month's AGM will be in next month's report, you'll either have a new committee or will be stuck with the same 'old' faces!

John Crawford.

## Sheffield

On September 23 the Sheffield Section held their Autumn golf competition at Doncaster GC. Although I was unable to attend myself I believe that there was some very good golf played from all those who competed.

The results were as follows :- 1. S. Pigott, 36 pts; 2. G. Wells, 36 pts (BIH); 3. R. Needham, 33 pts; 4. A. Lomas 31 pts; 5. S. Brown 29 pts; 6. S. Currie, 28 pts; 7. T. Simpson, 28 pts; 8. A. Whittington, 27 pts; 9. T. White 27 pts; 10. A. Bunting, 27 pts.

Nearest the Pin G. Wells. Best trade score I. Gravel 35 pts.

Thank you to our main sponsor for the day S. Chapman, of Ransomes Textron, for donating the prizes for our prize table and to all other trade members for their support.

The next competition will be our Christmas comp held at Rotherham GC on Monday, November 25.

See you all soon.

Chris Astle.

## North Wales

Dave Goodridge wishes to thank John Osman on behalf of all those who attended the practice days of the Ryder Cup at The Belfry, courtesy of John Deere. A good time was enjoyed and an unmissable chance to see the top 24 golfers in the world on matchplay knockout. It just doesn't get any better than that.

On one occasion on the Tuesday someone in the crowd shouted to Colin Montgomerie, as he had missed the green on the par-3 12th, that he could play better than that. Colin turned round and said "Come on then. What club do you want?" "A sand wedge," he replied and proceeded to chip the ball within two foot of the hole. Colin then dropped another ball and made the same shot, sailing it about eight foot past the hole. These are some of the great moments if you were there on practice days, the relaxed atmosphere of the pros and the banter they have with the crowd.

Members of the North Wales Section were also involved among the 75 strong maintenance crew that helped keep the course in its fine presentation - Phil l'Anson, Matt Young and John Evans, of Carden Park, and Danny O'Neil and Dan Hayes, of Northop.

Moving on. Larry Marsden has retired after 15 years at the Wallasey GC and we wish him well. He has been replaced by Chris Cole, from Wirral Ladies.

Stuart Yarwood, of Lymm GC, appeared on TV's The Weakest Link Show with Ann Robinson (Ann. A real favourite in Wales ? Not ) Stuart got to the last four but was ousted by a woman for commenting that he only lets ladies play on a Thursday morning (which I think is more than

generous). Well done, Stuart.

The IOG Show at Aintree was yet again a huge success and our thanks go to the organisers for their marketing and advertising campaign? We will just have to find more security persons to deal with the 'crowd control' if this show is to go ahead again next year.

Gareth Williams, of Porthmadog GC, has been invited by Toro out to the Guadalmina Golf Hotel in Spain from Sunday 24 to Wednesday 27 to try out the new cylinders and machinery for 2003 - Toro have been experimenting previously at Porthmadog.

A warm welcome back to Jamie Williams, at The Vale of Llangollen GC, who is rejoining the team. Wendy O'Brien is also home from her Augusta learning experience.

Our North Wales columnist reaches the half way stage in his life next month and has been told that Philisan has been replaced by, vodka and Red Bull? Anyone wishing to send either will be truly appreciated.

A shortlist of candidates for the USGA Atlanta show will be confirmed shortly this again is donated in conjunction with Bernhards.

Regional training courses start on November 25 at BIGGA HOUSE. These include soil science and sharpening. Please contact BIGGA HOUSE if you wish to book in.

As mentioned in last month's notes, the Christmas tournament will be at Caldy GC on Dec 5. Your entries will be out shortly and this one is sold out very quickly, so don't delay. This also is our Section's AGM and your chance to air any topics (questions on paper beforehand please) a great day's golf and everyone goes home with a prize.

Any views, news or information, please contact me on: Home: 01925 263394

Fax: 01925 269622 Mobile: 07778 162162

e-mail: acorn@golf@supanet.com

Mesen Cymru

Andrew Acorn

## North East

September 19, was the date for our autumn comp. This year it was played for the first time at Longhirst Hall GC and what a pleasure it was to be there, water hazards all over the place from small ponds to large lakes. A true test of golf. Thank goodness we were not off the back tees as I think everyone would have struggled to get around.

Thanks should be given to Graham Chambers and his staff for the excellent condition of the course especially as it's only been open four to five years.

The committee would like to thank Dave Cryan, from Rolawn, for sponsoring most of the prizes. It was a nice change to see some golf gear for prizes and

also to Scotts who also kindly donated several prizes. Turf Care again come up trumps with a good prize of a portable TV, and not forgetting the rest of the sponsors either. They were Border Turf Services, Shorts, Aitkens and Greenlay.

Just a word to all you sponsors. Thanks for everything, the spring and autumn competitions

could not go on without your help.

Also to the following golf clubs Bellingham, Gosforth, Hexham, Stocksfield, South Shields, Tyneside and Warkworth, who mostly donated courtesy golf for four persons.

Next year we may play the Spring competition inland instead of travelling up the coast.

Autumn Comp. Best Nett. K. Dinsdale, Northumberland GC, 95-28=67; Best Gross. S. Quince, Parklands GC, 75; Best Nett for 9 and under. J. Richardson, Hexham GC, 80-7=73; Fewsters Shield. 1. Johnson, Stocksfield GC, 88-16=72; 2. R.Black, Westerhope GC, 80-7=73; 3. M. Lathan, Hexham GC, 78-2=76

At a recent Section meeting it was decided from this year's Autumn competition to change the prize allocation. The best nett of the day has a choice of any prize, then next its the best gross who has the next pick followed by who ever has the lowest nett between the 9 and under and the Fewster's Shield. The same will apply to the Spring competition.

Jimmy Richardson

## North West

What a month September has been weather wise, certainly in England, although when I met the members from Scotland at the National Championship they wondered where the brown grass had come from. September has mostly been dry and sunny here but Scotland have had a considerable amount of rain making their courses lush green. It is just as well the weather has been good because we had plenty of section golf to be played. The first was the Whitelaw Bowl on September 4 at Penrith Golf Club, and the weather was superb. This annual tournament is sponsored by Course Care and we had a good turnout of 35 members. Once again we were made very welcome by the club and the course was as good as I have ever seen it. The Whitelaw Bowl was won by David Forsyth, the Head Greenkeeper, with a score of 43 points. The match against the golf club stewards was played on September 9 and unfortunately during the afternoon the heavens opened and the match could not be completed. We agreed to call it a half and as we had won last year we retained the trophy.

The Autumn Tournament was played at Didsbury Golf Club on Thursday, September 12 and the weather was fantastic. It was an eventful day for Alex Davies, the Head Greenkeeper, as this was to be his last greenkeepers' tournament, at least in this part of the world. In October he and his family will be emigrating to start a new life in New Zealand (at last). Alex has been threatening to go to New Zealand almost as long as I have known him and at last he has taken the plunge. We all wish Alex and his family good luck in their venture.

Back to the golf day, and that course which can flood as quickly as any I know, was in beautiful condition thanks to Alex & his staff. We had 40 members playing and everybody enjoyed the day. I would like to thank Didsbury Golf Club for allowing us the courtesy of the course, the caterers for a nice lunch and a magnificent meal