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event cards, which I am assured are on the way to you and will be in the next invitation to the Summer Tournament at Henley GC.

It is with deep regret that I have to inform the Section about the death of Colin White. Colin's career started at The Dell in Southampton and in the mid 1970's he took charge at Tottenham's White Hart Lane. After a successful career in First Division Turf Management, Colin joined forces with Rigby Taylor and for the last 10 years he has been covering various parts of Southern England for Avoncrop Amenity.

On March 26 Colin passed away after bravely fighting a terminal illness. Always the perfect gentleman, Colin will be sadly missed throughout the Region and on behalf of the BB&O Section we offer our sincere condolences to Colin's family.

Mark Day

The BB&O's Chairman's Message

Dear Member,

As your recently appointed Chairman I thought that it would be an ideal opportunity each month through the magazine and Section notes to send out encouraging words and suggestions.

At the present time, representing you at Section level is a wonderfully dedicated committee, who are keen to promote your interests in the form of golf days, social and educational events. They therefore need your support.

I know only too well the difficulties that one can encounter with employers when requesting time off and in particular when workload and golfing expectations are high, this is understandable. However the benefits

are plentiful and I believe should not be missed.

My suggestion this month would be to prepare your diary well in advance and pencil in all key events that you wish to attend, present this at your greens committee level setting out your reasons and requirements, also pinpoint the areas as to where your course could benefit from such an adventure when greenkeeping networking is prolific.

Have a good spring.

Sid Arrowsmith MG



Surrey

What a great day we all had at Dorking GC, on March 31. Congratulations to Tony Bremer and all his team, including Les. Only a few days before, an inch of rain fell on Dorking and Tony couldn't believe his own eagerness when inviting 68 Surrey members so early in the year. But his worries soon faded as he set out with his Texas Scramble team and they reassured him with many a word of encouragement, that I hear included: "I think the line is just left of that fusarium patch."

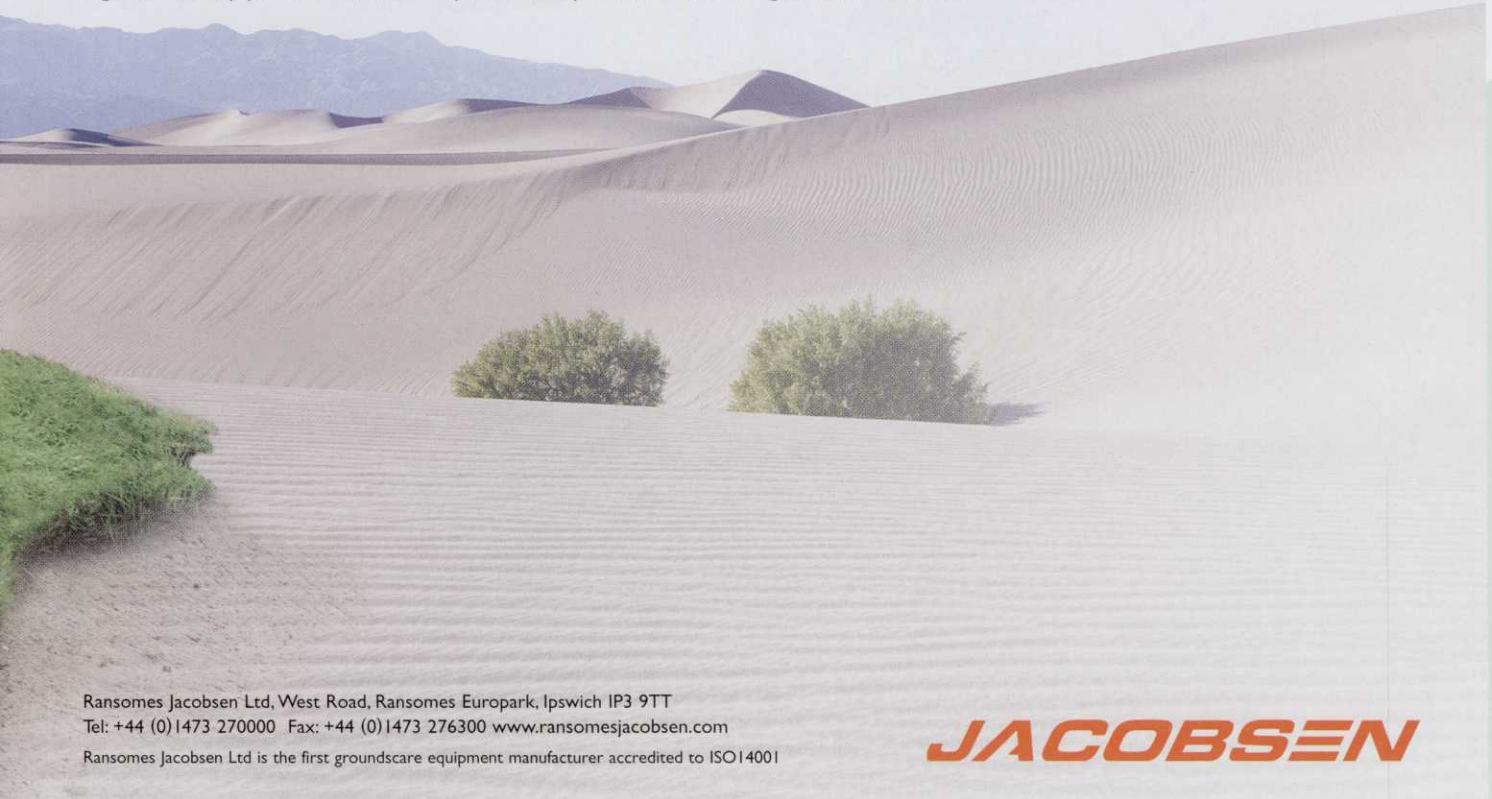
As for me I am pleased to say that I captained a team of such skill and consistency, namely Ron Christie, Roger Tydeman and Richard Evans, that our net 55.7 was easily enough to secure first place. The outstanding moment was the second shot on the 18th when, in front of a balcony of astonished spectators, one of our team hit a 170 yard shot to within 5ft of

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the pin. Modesty does not allow for the disclosure of this fine player but just ask John Ross if you must know my name.

Runners up were Alec Bradshaw, John Jennings, David Holloway and Ian Sellers, net 57. The Longest Drive prize was given to Anthony Freeman, because he is the Section Chairman. Nearest the Pin prize winners were Greg Smith, Alec Bradshaw, Dam Nordworthy, Mark Harvey and Darren Bryant. The sponsor was Ernest Doe and we thank them most sincerely for the quality prizes.

I have since spoken to many who played and we are all of the same opinion that next year we ought to play Dorking again as our starter venue, as bad weather is no concern to a Head Greenkeeper with Tony's cast iron constitution.

Scarlet Sellers, 8lbs, was born on February 27 and her mother, Stephanie, made Ian, our ex Secretary, a proud father again after many years. He felt so young that, as with fatherhood, he came out of retirement recently to play football with John Jennings. He found that an early morning call from a crying baby was only a little less uncomfortable than four days of not being able to walk. Having mentioned John Jennings twice already in this edition, we congratulate him, his wife, Lin, and baby, Leah, 8lbs. 7oz, born on December 15.

Our next golfing fixture is at Banstead Downs GC, May 17, so please make it as good a turnout as we had at Dorking.

The Gentlemen's Dinner, at Walton Heath, was once again a huge success and although not a Surrey Section event, many of us played and we thank Ian McMillan and his greenkeepers for an excellent day.

Brian Willmott

Kent

Quick, wake up, the grass is growing again! Oh what joy to be out there mowing again after another long winter. Everyone must be really busy because none of you have had the time to report any news to me for this column. Come on guys, anything will do!

A couple of bits of news I have got. Firstly, congratulations to Richard 'Tonto' Lewis, whose undoubted better half gave birth to a 7 pound 8 ounce baby girl, called Honey, on March 5. Secondly, welcome to David Tomlin, of the London Club, to the Kent Section.

Thanks to several more companies pledging support to our revitalised Section, namely Barmonset (Golf Mats UK), Collier Turf Care, Lastec, Gem Professional, Ernest Doe and Sons and Midlube.

Lastly, we hope to be putting together a crack golfing team of all-star Kent greenkeepers to take on the world, or other Sections, in the near future. Participation in these events will be dependant on individuals turning up at regular golf days, so make sure you get there! Many thanks to Andrew Wood for this and Avoncrop Amenity in general for their valued support.

Don't forget to contact me with any news on 07843 410755 or at grassyars@hotmail.com.

Rob Holland



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London

Welcome to another edition of 'no news from London'. It is the second week in April and as I look outside my office window, it is snowing! I no longer get surprised by the different weather patterns that we experience in the UK but I must confess I find it extremely funny that the majority of my members told me three weeks ago that summer had arrived and wasn't everything just dandy.

Three days of sun in the middle of March and no one needs a summer holiday because summer is already here, on our doorstep. You may have guessed but not one of our members work for the met office. Of course this all has a knock on effect to the perception of your course because we should now have our surfaces in prime condition, because that is what three days of sun should produce.

I probably sound bitter but I'm not really as we are in a very acceptable condition at the moment, but it does make you wonder what goes through people's mind when their course is maybe not at its most desirable in very early spring.

I'm sure this is the case at most clubs and an attitude that will carry on for years to come. Part of this attitude is proportioned to the 'Augusta syndrome', which I don't know if I fully agree with, though I fully understand the merits of that argument. I don't want to use these notes to harp on about our course or myself but due to the nature of our undulating greens and high fescue sward content we are actually advertising at the moment to experience 'Augusta-like greens'.

Now before everyone starts calling me ***** and ***** , we know our greens aren't as green and as quick as Augusta's, but they are a lot quicker and sloppier than a lot of people in the Region may have played before, and numbers of green fees and positive comments are proving that we are benefiting from the Augusta syndrome.

Alec MacIndoe



Frosts are nowhere near as intense and the use of temporary greens was not as widespread as in the past. Greens were surviving at previously unheard of heights of cut. At Minchinhampton we hand mowed with old Certes mowers at 4.5mm once or twice weekly pretty well all through the winter.

There were also some very sensible suggestions for dealing with stress and some very silly ones. The golf course is outdoors and there are many factors, not least the weather, over which we have little or no control. There are also a lot of people to deal with - members, visitors, public, committee, staff, etc. You cannot possibly please everyone, but it will help to communicate with everyone.

Other suggestions for dealing with stress ranged from visiting the herb-shop, or off-licence, or if that fails, any nearby motorway flyover. I favour the second, less drastic, option myself, but if anyone wishes to seriously discuss stress do please call - it can be horrible to deal with.

I realise that it will be May before this hits the shelves, the sun will be out, Dominic will be sharpening the greens for the Greenkeeper Amateur event at The Wiltshire. Did I say 10 on the stimp Dominic? Of course I meant 12 and don't forget to cut the rough properly. Winter will be a distant memory, but please forward any more details to me and I'll try to correlate and circulate back to everyone.

Andy Boyce, from Bath GC, raised an interesting point about management on a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Part of Bath GC, like Minchinhampton Old Course, is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Whereas, in the past, there was not such a conscious level of interest in archaeology, now the Statutory Bodies, in this case English Heritage, are much more publicly accountable.

This in turn means a tightening of rules, which inevitably means more restrictions on activities, I blame Phil Harding. It is an offence to carry out any action that disturbs the ground on a Scheduled Ancient Monument. There is a clause, thankfully based on common sense, which allows any past established actions, in our case aeration of greens, tees and fairways for example, to continue, as there is no point protecting something, which has, in all probability, already been damaged.

Any other activity needs 'Scheduled Monument Consent', which involves applying to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, and can take six months to get any decision. In the case of Minchinhampton Old Course, we have just drawn up a management plan in conjunction with English Heritage, which details known archaeology and sets out what may or may not be done. This has been an immensely positive step and has really put the management of the course, which had become quite difficult, back on track.

We are starting to draw up next year's fixtures - please contact me if your club would be willing to stage one of them and indicate which you would prefer. Otherwise I'll be on the phone!

Finally, spring is here at last and that means ponies on Minchinhampton Common, you'll have seen the photo in April's Greenkeeper International. No fences or anything - you wouldn't believe how far a pony can amble in a night, or how many greens it can manage to amble across. Crafty little beggars too - a couple of them have discovered the ice-cream van and have learnt to hang around looking adorable waiting to be fed, only to turn nasty if the ice cream is withheld.

Recently, a pal of mine had to run madly around his car, hotly pursued by a hungry pony, and eventually only managed to escape by flinging his 99 with double choc flake across the common while frantically wrenching open the car door.

Keep the info coming in guys. See you all at The Wiltshire.

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Paul Worster

SOUTH WEST & SOUTH WALES

South West

There is an inherent difficulty in writing this column, it takes six or seven weeks to get into print. That means that by the time anyone reads it, the season has completely changed and everyone wonders what the old twit is on about.

Thanks for the feedback from the March edition ref. stress levels. I had several guys get in touch, one still smouldering following "a stinging lecture in appropriate greenkeeping technique" delivered by a bad tempered club official at a recent greens committee meeting. This mini lecture was along the usual lines of how well his lawn is looking compared to the course and so on, and culminated in the assertion that temporary greens are totally unnecessary and should be done away with completely.

Now where have I heard that before? Back in the 1970's springs to mind. The theme that ran through all your feedback was that with unpredictable, and often very changeable weather, it can be very difficult to know exactly how best to manage the greens, particularly through the winter months. I did conduct a brief local poll to find out how we are coping - thanks to all those who took the time to talk it through.

There was markedly more fusarium last autumn, and the fusarium season took longer to run its course with fewer, but much larger scars, than usual. Raising the height of cut did not necessarily speed recovery.



South Coast

It is with great sadness that I have to pass on the news that Colin White passed away on Saturday March 26. These are without doubt the most difficult Section notes that I have ever had to write and I have sat in front of my PC trying to write them for over a week now. How can you sum up into words about such a great man?

Having returned from his funeral and memorial service I feel I can now pay tribute to 'Chalky'. Chalky was an extraordinary man who touched so many people's lives and we can all be thankful for knowing him. It was said that when he entered a room it lit up and how true that was. He was always happy, never had a bad word to say about anyone and always had a joke to tell to cheer up the troops.

He was a people person, only seeing the good in them and I can recall the tremendous support he gave me before giving my first public presentation: "You'll be fantastic," very comforting words to a very nervous man. The memorial service was a celebration of this great man's life that was cut so short. It was a very moving service that highlighted his pursuit of excellence in everything he did and enabled us to hear some tremendous Chalky stories from some of the people who had the privilege to work with him.

His love for the Saints is known by all and I'm sure he had a smile on his face as we all sang the final hymn, 'O when the Saints go marching in'. The fact that there were several Portsmouth fans in the congregation



would have been the icing on the cake! As a Section we will miss him enormously not calling at our golf clubs but also at our golf days, the sight of Chalks' smiling face on the course will live long in my memories.

I had the fortune to play with him last year and he had a blinding front nine heavily outscoring me. In true Chalks' fashion he apologised so many times for playing so well but at the turn he simply said to me: "Come on, time for a big second half Alex." It is so fitting we have decided to dedicate our spring tournament to Chalky and will play for the Colin White Memorial Trophy and it's great that some of his family members will be there to play, present the trophy and see just how much respect and affection we have for him.

We will all have our own very special memories of this great man and although it may seem he has left us, those cherished memories will ensure that Chalky is very much alive. Let's remember the great man that was Chalky White. God bless you Chalky, I am honoured to have known you, call you a friend and will always remember you with the greatest of affection. Thank you for so many happy memories. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends.

Alex McCombie

Devon & Cornwall

It's a well known fact that one is never too old to learn in this profession and having been involved for some 34 years, and now well passed my sell by date, I am beginning to wonder if I am starting to lose my marbles. In last month's report I mentioned that a local greenkeeper had increased his skills

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by becoming a marine salvage expert, this month I can even beat that story.

Two weeks ago I was travelling around the Cornwall area when I visited one of my regular customers on the South Coast to be greeted with a very strong aroma of a fishy nature. The lads were actually having a tea break and frequently asking me why I kept blowing my nose and sniffing. Knowing from past experience that a couple of the lads are practical jokers I was becoming rather on the cagey side, by this time I could see that they could not keep their secret any longer, hence I called their bluff, only to be told that as well as being greenkeepers they had become part time trawler men and to prove the point they asked me to go outside, which I readily agreed to do.

To my amazement there before my very own eyes was a Cushman with not one but two Dolphins loaded on the back. Unfortunately the Dolphins had been damaged by the trawler nets and hence washed up onto the private beach. On a more serious note it was quite distressing to see the damage that had been inflicted. I was informed that it was not the local trawlers, because their nets comply with fisheries regulations, it's those fools from the other side of the water.

The March meeting was held at the Churston Golf Club on the 16th with an attendance of 56 members. The sponsors were Bayer and Supaturf. The morning's Stableford competition was for the Supaturf Trophy for Head Greenkeepers and the Bayer Trophy for Assistants. The non golfers were entertained by Kelvin Miller, the Head Greenkeeper, who took them on a course walk. Unfortunately the weather was not favourable for the players or the non golfers with very heavy rain showers, in spite of the poor conditions Kelvin and his team had prepared the course in superb condition.

The winners of the Supaturf competition were as follows: 1. Buster Lewer, Dainton Park Golf Club, 34pts; 2. Kelvin Yeoman, Dartmouth Golf Club, 31pts; 3. Gordon Childs, Retired Ex Churston Golf Club, 31pts. Kelvin had the best score on the back nine by one point.

The Bayer results for the Assistant were: 1. Steve Worrall, Stover Golf Club, 38pts; 2. Simon Combes, Dainton Park, 36pts; 3. Chris Edwards, Wrangaton, 36pts. Simon had the better score on the back nine.

After an excellent lunch and prize giving, Ann Murray, Director of the European Turfgrass Laboratories, in Stirling, presented the afternoon educational talk. Ann's talk was on rootzones and top dressings and was very enlightening. It was unfortunate that Ann had to catch a return flight to Edinburgh otherwise many more questions could have been asked from the members, it is certainly a very interesting topic. Many thanks to Jane, our Regional Administrator, who collected and returned Ann to the Bristol Airport, safe and sound.

If any member has any news that can contribute to Around the Green, please do not hesitate to contact me. I have just heard the weather forecast for the end of the week, snow and frost. Do you ever get that feeling you just cannot win?

That's all for now until next month.

Donovan O Hunt

South Wales

We imagine you are all working like crazy, trying to keep the grass down, bet you are all fed up with the comments relating to Augusta's greens and why your greens are not as fast as theirs, with the exception of Fescue Peter 'the rake' Lacey. A moaning member at Newport Golf Club recently said our course in February was poor in relation to the courses he played in Spain recently. Members, don't you just love them?

By the time you receive this month's magazine we will have held our annual spring seminar, sponsored by Farmura International, guest speaker Jim Arthur. Our series of winter evening lectures have finished. IOG were

responsible for organising the 2005 series, with an excellent range of topics relating to all fields of turf management, giving the greenkeepers an interesting insight into the challenges that groundsman face.

The Section is indebted to Avoncrop, once again, for sponsoring the winter evening lectures. Thanks to all who give freely of their time and effort to ensure this continues, thanks to IOG and to Pencoed College for allowing us to host these nights. Must say the turnouts for the evening lectures from the greenkeepers was poor, goes without saying we would like to see more and we welcome new members, it does not cost a penny and the series has been very educational. It also gives you a chance to meet new acquaintances and network. Please don't let all Peter Lacey's and the IOG's hard work in organising go to waste.

Thanks to the WGU for part financing my Deputy at Newport GC, Gareth Gibson, on his chainsaw course. We used to be a tree lined Parkland course, I think Gareth has a sideline on firewood. Congratulations to one of my colleagues, Mark Wilshire, and his wife, Katherine, on the birth of their girl, Rebecca Louise, 8lb 6oz. Mark is a bit miserable at the moment due to sleep deprivation.

You should all have received your fixture cards, thanks to Tower Chemicals for sponsoring. If not, get in touch with Peter Lacey and he will send another. The applications for the Rigby Taylor Doubles Matchplay are coming in thick and fast, the draw will be made at the spring seminar. Competition costs nothing and the final, if your good enough, will take place at Tenby Golf Club, with a great evening, followed by being treated like kings, courtesy of Dave Carvey. I hope I am drawn against Russell Anderson and one of my boys, Peter Holmstrom, and Jim lets us play at Celtic Manor.

The redesigning of the Ryder Cup course begins this month. It should be exciting to see the new holes develop, I believe there will be nine new holes and extensive remodelling of the other holes. Jim Mackenzie will welcome anybody interested to see the development in progress.

Good luck to the Celtic Manor, particularly the green staff responsible for the Roman Road course who are hosting this year's Welsh Open in June due to the remodelling on the Ryder Cup course. Hope you get a dry one.

All the best to Gary Connell, Deputy Course Manager, at the Celtic Manor and his new wife, Nicole, who are getting married there.

Dates of interest and fixtures for 2005: Welsh Open, June 2 - 5; Summer Tournament, June 8, Rhondda Golf Club, 1.30pm tee off; Scotts Golf Man Trophy July 21, Llanishen Golf Club; Match vs South West, August 18, St Pierre, 12.30pm tee off; Autumn Trophy, October 20, Raglan Parc Golf Club, 1.30 Tee Off; RT Matchplay Finals, October 28, Tenby Golf Club, 11am Tee off; Kerry Jones' Birthday, December 5, all cheques payable to K Jones, thanks; Winter Trophy, December 9, P&K, 10.30 tee off.

Results of the spring golf day next month, hope the Match Captain, Andy Roach, has cut Emyr Nickels handicap, to give the rest of us a chance. You should have received an application form for the BIGGA Environmental Competition, which is strongly advised to enter.

If there is any news in the future please contact Kerry on Tel: 07776 178 455 or email: KerryjokoJones@yahoo.co.uk, or Angus on Tel: 07977 423571; email: agusmac07@aol.com.

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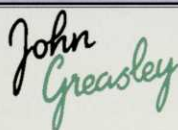
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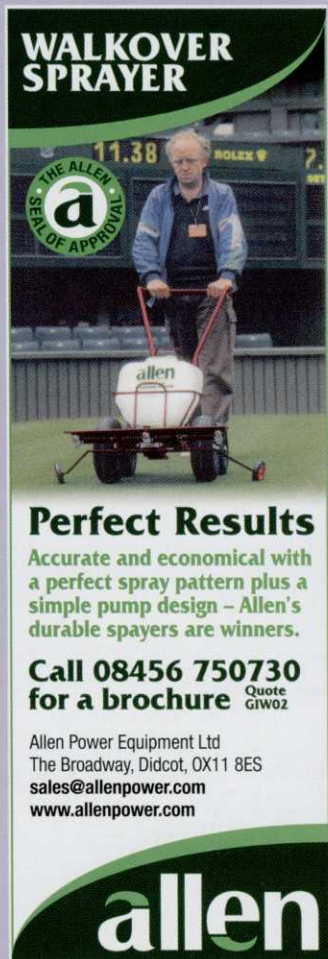
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