



MIDLAND REGION
Peter Larter
Tel: 01476 550115

BB&O

Our first golf meeting for this Section was a resounding success. The blue skies held for the day giving us a taste of Club Mediterranean golfing weather. The venue at Magnolia Park Golf Club was in excellent condition considering the grass was growing at whippet speed. All this was under control by Philip and his team so well done lads for a great show. The Tacit team decided to try out the buggy fitted with a satellite device that read your distance to the middle of the putting green. Initially looked upon with scepticism we were all finding this very helpful as the game evolved and considered this device a winner. I would like to thank Pam Boardman and her team at Magnolia Park Golf Club for the great hospitality. The organisation on the day was helpful with a great end to the day due to great food in our own private area. Also many thanks to Tacit who sponsored the day and put out great prizes appropriate for summer weather barbies. The results for this event went as follows: 1. Nathan Bond, Carl Small, Ian Robbins, 86 pts; 2. Ross Wilson, John Bowness, Colin Hutt, 75 pts. Nearest the Pin, John Bevan. Longest Drive, Ross Wilson.



Besides the team event we also had several members playing a card to enter the National Championship later this year in October. The Section sponsors the cost of entry for two people. The best Gross was Ross Wilson, with 78, and the best Nett was David Hood, with 71. We wish you guys all the best when the competition comes around.

John Bevan approached the Section for sponsorship to enter a golf day to raise money in aid of the Macmillan Nurses and the RNLI. The Section has paid £25 towards such a worthy cause. We look forward to a report on your progress on the day, John, and hope your team from Wexham Park Golf Club do themselves proud.

Lastly a personal thanks to Peter Larter who played early and vetted the results as they came in for delivery at the prize giving.

We have some results from round one of the Rigby Taylor knockout. Colin Hutt managed to see off Dean Thatcher and Wayne Nott by 2&1. His partner Ross Wilson declared himself unfit to play on the first tee due to illness! Roy Kates and Chas Taylor thrashed Lindsay Anderson and Simon Austin 6&5 thanks to some fantastic putting and local knowledge!

I would like to remind you of our third golf event for 2003. This is the Autumn Invitational Tournament at the Buckinghamshire Golf Club. The format is an 18-hole fourball betterball and each member entering must have a partner who is the Secretary, Club Manager or Green Chairman from their own club. This day is sponsored by Headland who will be in attendance to ensure you have a great day. The cost includes a bacon roll/coffee to start and a buffet style evening meal in a private room. Breakfast kicks off at 9.30am, served in a private suite with the 1st team off at 11am. Please come well before 11.00am so the teams for the day can be organised. Everyone benefits from a relaxed start to proceedings and ensures the starter has the teams to work with. Please contact me for entry into this competition at Holly Lodge, Pond Lane, Hermitage, Thatcham, Berks RG18 9RN or phone me on 07778 765021. The cost is £25 per person, representing superb value for money. Please make cheques payable to BB&O Section.

David Haskell-Craig

Midland



With the end of the famous "Benson and Hedges Snooker Championship", the Midland Section decided to make a bid to replace such with their own tournament "The Nigel Tyler, of Alpha Amenity, Snooker Evening". Such was held at that infamous venue, "The Perfection Snooker Club", at Stirchley, in Birmingham on May 29. Not only did Alpha Amenity stand the players an extensive buffet, they were also gracious enough to afford the Lights, and prizes to-boot. One can't say fairer than that.

On the evening there were 17 players of which was eventually, after some fiercely contested battles, whittled down to two for the final: Robert and John Tomlin. John was the victor out of the two brothers. Well played John. Thanks to all for attending, you made the evening most enjoyable and a great success gentlemen, it was nice to meet so many new faces. Further thanks also to our hosts "Perfection" for their welcoming and very kind hospitality. Once again thank you to Nigel Tyler and Alpha Amenity for their continued support of the BIGGA Midland Section.

As you may have already guessed, I am very keen to promote non-golfing social events so as to reach a greater number of the Midland Section's members. To this end, and due to the fact that I did not foresee the impracticability of running both darts and snooker event together, I am in the middle of organising a darts evening. Those who fancy a bit of Bully please call or text me on: 07816 410 552. Any company interested in sponsoring the darts evening, or indeed a future social event, please have no hesitation in calling me.

I hope to have set a date for the fishing by the time you read this, shall report such next month. Please remember that one does not need to be the modern day equivalent of Richard Walker or Hugh Falkus to take part. All that is required is the wish to enjoy a relaxing day with a bunch of great characters, in a beautiful place, with free grub and light beverage, and prizes as well. The afore being thanks to Allen Southam, of Hanson Aggregates. You must be interested, so call me on the usual, or Allen on: 07976 853 777.

It gives me great pleasure to welcome the return of Mark Chatterley to our Section. It's a pity that you missed the snooker evening. Hopeful that you can make the fishing Mark.

I have to report the unfortunate passing away in June of Allan McDougall. Allan was Course Manager at Sandwell Golf Club before moving briefly to Ireland then settling at Royal Mid-Surrey Golf Club. Allan was a much respected Course Manager and well liked in the Midland Section. Our thoughts go to his family and friends.

For many years I've been honoured to have known Brian Beet, the father of Craig. Brian was one of the most genuinely welcoming fellows to which I have had the pleasure to have afforded grace. Brian passed away in June. Our thoughts are with you and your fine family at this most difficult time Craig.

To date there has been no submissions for the "Thought of the Month". Therefore anyone who wishes to send in an anecdote, is more than likely to win the tenner cash prize. Perhaps considering the immense financial outlay of stamp and stationery, a return of 250% is too great a risk!. Hope you are enjoying this very busy, yet most gratifying time of year. Until next month, cheers.

Sean McDade

East Midland

This year's Spring tournament was held on May 15 at Ashbourne GC. which was a new venue for our Section. The day was set dry and fine, in fact, the only dry day of the week. The course was surrounded by some marvelous views of the Peak District, which added to the enjoyment of the day.

A total of 33 competitors took part in the event with several good scores being posted in the perfect conditions, with the eventual winners as follows.

Best Nett: Antony Bindley, Kirby Muxloe 81-13-68 on countback Best Gross: Chris Brown, Horsley Lodge, 78. Cat 1.1. Russell Allen, Horsley Lodge, 80-7-73; 2. Dave Leatherland, Kedleston, 83-9-72; 3. Ian Needham, Beedles Lake, 83-8-74. Cat 2. 1. Adie Porter, Greetham Valley, 80-12-68; 2. Jamie Bedford, Birstall 85-16-69; 3. Harold Seed, Ashbourne, 87-15-72. Cat 3 1. Mike Billings, Chevin, 90-22-68; 2. Gavin Robson, Lingdale, 91-21-70; 3. Mark Bindley, Kirby Muxloe, 97-21-76. Trade & Associate. 1. Kevin Kinzer. E.T. Breakwells, 87-19-68; 2. Tony Cheese, Rigby Taylor, 75-0-75. Nearest the Pin. Gavin Robson, Lingdale. Longest drive. Jeff Dickinson, Leen Valley.

The day was once again generously sponsored by E.T. Breakwells who provided all the fantastic prizes. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ashbourne GC for courtesy of their fine course; the steward and stewardess for a great meal, and a special thank you to Scott Purdy and his staff for presenting a great golf course. Next year's Spring Tournament will also be held on May 15 at Kirby Muxloe Golf Club.

This year's East Midlands v East Of England golf match will take place at Beedles Lake Golf Club on Wednesday, August 13 at 3.45pm. The Autumn Tournament is to



be held at Overstone Park on September 5, 1pm. If you wish to play in either of the competitions please get in touch and I will gladly post you a form.

Finally I would like to take this opportunity to wish Pete Billings and his wife all the best for the future after their recent wedding. I hear they had a lovely honeymoon in Barbados.

Antony Bindley

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Devon and Cornwall



Not a lot of news to report this month so I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our sponsors over the last 12 months. They are: D. O. Hunt, Roffeys; A. Domett, Devon Garden Machinery; P.J. Flegg; D. Singleton, Barenbrug; J. Palfrey, Avoncrop; J. Mullins, Supaturf; P. Clifton, Bayer Environmental Science; C. Richards, Rigby Taylor; A. Masters, Vitax; R. Davey, Irritech Irrigation

The Regional Play-Offs for the John Deere World Team Championship were held at Royal North Devon Golf Club. The winners were Yelverton Golf Club with a score of 14 under par. Yelverton now go forward to the Belfry on July 25 to compete in the National Final. A big thank you to John Deere and Rochford Garden Machinery for sponsoring the event and to the Head Greenkeeper, Mark Evans and his team, for presenting the course in superb condition.

Congratulations to Antony Newland who will be leaving Yelverton to take up the position of Deputy Head Greenkeeper at Tavistock Golf Club on July 1. The Section wishes him every success.

You can contact me on: 01822 617671.

Steve Evans

South Wales

I've taken a break from cutting the fairways to write these notes, and at the rate the grass is growing at the moment if I'm not quick enough the grass will be up to the top of the wheels again and we'll be out with the flymos and trimmers. Seriously though it's good to see some grass at last, it gives us parkland boys something to do!

Kerry Jones, Course Manager at Garnet Park GC, has obviously been busy, he's just become a dad, a baby boy of 8lb and his wife Alison and baby are both fine.

Somebody else who is about to become very busy is Lance Evans. Lance has just been promoted to Deputy Course Manager at Royal Porthcawl GC. Congratulations. Probably the busiest man in Wales recently has been Celtic Manor's Course Manager, Jim McKenzie, who, with his team, had the course for this year's Wales Open in absolute pristine condition, I was lucky enough to spend the day watching some of the golf, and the view from the 2nd green looking down on the rest of the course was awesome.

Two new members to the Section are Langland Bay GC's new Head man Jim Jenkins, and Neath GC new Head, Ed McCabe. On behalf of the Section I would like to welcome you to South Wales and we hope to see you at some of our future fixtures. We played our annual match against the secretaries last month at Brynhill GC and it turned into quite an event, I thought we won, but due to the secretaries' knowledge of the finer points of the games rules, we only managed a half. Never mind Angus and Jinxy. I think the results on the day went something like: Emyr and Phil halved; Dave and Mike won; Peter and Ian halved; Adrian and Russell won, Angus and Julian ??, and John and Phil lost. Thanks to everybody who represented the Greenkeepers, to Ian Grant and his staff for the hard work put into presenting the course, and to Brynhill GC for allowing us the use of the course.

I have been reliably informed that David Gladwin, greenkeeper at Camarthen GC, will be playing in this year's Welsh Seniors Championship. We wish Dave all the very best. Best of luck to his caddie (Vicky T) for the couple of days. She'll need it.

Adrian Panks

South Coast

July already and the world of golf turns its attention towards the Open championship and Royal St Georges. We wish all the greenkeeping team well in what I'm sure will be a highly successful week for them and another great Open. We have four representatives from the Section who have been selected for the BIGGA Support Team and I'm sure they will enjoy a memorable week as they walk the famous links inside the ropes. It's been a very quiet time in the Section at the moment and there is no news to pass on. Next month will be busier with reports from our annual match against the Wessex Secretaries and the summer tournament. Don't forget to contact me if you have any news which you would like include in the around the green section. My contact details are Tel: 01202 661106 mobile 07966 386232 or email me at a.mccombie@ntlworld.com

Until next time,

Alex McCombie



SOUTH EAST Derek Farrington

Tel: 01903 260 956

Kent

Firstly, with recent changes in the Section, Phil Belton from John Shaw Machinery, has taken up the role of Kent Section Press Editor for 'Around the Green'.

As many of you will know, the Section held its first golf day at Canterbury Golf Club. I am sure that every-one who participated would agree that the course was in excellent condition. Thank you to Canterbury Golf Club for agreeing to hold a golf day, especially Jason Moody, Course Manager and his team for providing a great golf course, the caterers complemented the course by providing excellent food. The results: 1. Stuart Butler, Northforeland GC, 36 pts; 2. Gary Branchett, Tenterden GC, 35 pts; 3. James Bent, Brokehill GC, 34 pts. The trade prize went to Brian Willmot, from Tacit, 34 pts. Nearest the Pin and Longest Drive was Paul Larson, of Sene Valley GC. Thank you to all the companies who sponsored the day.

There have been a few people move in the last month or so. Phil Belton has joined John Shaw Machinery, having worked as a greenkeeper for many years. He will take up a new position of Sales Representative.

Jason Rook has joined Canterbury Golf Club to take up an Assistant's position. Birchwood Golf Club has two new additions to the team, Rob Dennis and Neal Rust, both are new to the profession and we hope that they have long and rewarding careers. Danny Williams has left Ashford Golf Club to join Chestfield Golf Club. Danny is hard working and loyal, he will be missed at Ashford GC.

Congratulations to Rob Holland, Course Manager at Birchwood GC, and his wife who are expecting their third child in August. All the best from the Section.

Finally, the next golf day will be on August 21. This will be the guest day and will be held at Lydd Golf Club.

Phil Belton



East Anglia

What a busy May - two golf days to report on and a birth. Firstly the Bartrams Golf Day at Purdis Heath Golf Club on Friday the 23rd, Norman and his team provided an impressive course for the match under Neil Ellice, the Club Secretary's, watchful eye and the hospitality was just as good. Toni Nelli ran around organising the event and made everything go like clockwork. Twelve teams of three teed off with the usual banter of, "How much did you say your handicap was?" Or "Driving like that your never playing off a 16!"

The weather gave us a few problems (the odd shower or two) but an enjoyable day was had by all, my partner Miss Charlie Langlands played very well despite being followed by a male pheasant on the 9th and 10th holes. A big thank you to Bartram Mowers and Ransomes Jacobsen for the day, On to the results: The Team Winners. S. Thompson, I. Mitchell, M. Clement. The individual winner. M. Clement,

37pts. Nearest the Pin. P. King. Longest Drive (As usual) J. Wright.

On to the birth, Patrick and Debbie Buggs gained a son, weighing in at 2 pounds 3 oz's. Thomas George was born 11 weeks premature and by all reports is doing very well so far. I pass on the Section and Association's congratulations and hope everything goes well for them.

On May 28 I was invited to Weston Park Golf Club to attend the John Deere Team Championship. A total of 28 teams attended, which was one of the highest attendance of the whole championship, while the weather was perfect, lots of sunshine and a light breeze. I had not played Weston Park before and was very impressed with the course and the way Kevin Hodges and his greenkeeping team had worked hard to bring it to its present high standard. Thanks to Stuart Edge, from Ben Burgess, and his team for all the hard work that went into the day. As you can imagine the golf was at its highest standard with several teams returning scores of 60 or lower and it is nice to see Course Managers, Professionals and committee members playing together enjoying each others company. The hospitality of the golf club was again very impressive and was maintained to the same high standard as the golf course.

On to the results: The team winners: 1. The Royal West Norfolk Golf Club, 58 Nett; 2. Thetford Golf Club, 58 nett; 3. Durham Golf Club, 58 nett. Longest Drive – Gary Stangoe, Nearest the pin 2nd – Frank Russell. Nearest the pin 16th – Steve Curtis. Best Professional – Andrew Collinson with a 73.

Royal West Norfolk went through to the next round after a chip off to the 2nd green.

Thanks go to other sponsors that helped with the event Collier Turf Care, Club Car, John Deere and Auto Flow. Derek Farrington the South East Regional Administrator had made a flying visit for the day and helped out with the checking of the cards. I would like to thank Stuart for the invite; my team enjoyed the day very much.

Ian Willett



Surrey

Goodbye cold damp greens, hello Summer, hello grass. Goodbye to the winter 19th hole chat, he's got irrigation, he's got fertiliser, so why doesn't he use them to make it grow?. Yes the grass is growing now, (hello to the summer 19th Hole chat) the greens are the best but they have been for years and everything on the golf course is rosy except that (19th Chat) where do greenkeepers go after 10am? And I haven't seen one in months.

And one retired greenkeeper/mechanic that we have not seen for a long time is Ted Styles. Ted come out of hiding as you are now an honorary member of the Surrey Section and we look forward to seeing you at the next golf day. At the time of writing this - June 2 - that golf day will be at your old haunt The Drift Golf Club.

The Surrey Section Committee had a meeting on the May 27 and it was decided that in future only members who have played in two previous golf events and that have had an official Surrey Section handicap would qualify to enter the Bioseed Bowl Knockout Competition.

Education and Training were also discussed and a Knapsack Spraying course is soon to be held. Please contact Daniel Lightfoot at Gattos Manor Golf Club for details. Also plan for September/October is a Chainsaw course and Daniel is again the man to contact (0770 2406761).

A new annual competition will take place between Surrey and Sussex Sections on August the 12th at Copthorne Golf Club. Please contact Ian Sellars for details of that, the England/Scotland Match and the annual match against the member of Wimbledon Common/London Scottish Golf Club. While speaking to Ian you might like to congratulate him on becoming engaged to Stephanie but I'm sure when you see him at the next golf day he is bound to want to buy you a drink in celebration. At least I hope that's what he implied. John Davidson has resigned from the committee as Treasurer as he has now taken up his new career running a gym. Many thanks to John for all his hard work over the past years and our best wishes for the future. Tony Bremmer will take over the treasurers job until the AGM.

The Spring Tournament and qualifier for the National Tournament took place at the Old Thorns Golf Club in May and the results were: Best Gross. Shaun Whipp. Best Nett 1. Derek Cunliffe, 68; Anthony Freeman, 72; Kevin Boxhall, 74. Nearest The Pin.

Steve Holmes and Longest Drive. Nigel Colley. Many thanks to Derek and his team for a great day, even the weather was perfect and the course was excellent. Derek when the lakes are drained my balls have 4 blue dots on them and Tony Bremmer has his name, address and telephone number on his.

Sadly this last paragraph reports the tragic news that Allan McDougall, Course Manager at the Royal Mid-Surrey Golf Club died suddenly brain haemorrhage. We send our condolences to his family and he will be missed by all who knew him. Alan was only 44 and always greeted me with friendship whenever we met.

Brian Willmott

NORTHERN IRELAND

G'Day Sports. Have you ever taken note of old sayings, the one that recently comes to mind is "More haste, less speed". How many times have you spent more time looking for a tool than the job you want it for takes to do, put it back where it came from boys and make yourself and everyone else happy. The other two things that aggravate me are "Where are my bloody glasses?" and people who don't tear toilet paper off at the perforations, so always think of other people and how you can make their life a little less stressful. What comes around, turns around.

Frank tells me they have his three legged chickens on the Hilton menu now, he says he had them every day for his dinner last week, the only drawback is on Saturday morning he woke and found himself perched on the end of the bed. Graham Wylie was back in town. Says he's the best. He's got himself a girlfriend, and says she is coffee coloured. He said she is better looking than Whitney Houston. There must be something! wrong with her!

Some of you may know and remember Alan McDougall, formerly of Roe Park Golf Club, Limavady, he regrettably passed away recently, our condolences to his family, some of them are involved in greenkeeping themselves.

An excellent golf day was held at Lurgan Golf Club. Our thanks go to Kyle Irwin, his staff and the very generous hospitality of Lurgan Golf Club.

Results: 1. Paul Lappin, Kirkistown, 41 pts; 2. Eamon Crawford, R.C.D, 38 pts; 3. Micky O'Neill, Fortwilliam, 35 pts; 4. Noel Crawford, R.C.D, 34 pts; 5. Justin Waddell, Fortwilliam, 33 pts; 6. Gary Murphy, Silverwood, 33 pts.

Visitor Mark Vaughan.

The very generous sponsor for the day was Pete Glass, of Orchard Amenity. Many thanks to him and we hope he had a good day.

Next event – Hilton at Templepatrick – July 3 at 12 noon.

Remember Terry Crawford Charity Day – August 1.

Graham Prosser



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This competition is not open to BIGGA Staff or non-members. The solution to the June Turftime Teaser was 'Glen Farrow Irrigation'. This was correctly answered by: Iain Turnbull of John O Gaunt Golf Club, Bedfordshire.

Our congratulations, a fantastic wicker food hamper with a selection of tasty food and drink is on it's way to you! Well Done!

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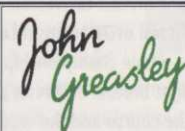
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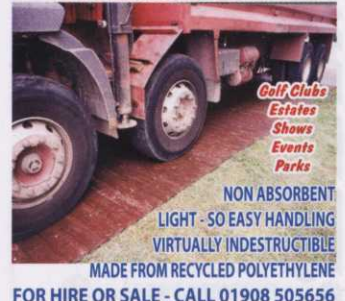
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The General Manager, Cotswold Hills Golf Club, Ullenwood, Cheltenham GL53 9QT



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Has an immediate vacancy for

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- Appropriate qualifications to NVQ Level 2 or equivalent
 - Holder of spraying certificates PA1, PA2 and PA6
- Practical Knowledge of golf course equipment and machinery
- Be enthusiastic, highly motivated and committed.

Apply in writing with full CV to:

The Secretary, Leeds Golf Club, Elmete Lane, Leeds LS8 2LJ

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The successful applicant will be responsible to the General Manager to carry out course policy and present the course to a high standard as expected by the directors.

The applicant should have a NVQ level 2/3 qualification with a PA2 spraying certificate and be able to demonstrate the ability to lead, motivate and manage an established team.

Experience of current regulations and legislation is necessary along with an understanding of budgetary control techniques.

Some knowledge of machinery/irrigation maintenance would be advantageous.

Please apply in writing or email, together with current CV including current salary to:

The General Manager, The Mid Yorkshire Golf Club, Havercroft Lane,
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Require

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Feature listing from July 2001

July 2001; Royal Lytham profile; Tees Mowers; Fertilisers; Green Grasses; John Deere profile; Sandy McDivot; College Listings

August 2001; Aeration Survey; Machrie GC profile; Rough Mowers; Saltex Preview; Dr Alan Gange - environmental research; Hayter Profile; Ponds; Open Championship review; Toro Student of the Year profile;

September 2001; Ryder Cup preview; Chafer Grubs; Drainage; BIGGA National Championship preview; Sandy McDivot; Machinery Maintenance; Soil Analysis; Wild Flowers

October 2001; Major Award for Walter Woods; Royal Portrush GC; Portstewart GC; Irrigation; Soil biodiversity; Leaf collection systems; Scotsturf preview' Saltex review

November 2001; BIGGA National Championship review; Environment Competition winner; Spraying; Toro Awards Preview; Cutting regimes; Dyke GC

December 2001; Toro Award Winners; Southern Gailes GC; BTME preview; Specialty equipment; Thatch removal

January 2002; Walton Heath profile; Greenkeeping in Denmark; Moving materials; A first for Andy Campbell; New products

February 2002; Harrogate 2002 Review; Drainage; Castlerock GC; Trees; Recycling; TurfTrax profile; Barn Owl special report

March 2002; Donnington Valley profile; Utility vehicles; Essay competition winner; Irrigation; Seeds; Sandy McDivot

April 2002; Heyrose GC profile; Bernhard's Scholarship; De-stress your greens; COSHH assessments; Rootzones and topdressing; Maintenance facilities; Essay competition

May 2002; BIGGA Report; Nematodes; Caldyc GC profile; Multi-tasking machinery; Bunker Sand; Essay competition; Fijian GC profile; BIGGA Minimum qualification

June 2002; Finding Fungi; Greatham Valley GC profile; Tyres; Calabria GC profile; Lakes and Ponds; Poa Annua - Jim Arthur

July 2002; Open preview; Turf; Steve Isaccs; Emissions; Grinding; Rotary Mowers; BTME preview; Sandy McDivot

August 2002; BIGGA Golf Day; Open review; Talking Heads - Education & training; Trees; Dr Kate Entwistle; Pwllheli GC; Weather; Compact Tractors; Saltex preview

September 2002; National Championship Preview; Irrigation; Non Grass Cutters; Hawkstone Park; Careers in Greenkeeping

October 2002; Saltex Review; Golden and Silver Key Supporters; Environment Awards; Health & Safety; Sustainable Use of Pesticides

November 2002; Toro Student of the Year; National Championship; Drainage; St Andrew's Bay; Autumn Problems

December 2002; BTME & ClubHouse Preview; R&A Golf Course committee; Dr Kate Entwistle; Pennard GC

January 2003; Beedles Lake Profile; Talking Heads - Chemical Application; Rebuilding Golf Greens; Constructive Advice

February 2003; BTME/ClubHouse Review; Royal Liverpool Profile; Irrigation; Nematodes

March 2003; The Berkshire Profile; Meloidogyne; Overseeding Golf Greens; Talking Heads - Health & Safety

April 2003; Oakmere Park GC; Spraying; Golf Course Security; Bernhards Delegation; Ransomes Jacobsen Profile

May 2003; Cardrona Golf & Country Club; Poa Annua; Rough Mowers; Mole Control; Rootzone; Green Construction

June 2003; Irrigation; Ransomes Jacobsen Scholarships; Fertiliser; Fairway Mowers



Pull up a Chair but Think of the Work



For the armchair viewer June has been a great month of TV for keen golfers but tough on the Superintendents having to prepare their courses so early on in the season.

But the great news is that there was much praise for the guys in the firing line - Bevan Tattersall, at The Belfry, for the final ever Benson and Hedges International; Jim McKenzie, of Celtic Manor, with the Wales Open; Kenny McKay, at Forest of Arden with the British Masters, and more praise than usual for my old mate, Chris Kennedy, at Wentworth, for the PGA Championship.

It may have been early in the season and the weather might not always have been ideal in the run-up to the events but there was heaps of praise for the presentation of the golf courses and justifiable accolades for the greenkeeping staff and all involved in helping to prepare their golf courses to the highest standard for these the first four televised events in the UK.

By the time you read this report it will be the turn of Gleneagles and Scott Forrest for the Diageo Championship, being played over the PGA Centenary Course. Then on to Loch Lomond and Ken Seims for the Scottish Open which is followed by The Open the following week which this year is being played at Royal St George's in my hometown of Sandwich. And finally to wind up July to us at Turnberry for the Seniors British Open Championship over the Ailsa course.

The R&A is responsible for the whole organisation of hosting an Open and it is one hell of a operation for all concerned, with the many committees, advisors, various contractors and thousands of volunteers who all play a valuable part in the success of the Championship.

But at the end of the day it is the Course Manager and Green Staff, who prepare the course. And what a responsibility it is as it seems as if the whole world is watching... most of them actually are. I am sure it will be a great Open on a great course and produce a great winner. We wish all at Royal St George's, especially Neil Metcalf and all his crew, every success.

Talking of Championship courses, we should spare a thought for the many hidden gems throughout our country which by design and condition easily would be able to host an Open but perhaps are held back by logistical challenges that a modern Championship places on a community.

Having played golf for 30 years and seen the standard and quality of some of these courses it is a shame that they do not get the recognition that they richly deserve, but they are certainly worth a visit if ever the opportunity should arise.

I was sad to learn of the sudden death of Allan McDougall, Course Manager at Royal Mid Surrey. Allan was very popular among his greenkeeping associates and our commiserations and thoughts are with his family at this sad time.

George Brown
Chairman