



far away as Cumbria and north Northumberland we hope to see you in the near future.

At the show I met up with the runner up in the Toro Student of the Year, John Talbot, from Ravensworth GC, and he informed me that he is going to make an effort to play in the Section competitions. Let's hope you can make it, John, along with the rest of the new members.

News from Slaley Hall is that they are in the process of changing the style of their bunkers. So far 12 have been done, but as you are aware they have a long way to go yet. Steve Cramm also tells me that work on their new shed should be started soon - twice the size of the present one.

The competitions have now all been sorted out and the first one is at Matfen Hall on April 22; Autumn competition at Morpeth GC, and the annual match against the East of Scotland, at Slaley Hall in the first week of October. Members will be notified for both the Spring and Autumn competitions.

Any more news, please get in touch. Jimmy Richardson

North Wales

The Spring seminar at Carden Park was well attended and our thanks to all our speakers, the main theme being on course set—up for tournament play. We hope those of you who attended will have a few ideas to put in place on your courses for the start of the monthly medals in April.

Once again, a number of the Section made the trip to the GCSAA show, this time over in San Diego — for most of us it was just that bit too far. There are some great tales of the courses visited, including watching the Buick Invitational, at The Torrey Pines Resort and looking around La Costa. I am sure Andy Campbell, Terry Adamson, Wendy O'Brien and Ian Beckett will tell you about the West Coast swing.

Here in North Wales, though, we have many great courses that give the Americans a run for their money. As you travel the coast from Chester to Bangor, taking in Prestatyn and Conwy (Caernarfonshire) links, North Wales and Measdu from Abergele to Aberdovey, the somewhat flat beginning blossoms into ideal duneland territory then on to the Island of Anglesey taking in Holyhead and Bull Bay. Around the Llyn peninsula, Nefyn & District, Pwllheli, Porthmadog, and the staging of Welsh Championships and, more recently, the European Senior Tour under the historic shadow of Harlech Castle. Royal St Davids, on a blustery day, is a test for anyone... including Jeremy Hughes. Back across the mountain heartland of Snowdonia to Llangollen and up the Wirral estuary to Wallasey and Hoylake.

I wonder why, when we decide to travel to far off places around the world, we don't just get in the car and have a drive around Wales?

I know I will now receive phone calls saying why didn't you mention my course! Well, they are all great and we are blessed to be involved in the Golf Greenkeeping industry.

Any news, views or stories for next month, give me a call Home 01925 263394 –Mobile 07778 162162

e-mail acorngolf@supanet.com

Mesen Cymru Andrew Acorn

Cleveland

Well, BTME has come and gone and I think I speak for most members when I say that it was another success! Well done to all those who organised the event and all who supported it.

Many of us believe that the new season is 'kick started' by the Harrogate show. Minds turn to ordering the spring starter fertilisers and checking that the machinery is 'ready for the off'.

Firstly, on behalf of Section members may I wish Phil Hargrave good luck? He has just been appointed as Head Greenkeeper at Crook Golf Club. His experiences at Wearside and South Shields should stand him in good stead for the challenges ahead.

Not too much news has reached me this month. However there are

some details of forthcoming social events.

 March 4. Baz Walker's Annual Section Quiz at Darlington Golf Club, 7 pm start.

Barry and Allie put a great deal of effort into the organisation of this event so please come along and support it. We know the Wearside team will win, as they know the answers to the questions before they are asked. However the rest of us really enjoy the challenge of competing for the second place prize! Please remember dress code on the night! The Section treats all members who attend to the famous Darlo Golf Club Pie and Chips — wonderful!

- 2. March 26. We're all going to the dogs tonight. Have a trip to Sunderland Greyhound Stadium with the Section. The committee have arranged a great deal with the track. For a measly £ 10 we'll get entry, a race card, three pints or drinks and a tasty baguette. A free bus will be provided for members who wish to travel from the Middlesbrough and Darlington areas. It is important to book early so contact Barry Walker on 07968 308892. Let's have a good night out and win some cash.
- April 21. SPRING OUTING taking place at Castle Eden and Peterlee Golf Club. Registration from 9am. First tee off time is 10am. Please book a slot by

ringing Barry Walker on 07968 308892. Let's have a good turn out and support the Section please.

Any news to T.C. on 07831 214879. Terry "El Prez" Charlton

Northern

Hi chaps, hope all is going well, and your courses are starting to recover from the winter play which will have taken its toll on areas around the course.

This will probably be the last time I write these notes as Adam Speight is waiting in the wings to take over as Secretary, (hooray, I hear you say).

You will all now have received your events and golf fixture list. So, as per last year, can everyone please pay for the golf day a week prior to the event?

If you are reading this before March 3 there may still be places left at the seminar at Bradford GC and the Dinner Dance at Riddlesden GC on the 6th. If you want to go to any of these events please drop me a line.

At a recent committee meeting Jim Brown decided the time was right for him to step down from the committee. So on behalf of everyone in the Northern Section – Jim, thanks for all your work over the last few years. Andy Slingsby has stepped up to take over the role of Vice Chairman that Jim has left behind. Adam and Andy are now our representatives at the regional meetings.

I would like to welcome Richard Bull, from West Bradford GC; Charles Poulter, from Knaresborough GC; Gavin Pickard, from Malton and Norton GC, and James Hopkins, from Moortown GC, who have all joined our Section recently.

Thanks for reading my ramblings over the past couple of years. Dave Thackery

North West

Did you get to the BTME at Harrogate this year? I am sure that if you did you will have seen some of the machinery you would have loved to get your hands on. The exhibition was once again well worth visiting as record numbers found out, and of course the seminars were first class with top speakers from the UK, Canada and the USA.

While on the subject of the USA, this week ten greenkeepers will be flying out to San Diego courtesy of Bernhard & Co to visit the GCSAA Exhibition. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet other professionals from a different country doing the same job but under different conditions.

This opportunity was open to all members of BIGGA. All you had to do was apply and attend a short interview. So if the chance comes along again, get your application in.

I have just completed the golf fixtures for this year which I will be

sending to the printers, so hopefully you will all be receiving your fixture list shortly. In the meantime here are the fixtures for the year.

Spring Tournament, Ellesmere GC, Tuesday, April 20, North West v North Wales; Vale Royal Abbey GC, Wednesday, June 9. Summer Tournament; Wigan GC, Thursday, June 24, North West v Northern, to be arranged; Whitelaw Bowl, Penrith GC, Wednesday, September 8; Autumn Tournament, Hurlston Hall GC, Tuesday, September 14. Stewards' Match to be arranged. Presidents Cup and AGM. Wilmslow GC, Thursday, December 2.

Any queries or news contact me on 0151 724 5412 or 07761 583387. Bert Cross



BB&O

As I am writing this report the first of this year's snow has just fallen. Looking on the bright side so has my weight, mainly due to the famous Atkins formula.

The BB&O's first Golf event takes place at Badgemore Park GC. This Spring Tournament kicks off at 10am on Thursday, April 22 with groups of three scoring. We look forward to seeing a few old and new faces at this event. Contact John Scoones for further details on 07880 550 380

Badgemore Park GC has just opened one of the latest design and technology greenkeeping complexes in the land. It boasts a state of the art lighting system with built in heater elements, water filtration unit and special maintenance bays for grinding equipment.

This ultra modern facility has the very latest security system that even the crew of the Starship Enterprise might find hard to fathom. Lyndsay Anderson and his team are as proud as punch of the facility and would be delighted to give a guided tour of their new premises on the golf day. Lyndsay can be contacted on 07810 553 012.

The Cornetto ice cream has a whole new meaning for Roy Kates, of Wexham Park GC, who recently tied the knot in Remo, Italy. We wish Roy and his wife Monica all the best for the future. Congratulations to you

Simon Marsh joins the Section from St Mellion GC, in Cornwall, and starts his new position as Course Manager of Harleyford GC. Simon, originally from the fringes of the BB&O Section, supports Aldershot FC and says, "I am happy to be in the land where Pizza gets delivered". I couldn't agree more, but I am on the Atkins diet. We all wish Simon the very best in his new position in Buckinghamshire.

Just as Simon arrives another member from our Section is departing. Gary Kenny, also known as Bravedart, is leaving Wycombe Heights GC to take up a new position as Course Manager at Ashford Manor GC. His dartboard has been bequeathed to his trusty Deputy who is currently undergoing training in the latest tarmac technology.

Nathan Chapman has secured a position as Head Groundsman at the Territorial Honourable Artillery Company in London, having been Greg Wheadon's Deputy at Aspect Park GC for the last few years. We all wish Nathan the very best in his new position with the Territorials.

Beaconsfield GC had their Christmas party on December 18. This became a double celebration when Michael Homer (now a major shareholder in Nappy's R Us) became a very proud, first time dad the next day. Mike's baby daughter has been named Georgina and from all over the BB&O we send him and his new daughter our very best wishes.

Congratulations to Brian Payne, from Burnham Beeches GC, who was presented with an award at BTME Harrogate for being an "Unsung Hero". Brian jets off for a week's holiday in France and a chance to reflect his time in greenkeeping with a bit of French cuisine and a few bottles of Chablis.

After a very successful tournament held last year, the new Rigby Taylor

Matchplay Competition 2004 gets underway. This year's format will be Singles and played between the months of April and August. All members of the BB&O Section are invited to enter this competition. The final of this event has been scheduled at The Berkshire GC in August 2004. Entries must be in by April 1 and good luck to all who participate. Anyone who requires further information can contact Gary Underwood on 07771

Any further information contact me on mark@tacitgolf.com Mark Day

East of England

First of all, sorry for not putting anything in last month's issue but at the time of writing there was no news to report. Planning for the year is well under way and we have got some very good golfing venues for the year including Belton Park, Lincoln Golf Club, Torksey, Boston and the first golfing date of the year, April 19 at Rutland County GC. Final dates and fixtures will be published and sent out in the very near future. As a committee we are always looking for educational courses to run for our Section and if you have any ideas on subjects that you would like to learn about or possible venues for the future please let me know. Don't forget the seminar day at Newark GC on March 3. See you all there.

Les Howkins

Midland

Well it's the end of an era! Yours truly has left Schwillbilly Towers of the Weoley Schloss Estate and taken residence in Handsworth Wood. Perhaps my pseudonym of old, Raggerty, should now be re-employed. Think about it, I am also a tree surgeon "Rupert"!

By now you should have received this year's fixtures and their relevant entry forms. Don't forget the Spring Tournament at Trentham Park, and the Scotts Doubles (final at Wentworth on September 16). Entry closing date for both is March 15.

As of the Spring Tournament, and all the following attire requiring events, members shall be expected to sport an official BIGGA tie, particularly at golfing evening meals. Those not doing so shall incur a £1

Proceeds will be collected over the year and presented to charity. The Section is currently carrying a small stock of BIGGA ties, and is offering them to you at a £2 reduced cost of £4.50. I'm sure you will agree that this can only improve our professional status and image, and promote our proud Section. Mr Fellows, I can't wait to see a BIGGA bow-tie.

I have the pleasure of welcoming nine new members to our smashing Section:- M. I. Gunn, G. Matthews, J. L. Tomlin, I. Holborn, L. Giles-Townsend, T. L. Reynolds, S. P. Walther, I. Cureton, and R. Dimmock. We all look forward to your support and to meeting you at our many events.

Sorry that this month's 'Around the Green' is a little light but moving home has taken-up all my free time. Anything to report? Please call the Raggerty hot-line: 07816 410552.

Until next month take care, and be cheered by the thought that Spring is only just around the corner. Honest!

Sean McDade

Mid Anglia

Doesn't time fly. BTME done and dusted for another year, pen and paper ready for yet another maintenance programme and all keen to get the cutting season started.

A fairly mild Winter again, (a few frosty days, some snow, hail and rain) but in general quite warm. Currently half way through February with signs of trees starting to bud, grass starting to grow, that time of year is almost upon us again.

I hope you managed to attend the BTME this year as it is a great way of seeing all the reps doing some work for a change, (only joking lads) but also to see the commitment of our Association towards us and trying to promote our trade as a professional body.



I met quite a few of the Mid Anglia Section on the day I visited and some faces from days gone by. We have had our first committee meeting of the year and as I said at the Christmas meeting these venues for 2004 have been chosen — Spring meeting: John o'Gaunt, 36 holes and National Championship qualifier. Format to be confirmed. Thursday, May 13.

Summer meeting: Mount Pleasant, 18 holes, 2pm start, buffet style meal and casual wear in the evening – date TBC, but hopefully last week in July.

Autumn meeting: Woburn G&CC, 18 holes plus the AGM. Wednesday, October 27. Christmas meeting: Chesfield Downs, 18 hole Texas Scramble, there will probably be a limited entry on this one. Thursday, December 9.

Please make a note of the dates as we are keen to get some of you new guys playing so it is not the same old names and faces winning all the time.

Finally I would like to thank Stewart and Martin, from SJS irrigation, for their time and insight into the world of the watering system. Twenty of our members attended, and thanks must go to Dunstable Downs GC for hosting the lecture.

Steve Mason

East Midlands

Once again the start of the year sees our first BIGGA event as our annual trip to Harrogate. As usual the show just gets bigger and better each year. It is also great to meet up with all your old friends, and to make a few new friends too. At section level we will have enjoyed out first event of the year, the go-kart evening on February 25 at the Wymeswold Centre, (results and a more detailed report will appear next month). The second event is our trip to Wimbledon on May 6, followed very quickly by our Spring Tournament and National tournament qualifier at Kirby Muxloe GC on May 12. Every member should now be in possession of their forms. If you have not received yours by now please let me know. Finally our AGM this year will take place at Rushcliffe Golf Club on November 11.

Antony Bindley



South Coast

At last a little spell of winter! A cold snap which has been long overdue and much appreciated by many of us that have been experiencing the unusually warm weather, which has brought us many problems including repeated outbreaks of Fusarium.

I have just returned from Harrogate and BTME. On a personal level this year was very different for me as I was giving a presentation at the National Education Conference.

After travelling up on the Sunday I had an evening meeting with Frank Newberry who wanted to run through my presentation with me. An hour later and Frank had given me some excellent pointers and feedback and it was back to my room to change much of the running order. Frank's support was much needed and although I had to change my presentation it certainly looked and ran better.

It seems a very crass statement to say 'it gets better every year' but as far as I'm concerned this was certainly the case this year with BTME.

The full programme of workshops and the conference started on Monday. The conference gave us a wonderful range of presentations with Billy McMillan the highlight for me. His presentation looked at how course management has changed and highlighted what makes greenkeepers so special. Commitment, passion and dedication were just some of those ingredients and it was covered in an excellent presentation which was sharp, witty and very moving at times.

Monday night and the conference dinner which was superb. After

dinner speaker Jimmy Bright was in side-splitting form, reeling off so many stories and gags and the top table were the brunt of many of Jimmy's jibes. Tuesday was back to the conference and another day packed with presentations. Kate Entwistle and Terry Buchen were my pick of the day and then it was time for the show.

Wednesday was keynote speaker day, always a highlight of the week. I vividly remember Frank Dick who was one of our first keynote speakers some years ago. I never thought I would see a better motivational presentation but it was eclipsed by Alvin Law.

His very powerful presentation 'No such word as can't' took us on a rollercoaster ride of emotions and experiences. His determination and will to succeed was a lesson to all of us and the standing ovation was inevitable and much deserved. I will remember this presentation for a very long time. I wasn't the only one in the audience found wiping a tear from my eye.

The seminar programme followed with many excellent presentations covering a wide range of topics from stress management to greens construction.

The show was bigger and better than ever and was very busy with much positive feedback from the stands that I visited. Wednesday also saw a glimpse into the works of our 'futures committee' during a presentation.

They have identified many areas of concern and are currently working hard to shape our association's future as well as outlining a directive into the concerns over education in the industry.

This was followed by the AGM which ran very efficiently and professionally and saw the Chairmanship pass from George Brown to Andy Campbell. Well done George for last year and good luck to Andy in his year in office.

Our Section's Past chairman Kerran Daly is now Vice Chairman and I am looking forward to being present when he becomes Chairman. The whole week was rounded off by the banquet and the sounds of 'Bootleg Abba' I didn't realise so many greenkeepers were Abba fans. We were treated to a collection of their greatest hits and the dance floor was packed all night. Another great night! I'm looking forward to next year already! Many thanks to all of our staff at HQ for all their hard work in making my week such an enjoyable one and hopefully there will be more faces from our section there next year.

If there is any news you want to include in next month's section notes then please contact me

Phone 01202 661106 mobile 07966 386232 email a.mccombie@ntlworld.com
Until next month
Alex McCombie

Devon and Cornwall

Our January meeting, sponsored by Barenbrug, was held at Royal North Devon Golf Club on Wednesday, January 14. Just for a change, the weather was horrendous with gale force winds and driving rain. Despite the conditions, we still had an excellent turn out, with 64 members in attendance.

Twenty-four members braved the conditions and attempted to play golf. Thanks to David Singleton of Barenbrug for setting the golfers on their way at the 1st tee. The rest of us were escorted on the customary course walk by Head Greenkeeper, Mark Evans. Many thanks to Mark for keeping the course walk brief!

I would like to thank the secretary, Bob Fowler and RND GC for allowing us the use of their excellent facilities. I would also like to thank the catering and bar staff for an excellent lunch and refreshments, and Mark Evans and his staff for presenting the course in superb condition, despite the weather. I would also like to thank Barenbrug and David Singleton for their continued sponsorship of our Section.

After lunch, the prizes for the golf were presented by David Singleton. The competition was reduced to 12 holes and in third place was Justin Woods, from St Mellion, with 21 points; 2nd place went to home player,



Nicholas Moyse with 22 points, and the winner with 23 points was Gordon Tamblyn, from Mullion.

Our afternoon educational talk was presented by agronomist, Andy Cole, of PSD Agronomy. The talk entitled, Green Speeds, Myths and Misconceptions, was very informative and excellently put together using Powerpoint. Many thanks to Andy for a superb presentation. We really did appreciate you coming to our meeting, especially when you were moving house the following day! Please relay our apologies to your wife and daughters!

Our annual trip to BTME in Harrogate was another resounding success and a great time was had by all. A big thank you to Regional Administrator, Derek Farrington, and to all the staff at BIGGA HOUSE for their hard work. Also a big thank you to Stewart Ashworth, of Amenity Technology, for once again sponsoring the coach.

The Toro/Ransomes Jacobson Machinery Workshop will be held at Seale Hayne College, Newton Abbot on Monday, March 8.

Our Spring meeting will be held at Teignmouth Golf Club on Thursday, March 25 with guest speaker, Lawrence Pithie MG, Director of Maintenance with American Golf.

Details of the meetings should be with you before you read this. If not, please give me a ring on 01822 617671.

Steve Evans

South Wales

Creoso I pawb un waith eto. Hello to all of you once again.

Firstly, I would like on behalf of the SWS to welcome Andy Campbell as the new Chairman of BIGGA and wish him well on his year in office.

BIGGA were kindly invited to attend a tour, presented excellently, by Tony Horn of the Millenium Stadium, which was co hosted by Inturf and the IOG. The evening mainly concentrated on the pitch movement and installation ready for this year's Six Nations' Championship.

Those who attended would all agree that Tony has a lot of work on his hands. One of the more evident things that arose was the diversity of events that take place at the stadium – requiring good project management due to the tight deadlines – events that varied from rugby to football and motocross to music.

We would like to thanks Tony and Inturf for an excellent night and wish you well in the up coming internationals. (Tony has kindly offered anyone wanting to help him fork the field at half time in the up coming internationals, free tickets, lunch with the players after and free bar. Give him a ring on 00021 666 666).

Unless you are living in bubble you will know that Wales has been battered by the weather with severe flooding across the whole of the country. Hopefully it has not affected you that much and has enabled you to get winter works back on track

The BTME has come and gone and if you were lucky to attend, I hope you enjoyed it. I have heard that some upstanding figures of the South Welsh Section were seen having a serious discussion about one of Harrogate's fine beverages. The world famous Vodka Nipple jelly! It wasn't only the vodka that was jelly night.

A prediction

I am writing this on Feb 5, nine days before the Clans of Scotland descend on Cardiff to do battle against the Welsh team, I decided to make a prediction of the score, so by the time you read this it will be all over. The Score. Wales 29 Scotland 3 (which was awarded to them as a thank you for just turning up).

Anyway that's it from me

P.S. With regard to my prediction, if I am way out on the score then blame Peter Lacey it was his idea. If I am close it was my idea, Cheers.

Editor's note: Well Wales didn't score as many as predicted and Scotland scored more. So there!

Cofion cynnes/Best Wishes Kerry Jones

South West

In reference to last month's article, I am pleased to announce that Andy Boyce has been promoted to Course Manager here at Bath GC. I am sure we would all like to wish him every success for the future. Another recent appointment has been John Jarvis who is now the new Course Manager at Lansdown GC. Well done, John.

Education? Yes I am still going on about it. What I am aiming to do this year is give you a list of courses, venues and dates and not rely on waiting for sufficient numbers to ring in and then try and match dates up with everyone. So please support these courses, you should be receiving information shortly.

Finally just a quick note to all you Course Managers. If you need extra help in the coming summer months to cover holidays, sickness, maintenance or pre-tournament preperation, then I would be more than happy to offer my services on a daily basis.

Contact me on Tel: 01225 333928 Mob: 07812 380936. Guy Woods



London

Under New Management.

A rare occurrence indeed took place at Sandy Lodge GC in February. The London Section held a committee meeting. Under the direction of new Chairman, Rob Phillips, a Committee of eight gathered around the table to decide the best way to shake off their "sleeping giant" image. They have not made a bad start.

Golf days have been finalised for April 29 at Batchworth Park; July 22 at Sandy Lodge and the Turkey Trot will be held on December 1 at Ashridge. An educational day on IT is well into being arranged and very generous sponsorship has been agreed to give a substantial prize to the 'Golfer of the Year'. All Section Members will receive details and entry forms for the Golf Days in the near future.

Rob and his team, which include Paul Clark, Secretary, and David Badham, Treasurer, are determined to get the London Section back on its feet and would be delighted not only with a great turnout for the above dates but would welcome any suggestions from Section Members.

Derek Farrington

Surrey

The welcome paragraph this month starts with the arrival of Charlie George Fletcher, 8lb 5oz of bouncing baby boy and the first born of Pete and Jo.

Pete, Course Manager at Selsdon Park Hotel and Golf Club said the delivery was straight forward and only Asprin was taken for the pain. Pete took this on arrival at the hospital with a glass of water. Congratulations from us all. Other arrivals to Surrey Section are Michael Merrick, the new Course Manager at Royal Mid-Surrey Golf Club and John Biermont, Deputy at Tyrrells Wood Golf Club.

Clive Osgood is leaving Walton Heath Golf Club after over 30 years and is taking early retirement. I am sure that Clive will keep in touch with Surrey Section and we look forward to seeing him at our golf days. Ian McMillan leaves Queenwood GC to take up the position as Clive's successor and we wish him every success in his new challenge.

Brian Willmott

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This competition is not open to BIGGA Staff or non-members.

The solution to the February Turftime Teaser was 'Barrelfield Construction'. The 5 lucky winners of the Padded Body Warmers, courtesy of Greenlink International & Rigby Taylor are Neil Fryer, Scott Smith, Mr J Attmere, Mr R J Evans, Malcolm Jervis. Well done to you all!

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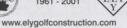


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- · At least 7 years experience on links greenkeeping and construction, with at least 2 years as a deputy head greenkeeper
- · A working knowledge of maintenance of modern golf course machinery and irrigation
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- · Active golfer with a handicap of 12 or better

Closing date for applications: 31st March 2004.

Apply in writing, with CV to:

Mr Graham Ferguson Lacey, Castletown Golf Links, Fort Island, Derbyhaven, Isle of Man



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