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North

I would like to start this month by saying well done to George Mitchell, from Newmachar Golf Club, and Jim McCormac, from Kiriemuir Golf Club, for going down to represent our Section and the Scottish Region in the National Championship, at Worksop Golf Club and Sherwood Golf Club, down near Nottingham. Sadly they just missed out in winning a prize, but I am sure they had a good time and made a lot of new friends.

We had a golf outing followed by our Section AGM on my own course at Newmachar Golf Club on October 13. A great day was had by all 19 competitors, but we were lucky to go ahead after two days of solid rain before hand. No rain to talk about for six months then flooded out, but despite all the water the course dried up overnight and a good day was had by all.

The winners were: Nearest the Pin at the 7th, Kevin Thompson, and the 12th was Ben Brookes. Class 3 was won by John Geddes, McDonald GC, 85-14-71(bih) and the runner up was Steve Simpson, Unattached, 88-17-71. Class 2 was won by Ben Brookes, Newmachar GC, 81-9-72, and the runner up was Alan Grant, Fraserburgh GC, 87-9-72. Class 1 was won by Neil Kidd, Moray GC, 77-5-72, and the runner up was Steve Sullivan, Craigiehill GC, 77-4-73. The winner of the Veterans prize was Donald Patience, Tarbat GC, 92-12-80. The winner of the Trade prize was Raymond Warrander, Alpha Groundcare, with a nett 79. The Apprentice winner was Mark Main, Moray GC, 92-16-76. The runner up in the scratch prize was George Mitchell, Newmachar GC, with a 76, and the winner and Champion golfer for the day was Kevin Thompson, Moray, with a great score of 67 - yes, he did play all the 18 holes. I would also like to say to my own staff, I was not wearing jeans to play golf.

We held our AGM after the golf and we only had 19 members, which was very disappointing. So come on guys, the Committee make a big effort for your Section, so you should do the same. I would like to thank the members who did make the effort to turn up but some new faces would be nice. Right, I will get off my soap box now.

I am delighted to say we have another three new members for this month's report. They are David Williams, Course Manager at Cullen Golf Club, and another two greenkeepers from Royal Dornoch, Alastair Ross and Alexander MacDonald. So welcome to the Section lads. I guess that must nearly be a full house from Dornoch now, so many thanks.

The two winners of this year's Patrons' Award from our Section are George Mitchell, from Newmachar Golf Club, and John Geddes, from McDonald Golf Club. So well done to them and enjoy your trip to Harrogate. Remember to take plenty of money with you as the beer is not cheap.

I would just like to finish by saying our two Section outings for next year are Montrose Golf Links on May 11 2006 and then up to Fraserburgh Golf Club on the September 14.

If anybody has any news they would like to put in the report you can get in touch with me at home Tel: 01224 821574, Mobile: 07711274525 and Email: dalengc@hotmail.com.

Dale Robertson

NORTHERN REGION

NORTHERN REGION ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES SEMINAR 2005

A Northern Region Educational Seminar is planned for Thursday November 24 2005 at Penrith Golf Club. The subjects to be discussed will be Employment Law and how it relates to the Greenkeeping Profession with Maggie Lawton, from the BIGGA Legal Helpline; Health & Safety Update by Jon Allbutt; Golf Club Policies and Management by Tony Smith, Course Manager at Teesside Golf Club; and The Need for Healthy Soil with Martin Ward, from Symbio.

Invitations were sent to all BIGGA Northern Region members during September, but if you didn't get one and want to attend, contact Peter Larter (Northern Region Administrator) for an application form at "Tamarisk", High St, Corby Glen, Grantham, Lincs, NG33 4LX or phone: 01476 550115; office: 07866 366966 or by email at petelarter972@aol.com.

North East

On September 29 we played our Autumn Competition at Alnmouth GC, this being our first visit for a Section day and it was a pleasure to play this excellent course. Credit must go to James Storey and his staff for the presentation of the course, coupled not only with a stiff test of golf but with a howling wind to boost up the scores. Thanks must also go to the catering staff for providing us with a great meal.

Once again the following companies came up trumps with some first class prizes. Thanks to Border Turf Services, Turf Care, Greenlay, Shorts of Whitburn and Aitkens. On behalf of the Section thanks again, without you we would not survive. Thanks to John Pemberton, Chief Executive of BIGGA, on paying us a visit. I hope you enjoyed the day.

The winners, other than the wind, were as follows. Best Nett. Jas Storey, Alnmouth GC, 73; Best Gross, A. Ingles, Newcastle Utd GC, 78. Greenlay Cup. S. Pope, Tyneside GC, 75 nett. Fewster's Shield. K. Dinsdale, Northumberland GC, 81 nett.

Jimmy Richardson

North West

I have just returned from the National Championship, which was played at Worksop GC and Sherwood Forest GC. The weather was great and the courses were in lovely condition. This year there were 61 members playing, which was slightly down in numbers from previous years. However the competition was equally as fierce as ever.

There was only two N/W Section members playing, these being John McLoughlin and Gary Burgess, both from Grange Park GC, and they did do well. On Monday Gary Burgess won the Longest Drive, and on Tuesday he won best nett in the 0-5 division. John McLoughlin won the third place gross over 36 holes. John plays off scratch, and Gary plays off 3. Well done to both of them.

I recently wrote in the Section notes that I would be retiring from the post of Secretary. After much thought and discussion with the Committee, I have decided to continue as Secretary for the time being, due to the Committee taking on some of the duties in running the Section. Bill Merritt will be organising the golf, and Chris Sheehan will write the Section notes after these notes.

I will remind you that the President's Cup and the AGM will be at Wilmslow Golf Club on December 1, with the tee available from 10am, bacon baps and coffee available from 9am. All applications to Bill Merritt,

The Lodge, Beacon Park Golf Club, Beacon Lane, Dalton, Wigan WN8 7RU. Please include a cheque for £20, made payable to BIGGA N/W. Everybody to bring a bottle on the day, or you will be fined £10.

Just one more thing, may I remind you that Harrogate Week, including BTME, will be at Harrogate on January 22-27, with a huge education programme. It is essential that this Exhibition continues, so please come along and see the best indoor Exhibition of machinery for turf culture.

That seems to be it for the time being but if you have any news or views please contact me on 0151 724 5412 or 07761583387.

Bert Cross

Northern

I'm afraid there is very little to tell you about this month. One very important piece of information for you though is that the date has finally been set for the year's Christmas golf. It will be taking place on Thursday December 8, at Bradford Moor Golf Club. So that means it's a great night out in Bradford instead of the usual Halifax. First tee off is at 12pm.

Two other events have been confirmed for next year. The first is the President's Day, which is going to be held at Northcliffe Golf Club. The Sheffield match is going to be held at Bradley Hall Golf Club. Both events have yet to have dates and times confirmed.

In December's report I shall bring you the results of the autumn competition. Any news or items of interest, please don't hesitate to let me know, 07739319060.

Adam Speight

Cleveland

Sorry about the lack of news over the last few issues but this was due to two main reasons. Firstly, a lack of news passed on to me and secondly, problems with my efforts not being received at HQ.

However let's try again! We all wish Richie Hood good luck in his new position as Head Greenkeeper at Houghton Golf Club. Richie takes over from Colin Baxter, who has retired after many year's service to the golf clubs of the North East and afar.

The trip to the dog racing at Sunderland was well supported. Everyone enjoyed a fine night but with varying success in the betting stakes. Mattie Robinson, from Oakleaf, was 'well up', but yours truly made the mistake of following John Talbot, of Middlesbrough GC, with his 1 - 6 reversed. He's useless! Not one draw.

The turn out at the Groundmen's bowls match was very disappointing with only Tony Mears and his son, Peter, attending from the greenkeeping fraternity. Such a pity as we had a great night in a wonderful part of the area, with a superb buffet to follow. Our thanks go to Durham City Bowling Club for their hospitality and the superb buffet.

On a sunny afternoon in June a small group visited the Rockliffe Training Ground, in Hurworth, just outside Darlington. For those of you who don't know, this is the training ground of Middlesbrough Football Club. This visit was made possible from a kind invitation from Chris Powley.

We were given a full tour of all the facilities by 'Arthur', a well known member of Chris' staff, including the indoor and outdoor pitches, changing rooms, the state-of-the-art gym, physio rooms, coaching rooms, dining facilities etc, etc. We were even taken around the land that surrounds some of these facilities, which included a huge house also owned by the club, which is to be renovated into a luxury hotel.

The whole visit proved to be both enjoyable and very interesting and gave us all an insight into how today's Premiership footballers conduct their time when not involved in matches. Many thanks go to Chris, Arthur and Middlesbrough Football Club for an excellent tour. Thanks to Tony

Mears for his report on the visit.

Finally, the results of the Autumn Tournament held at Bedale Golf Club. The Stableford competition was won by Ian Holoran, of Middlesbrough Municipal GC with 32 points. Second was Alan Reed, of Saltburn GC, with 30 points. Third was Barry Walker, of City of Newcastle GC, also with 30 points. The best nett on the par 3 holes was shared by Ian and Alan. The trade prize was won by Jamie Applegarth, representing Rigby Taylor.

Many thanks are due to our main sponsor - Brendan Brown, of Norlube. His support enabled every player to receive a prize. Congratulations to Bedale Golf Club too! Ian and his staff had the course in superb condition. The meal was also top class, so thanks to the catering staff too. The only disappointment was the poor turn out - only 10 greenkeepers and two trade reps. I think many members were taking advantage of the Indian summer. Any news to TC on 07831214879.

Terry Charlton

Sheffield

On September 12 we held our autumn competition at Notts Golf Club. Our thanks go to Notts for giving us the courtesy of their course, and well done to Phil Stain and his staff for the excellent condition of the course.

The main sponsor of the competition was Palmer Groundcare, who provided an excellent prize table. Thanks to Glynn Sawyer, from Palmer Groundcare, and to all the other trade members who provided prizes once again, it is much appreciated. Thanks also go to the catering staff for providing an excellent meal that was enjoyed by all.

On the golfing side of things I am told there was some good golf played. The Captain of Notts, Ken Kirk, presented the prizes. The eventual winner was Andy Unwin. Well played Andy.

1. A. Unwin, 35pts bb9; 2. G. Wells, 35pts bb9; 3. C. Hopper, 35pts; 4. G. Britton, 34pts bb3; 5. L. Varndel, 34pts. The winner of the guest prize was Russ Lathem. Well done Russ, it's getting a bit regular now!

Our Christmas competition is on December 5 at Rotherham Golf Club. While talking of Rotherham, they have a new apprentice greenkeeper, Phillip Smith, who is new into the industry. Good luck Phillip and we hope you enjoy it and hope to see you soon!

I also hear Andy Unwin has flown the nest and bought his first house! Good luck Andy. As usual any news contact me on 07793111845 or jv.lax@tesco.net.

John Lax

North Wales

Eaton GC was the venue for our North Wales Section Autumn Tournament and if you were not one of the 53 players who attended this event, well I know you missed something a little bit special. I remember the original Eaton GC that was situated in the grounds of the Duke of Westminster's estates, I also remember Paul. The Geordie and his First Assistant, Alan Kift, greenkeeping out of the orangey glass houses with all the mowers and tools based in there at Eaton. For whatever the reason for moving the club to Waverton, where it will now be kept with the Duke. I think he did the members proud by providing the new land which was predominately 'farmers grazing land' to relocate their golf club, in the early 1990's.

Then, after some changes in the staff, the reins were taken over by Len Sproston who headed the team through the late 90s and from then to the present day with the current Head Greenkeeper, Gavin Clarke. I thought Gavin and his lads had done a fantastic job in presenting a very strong golf course for our October event. What looks from the entrance and roadside views a flattish parkland course, was far from it once we made our way

out onto the opening holes. The course then never really relented and perhaps shown by the best gross greenkeepers score of a 5 over par 78, with his handicap of 3, shows you don't have to have a PGA tour set up to make things tricky.

The Section would like to thank Eaton for their courtesy and hospitality bestowed to us on the day. To the captain for the prize giving and the caters for the home made soup, the fine chicken curry with rice chips naan bread and vanilla cheesecake with fresh cream and ice cream for afters. I don't know what everyone else had, but I didn't have room for my supper when I got home!

The prizes on the day went as follows. Nearest the Pin on the 11th. Tom Durband, from Caldly. Nearest the Pin on 17th. Dave Austin, from Rigby Taylor. Best Gross. Jez Hughes, 78. Best Guest. 1. Roger Greenhalgh, Sutton Hall GC, 41pts; 2. Terry Dodd, Chirk, 37pts. The Trade trophy went to Dave Austin, with 38pts off his +1 handicap.

So to the Greenkeeper winners and in reverse order. 4. Steve Roberts, Flint, 34pts; 3. John Evans, Carden Park, 36pts; 2. Jeff Jago, Sutton Hall, 38pts; 1. Carl Croucher, Caldly GC - extracts from his winning speech have been noted and will be interpreted at our Christmas AGM. The date by the way is December 7 at Rhuddlan GC.

Staying in winning form was the Sandiway Club Committee, who attended the Golf Management Trophy, held by BIGGA and sponsored by Scotts, at Bingley St Ives GC in West Yorkshire. Head Greenkeeper, Brian Taylor, Past Captain, Charlie Wright, Secretary, Bob Owens, and Chairman of the Club and Greens, Keith Brain. Keith is also a great golf writer and a former columnist for the Manchester Evening News

They all thought the course was absolutely fantastic and represented what is typical of old style courses where you don't have to smash the ball 300+ yards. What started out as a bit of fun became quite serious at the end, when they were in with the top score and stayed leaders in the clubhouse even after the last match came in. 30 regional teams from the Wirral estuary to the far north of England were all pushed into runners up and the Sandiway lads brought the trophy home. Well done guys and I believe you are now the 2006 hosts of this event, so we wish you luck in your defence and keeping the trophy within the North Wales area.

One final congratulations goes to our own Dave Newton, from Arrowe Park GC, on the Wirral, who came runner-up in the Toro Student of the Year competition, and was presented with his award up at HQ. Both his colleagues, Neil Oxton and Les Parry, are proud to have his talents highlighted and would like to thank Toro for their support of education.

Mesen Cymru

Andrew Acorn - andrew@acorngolf.co.uk

SECTION NOTES INFORMATION

In order to improve the sending and receiving of Section Notes, where possible can all future notes be emailed to gareth@bigga.co.uk by no later than the 5th of the month prior to publication please.

You will receive an email back to confirm receipt of your notes.

If you do not receive this confirmation please get in touch with BIGGA Headquarters.

MIDLAND REGION

MIDLAND REGION ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES SEMINAR 2005

A Midland Region Educational Seminar is planned for Thursday November 17 2005 at Brampton Heath Golf Club, Northampton. The subjects to be discussed will be Employment Law and how it relates to the Greenkeeping Profession by Maggie Lawton, from the BIGGA Legal Helpline; Health & Safety Update with Jon Allbutt; The Need for Healthy Soil with Martin Ward, from Symbio; and a Course Walk at the adjacent Northampton County Golf Club, an Open Qualifying Course, with the Course Manager David Lowe.

All BIGGA Midland Region members should have received their invitations in September, but if you didn't get one and want to attend, contact Peter Larter (Midland Region Administrator) for an application form at "Tamarisk", High St, Corby Glen, Grantham, Lincs, NG33 4LX or phone: 01476 550115, office: 07866 366966 or by email at petelarter972@aol.com.

Midland

Oh boy how naive can one be. As some of you may be aware, for many years I was interested in and competed in amateur Latin & Ballroom dancing. At my new course, Sandwell Park, I let such slip out. I think that shall fuel many a banter gibe for all of eternity from my new work colleagues. On a personal note of my movement from Penn, I would like to thank Ed, the lads and Penn GC for the last five years of very interesting and enjoyable employment. I wish my successor all the best. I hope you enjoy it as much as I. Ed likes his tea...

On September 18 we held our third Annual Angling Event. The venue was superb, the fishing very good, and the following buffet/prize awarding top notch. The results were: 1. A. Shore; 2. S. Yates; 3. E. Perry. Heaviest Fish. E. Perry. Best Specimen. S. Yates. Our thanks to N.Tyler/Alpha Amenity for sponsoring the prize table and buffet, and to my father, KLM, for preparing the excellent buffet and securing such an exclusive venue. Last but certainly not least, thanks to our very generous host, Roger Perks, for affording us such a sumptuous and enjoyable day. Thank you Sir.

Once again the Scotts Doubles Tournament has been won by the current holders, E. Stant & P. Woodham - I must have a word with the handicap secretary. Ed and Paul played against Mike Gash and John Ganley. Well done to all for reaching the final, as such is played at Wentworth's West Course. There are no losers, only winners. Our thanks to Wentworth GC and Chris Kennedy - wow was unsurprisingly reported to me. Also thanks to Scotts for sponsoring such an excellent event.

It gives me great pleasure to welcome six new Members to our Section. C. Stilgot, J. Smith, S. Hart, S. Thompson, A. T. Brassington and, at my new track, N. Cooper - I now know where to get my barrels.

Last month Gay Hill GC hosted a manual handling course in which 10 greenkeepers attended and successfully achieved their certificates. A tractor driving course has been successfully completed by John Tomlin, Kevin Cheshire and Simon Watkins. After receiving enquiries from various golf clubs, a mole control course was to be held at Kings Norton GC on November 2.

Three greenkeepers from Moseley GC are set to attend an ATV course at Gay Hill on December 12. There are still places available for Chainsaw training. There are two places available for February 1&2 2006, and one place for 8&9. Prices are £225 for BIGGA members. Our thanks go to Ken

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and Sami at BIGGA for their help in subsidising these valuable training opportunities. If anyone has further training needs, please contact Paul Woodham on: 07880 734 197.

Until next month, fondest of regards.

Sean McDade

BB&O

I am getting a new white van, one with shiny alloy wheels, air conditioning, electric windows, tectonic coffee cup holder, CD player and with economy in mind, a digital calorie counter to help the weight ratio making the van more fuel efficient. It was then that I woke up and realised it was all a dream, except the weight ratio

Anyway, let's start with the Big Bird Shoot. On September 20 the BB&O held the annual clay pigeon shooting competition at West London Shooting Grounds. With two barrels ablaze, a dozen or so bandits filled the air with the smell of gun smoke as they took on the various shooting disciplines organised by the shooting ground officials. The targets this year proved hard to hit, with the occasional clay rabbit spinning across the ground or flying towards you.

Those looping in the air at high speed were the hardest of the targets to hit. It was nice to see retired greenkeeper, Jack Evans, who, with serious failing eyesight, managed to instinctively shoot many of the clays on offer. Our thanks to proprietor Andy Castle and Jon Beck for cooking up the spicy hotdogs and burgers on a day when all appreciated the shooting and cooking.

On the move is Alec MacIndoe, who leaves Donnington Valley GC and moves up the road a few miles to Newbury & Cookham GC. Congratulations on your new position.

The Rigby Taylor Pair's Competition has reached the semi final stages and competing for a place in the final are Rabbits v Henley Firsts and Goring & Streatley v Hoof Trumped.

On October 4, at Caversham Heath GC, James Moore, together with family and friends, work colleagues and greenkeepers from the Region organised The Taylor James Moore Memorial Golf Day 2005. With 22 teams of four competing on a day blessed with good weather, Caversham Heath GC as usual did not disappoint. Pushing driving skills and accuracy to the limit, we teed off on the longest of competition tees with every blade of grass perfectly manicured but somehow always getting in the way.

Results were as follows: 1. Henley Boys, 93 points; 2. Rigby Taylor, 92; 3. God Like, 86; 4. 617 Squadron, 86; 5. The Ramblers, 85; 6. The Gem Boys, 84pts.

The object of the day was to raise money for charity in memory of James' newborn son, who died shortly after being born. With the help of various sponsors, football memorabilia for auction and various golf clubs donating prizes, the final figure achieved was a massive £5,500. The money will go to a good cause and be divided between The Great Western Special Baby Unit Hospital, in Swindon, and the Peter Dunn Neonatal Unit at St Michaels Hospital, in Bristol.

If any member has any news or views they would like to share, or would like more information about the Section and forthcoming events you only have to call the Section Secretary on 07880 550 380.

Mark Day

Mid Anglia

Just a quickie this month. Our Christmas event is on December 8 at Dunstable Downs Golf Club. The usual format will apply, teams of 4 playing Texas scramble. All entries in to Richard Saunders in good time please.

A seminar on soils is planned for November, but at the time of print no details have been confirmed. Contact a Committee member for up to date information or look out for something in the post soon.

That's about it, autumn results in the next magazine.

Cheers

Bob Butfoy

SOUTH EAST

SOUTH EAST SEMINAR 2005

The South East Regional Seminar this year will take place on Wednesday November 9 at Benton Hall GC, Essex. The day promises, interesting and informative subjects with plenty of time for discussion.

The speakers for the day will include David Golding, GTC Education Director, Julia Turner, Material Development Manager Wrap, Jack MacMillan, Past Chairman of BIGGA now with the European Tour, Brian Pierson, celebrating 40 years as a Golf Course Builder, and Michael Pinner, a locally based Course Architect with strong views on current Golf Course Design. John Pemberton will also be speaking with Rachael Palmer attending to answer all your questions on membership and our Association.

All members should have received invitations, but if you didn't get one and want attend please contact Clive Osgood on 01737 819343 or mobile 07841 948410 or by email at cliveosgood@yahoo.co.uk.

Kent

Kent greenkeepers had a fantastic day at Orsett Golf Club in an unofficial, inaugural team challenge event against our colleagues from over the water in Essex. Our crack team of 10 golfing superstars/hackers/bandits (delete as appropriate) took on the best our northern brethren could muster on Don Clark's excellent open qualifying course.

Despite many of our team venturing into unknown territory for the first time they were undaunted by the challenge set by Don and his greenkeeping team. After the pleasantries had been exchanged through gritted teeth on the first tee it was down to me to make the opening drive and lead by example. A solid strike from my trusty three wood sent the ball sailing over the trees down the right then bouncing down the entrance road and was last seen heading for Southend! After diplomatically losing the first hole, however, Kev Morris and I managed to claw our way back in front. In desperation, Don Clark called on the storm clouds to gather and the ensuing violent lightning storm threatened to spoil proceedings but the might of Kent was never going to be daunted by a five minute downpour! At the end of a great day's golf Kent were victorious by four matches to one.

After negotiating the club's complex security system to access the changing rooms we were treated to a fantastic dinner in the clubhouse, where the shouts of 're-match' rang loud and clear from the Essex boys!

All in all this was a great day for our Section and although we have the basis of a winning team as I said in earlier reports, anyone who participates in our regular events is eligible to represent the county in what we hope will ultimately result in a home counties league. So Surrey, Sussex, BB&O, London et al, beware, the Kent Section is back!

September 29 saw our autumn competition played at Southern Valley. The weather was very kind to us with only the occasional dip in temperature, when the sun disappeared behind the clouds.

Congratulations to Matthew Gray, Kings Hill, as winner with 44pts. 2nd place was Ian Rawlings, Mid Kent, 41pts, and Nearest the Pin. 3rd placed was John Fullager, Whitstable, 37pts, and Longest Drive. Trade winner was Gary Tait, again, with 37pts. Thanks to Ernest Doe & Co and Scotts for their generous donation of prizes.

We have had a great response to our call for would be 'Rooneys and Ronaldos', for our upcoming match with the Sussex Section at the Withdean Stadium on Friday November 11. We have a 'squad' of around 15, although if you turn up on the night with a pair of boots I'm sure you'll get a game.

Supporters are also more than welcome, the more the merrier. So if you fancy watching 15 mostly over-weight and unfit Kent Greenkeepers humiliate themselves, we'll see you on the night. Directions to the stadium are available from our website, www.kentgreenkeepers.webeden.co.uk.

Rob Holland & Kevin Morris

Sussex

Now the summer is coming to an end, we can all put our feet up and take it easy. If only that were the case, for now is the time were we have to start the real graft and construction. Oh well, it keeps us out of trouble.

The eagerly waited Sussex v Surrey match was held at the Dyke Golf Club on a lovely warm summer's day. Sussex had it in the bag as we were a few players short until Surrey kindly gave us one of their players. Unfortunately it was Brian Wilmot, enough said. The match ended 4-2 in Surrey's favour. I did actually have the pleasure of playing with Brian, and I can say it was not all his fault. We did get attacked by a load of flying ants on the 14th green, which totally put me off my three inch putt (only joking Brian). I hope every one enjoyed themselves and hopefully next year we can turn them over on their own soil.

There was also a golf day at Slinfold Park, in October, so I'll let you know what happened next month. The Christmas golf day will be held at Worthing GC on December 2. So look forward to playing George Barr's course.

If anyone has any news they would like me to include, then please send to Robert.hudson77@btinternet.com. I look forward to seeing you guys at the next golf day.

Rob Hudson

Essex

On a blustery day to say the least, 48 competitors teed up for our latest golfing event, which was held at Bentley Golf & Country Club at the end of September. The day was kindly sponsored by Headland Amenity and a special thanks goes to Steve Crosdale for providing the prizes. The course was in superb condition as always and a big thank you to Mark Stoppes and his staff for all their hard work.

We would also like to thank Bentley GC for the use of their facilities, Geoff Scott, the Secretary, the Captain, Melvin Wright, Daz on providing an excellent meal and to all the staff for the friendly hospitality shown through out the day.

On to the prize winners and the overall winner was our Treasurer, Dominic. So unfortunately for him, that's a two shot cut on his handicap next time around, but I guest it will not affect his game.

Overall Winner. Dominic Rodgers. Cat One. 1. Bradley Adams; 2. Anthony Kirwan; 3. Ben Sharpe. Cat Two. 1. Martin Forrester; 2. Andrew Cracknell; 3. Craig Campbell. Guest. Dave Wilshire. Trade. Steve Denton. Nearest the Pin. Andrew Cracknell. Longest Drive. Ben Sharpe.

We would like to thank the trade for the raffle prizes. Collier Turf Care, Rigby Taylor, Tacit, Scotts, Sherriffs, Banks, Ernest Does, P Tuckwells and Avoncrop.

Our last golf day of the year is on December 1 at the Essex Golf & Country Club. The format is Texas Scramble followed by the AGM. It's your Section so please support the AGM, so we can have your ideas or comments.

Hope to see you all at the SE Regional Education Seminar, November 9, at Benton Hall GC.

Martin Forrester

SOUTH WEST & SOUTH WALES

SOUTH WEST/WALES SEMINAR 2005

This year's South West and South Wales Regional Seminar, The Big Debate, will take place on Tuesday November 22 2005 at Cannington College, Bridgewater. The theme for the Seminar will be the use of fungicides and pesticides in golf course presentation and the effects of future legislation.

The speakers for the day are Euan Grant, Head Greenkeeper at St Andrews; Kenneth Siems, Course Manager at Loch Lomond; Frank Ainsworth, Course Manager at Hilton Templepatrick, Belfast; Andy Campbell, Course Manager at Carden Park; Jay Dobson, PSD Agronomy Ltd. These speakers will make the day both informative and interesting.

Booking details and information have been sent to Head Greenkeepers/Course Managers in the Region. Should you require any further information you can contact Jane Jones, Regional Administrator, on 01454 270850 or mobile 07841948110.

HARROGATE WEEK 2006

The South West and South Wales Region are once again offering members a three night bed and breakfast package to Harrogate. Staying at the Cairn Hotel, arriving Monday January 23 2006 and departing on Thursday January 26. The cost for this package remains the same as last year - Single room is £195; Twin room (sharing) is £135 per person.

Numbers are limited so to reserve your place and receive a booking form please contact Jane Jones, Regional Administrator, on 01454 270850 or mobile 07841948110.

South West

Who says motivational talks are rubbish? Team Captain, John Keenaghan, was well up for the recent team match against the South Coast Section at Marlborough. The first inkling we had as to how seriously he was taking it was when Wayne Vincent and myself sneaked into the bar for a much needed nerve-settling couple of pints of lager before playing, only to have the lager whisked away from under our noses and replaced with two nice nutritional glasses of carrot juice. "It's to keep your salt levels up," explained John, our self-appointed personal trainer.

Before we had a chance to complain, things got much worse and we were sent for a jog round the practice ground to loosen up while listening to John bellowing repeatedly into a megaphone: "Who are we going to thrash? When are we going to thrash 'em?" Revenge is sweet though, especially after the year that John has had as Team Captain. Word of comprehensive defeats in the two previous matches had reached the ears of the South Coast team, who came to Marlborough in confident mood, looking to send John to the same fate as most of the West Country football managers recently.

In particular I'm told, his chain had been jerked particularly hard by Fred Demon, but in the end, John's S.W. team emerged worthy 5-1 winners.

with John getting the additional satisfaction of grinding Fred's nose well and truly into the mud by 4&3.

Speaking of mud, there wasn't much at Marlborough and the course was in fantastic condition for the match - the hard work of Marcus, Nobby and the team really shone through. This has not been the easiest of years, but all the competitors were in praise of the course. Our thanks to everyone at Marlborough for stepping in to take this match at fairly short notice, and for welcoming us and providing such wonderful course conditions and food.

The results were: Ashley Darney & Rob Davies beat Tony Crouch & Shaun White 4&3. Tim Needham & Adam Matthews lost to Chris Bland & Mike Lake 1 down.

John Keenaghan & Nobby Knight beat Tony Gadd & Fred Deman 4&3. Kevin May & Adam Tunmore beat Stuart Hooker & Kevin Glass 1 up. Mark Anderton & Chris Sealey beat Phil Wentworth & Joe Cooper 1 up. Wayne Vincent & Paul Worster beat Steve & Don Friend 4&3.

I was chatting to a former assistant greenkeeper of mine over dinner after the game. Tim Needham, who is now part of the greenkeeping team at Chipping Sodbury, was telling me about his on-going Foundation Degree in Greenkeeping and Sportsturf Science via distance learning at Myerscough College. He has taken advantage of Association sponsorship to spread the costs and is settling well in to the study regime. Anyone who is reasonably computer literate could do this degree virtually completely online, and sponsorship is still available from BIGGA. He hopes to complete the course in about three years without having to visit Myerscough itself (near Preston, Lancs.) at all. Good luck Tim.

It was very nice to get a call recently from Gary Cooke, down at Enmore Park. Gary, who hits the ball further than I go on holiday these days (but a lot straighter), was telling me about all the work underway on the course at Enmore, ahead of their busy centenary year in 2006. He is working with the golf architects Hawtree to rebuild, reshape, and drain about 30 of the bunkers. He has also installed 1200 metres of drainage to the fairways, semi and bunkers, and now hopes to keep the course fully open in all but the very worst weather. Gary's final comment was: "Trust the bl***y weather, all this hard work and grief installing the drainage and has it rained? Has it hell!" Don't worry mate, it will, and then you'll be glad you went to all that trouble.

Stop Press from your Committee. In order to further underpin the Section's commitment to training and education, in addition to a sponsored place at Harrogate Week 2006, the South West Section will also sponsor 10 free places for assistant greenkeepers or deputy head greenkeepers at the forthcoming Regional Seminar at Cannington on November 22.

The first 10 applications to be received by Nobby Knight, 17 St Marys Gardens, Hilperton, Trowbridge, Wilts, BA14 7PG, will qualify for these free places. This is a good chance to hear Euan Grant, of St. Andrews, talking about his methodology and Open Championship preparation. Also on the bill are Ken Seims, of Loch Lomond, and Frank Ainsworth, who many in this area will remember from his days at Kingsdown. Other speakers from the top of the profession make this a must go occasion, so get your application in. Thanks go yet again to our Patronage Partners, whose generosity makes these important educational events possible.

Finally, at Minchinhampton we have just hosted the inaugural EGU Senior Counties Finals between Northampton, Cheshire, Kent and Somerset, over four days on the Avening Course. The weather for once tried to cooperate on the first day with warm temperatures and no wind, but reverted true to form thereafter with low clouds, fog and about 10 degrees colder. We still had the height of cut on the greens at 3mm and managed stimp speeds of 12 feet.

The President of the Kent Golf Union had played about 10 holes and remarked that he was enjoying the course so much that he'd bring their annual 'away day' to Minch next year. But his parting shot (after they'd lost) was: "It's your wretched greens that have shafted us."

It was a real pleasure to bump into my old friend Lauchlan (Jock) Millar, now retired, from Burnham and Berrow. Still as sprightly as ever, 5 handicap and enjoying his golf, and no doubt irritating the hell out of the current green staff at Burnham as the old habits of rising at 6am and heading straight down to the first tee every day die hard. Long may it continue. Keep the info coming in, 01285 651908 or paul.worster@tesco.net.

Paul Worster

South Coast

Where has this year gone? It doesn't seem that long ago when I was looking forward to the summer and now autumn is here and we are racing towards Christmas. Renovation programmes, winter programmes, leaves, needles and a little bit of fusarium and anthracnose thrown in for good measure. We have at last seen some rain after another prolonged dry spell! Hopefully we won't pay for the dry summer too much.

Our autumn tournament was held at Sherborne Golf Club, a course I hadn't played for a long time. Course Manager, Chris Watson, has been there two and a half years now and has played a huge part in transforming the course, although he says there is still much to be done. The day's sponsors were Rigby Taylor and Eco Compost and as usual Joe Crawley was there to ensure we all teed off promptly.

It was nice to have Jane Jones attending and she brought her clubs along, unfortunately she got drawn with me! A nice stiff breeze made the course even more testing for us lesser mortals and it certainly separated the men from the boys. My golf was at its erratic best with every shot in the bag including some of the unmentionable 'Lucy Locketts'.

However I must blame Chris Watson for his duff information on how to play the 5th hole and the supposed 'tiger line'. I must thank my playing partners for their patience, Jane Jones played like a dream on the front 9 and Chris Sturgess was Chris with the odd glimpses of genius. Highlight of my round was a superb birdie on the 9th hole. A very well struck duck hook careering into the undergrowth followed by some high pitch screeching from a very unsuspecting pheasant. Anyway enough of my comedy golf!

Mark Davies showed his true class with a superb round of 4 under par 68. I was fortunate to play in the group behind Mark and he was hitting the ball 'solidly' in his words. I managed to edge past his Longest Drive with my second shot but came nowhere near his Nearest the Pin. Mark has been long overdue picking up some prizes as he always plays well. So it was good to see him clean up.

Winners on the day were: Division 1. 1. Mark Davies, 40pts; 2. Simon Ridland, 37pts. Division 2. 1. Shane Hodgkins, 41pts; 2. Paul Staples, 39pts. Division 3. 1. George Cooper, 38pts; 2. Peter Handford, 33pts. Longest Drive. Mark Davies. Nearest the Pin. Mark Davies.

Many thanks to Sherborne Golf Club for their superb hospitality. Chris Watson and his team must have worked extremely hard in presenting the course so well for us and our sincere thanks go out to them all. The caterers provided an excellent meal for us and looked after us so well. So many thanks. Without sponsors our golf days wouldn't happen, so many thanks to Rigby Taylor and Eco Compost. Last but by no means least many thanks to Chris Sturgess for all his hard work in organising the day.

I will report on the AGM in next month's notes. The date for the Turkey Trot is still to be finalised and you will receive details when it has been

confirmed. I hope to see you at Cannington College on November 22 for the Regional Conference, which has an excellent line up of speakers.

Alex McCombie

South Wales

Well the golfing fixtures are finally over, thankfully, it seems to have been a hectic year. I don't know about you but I hate the autumn, leaves seem to be a never ending battle, making my course look untidy. Dew lasting all day, disease, golfers wanting my head for issuing trolley bans, buggies driving in all the wettest places possible, I think they do it to wind me up. I think I will go and core the greens again to nark them off.

Congratulations to Russell Anderson, Cardiff Golf Club Course Manager, for winning his Club Championship, for the second year running.

The Section is looking for competent A1 assessors qualified in level 2 Changing Hole positions; please get in touch with Pennard Golf Club for next year's Club Championship. Out of a field of 100 members, less than half completed the course, greens stimping over 11 in the morning, wind got up by the afternoon the speed rose to over 12, making the choice of pins on four greens unplayable. I bet the Head Greenkeeper's name was banded about the clubhouse bar.

Dates for your diary: November 22 at Cannington College, Bridgewater. I know I mentioned the seminar last month, just in case you have forgotten it is entitled 'The Big Debate'. The following speakers will be covering the use of fertilisers and pesticides in relation to their application, with regard to the management of their own courses, Euan Grant, Head Greenkeeper at St Andrews; Kenneth Siems, Course Manager at Loch Lomond; Andy Campbell, Course Manager at De Vere Carden Park; Frank Ainsworth, Course Manager at Hilton Temple Patrick. The following speaker will give an overview with regard to these practices - Jay Dobson, Director of PSD Agronomy Ltd.

The cost for the day inclusive of buffet lunch and mid morning coffee is £15 members, £20 non members, £10 retired members. Booking Forms and details will be sent to Head Greenkeepers/Course Managers. Please note the date and come to what looks to be an informative and interesting day and support the BIGGA South West and South Wales Region. Further details or any queries contact Jane Jones, Regional Administrator, on 01454 270850 or 07841948110

December 9 is another great day out and is our Winter Tournament. Our annual return to the Pyle & Kenfig Golf Club for the Section's largest gathering of the season. Teeing off from 10.30am and sitting for our traditional Christmas dinner at 5pm. Bring a bottle and enjoy our traditional raffle, recorded in the Guinness Book of Records, as the longest running raffle in history, a great day out, don't miss it!

January 22-26 2006 - Harrogate Week. We have been approached by Tower Chemicals, who are prepared to sponsor a coach to transport the members of our Region to the Harrogate Week, including BTME & ClubHouse. All we have to do in order for us to qualify for this free sponsorship is to demonstrate the need for such transport from within our Region.

The coach would mimic that of the past BTME express that the Region used to run and would leave on Monday morning and return on Thursday afternoon. Please help the Region to take up this generous offer by registering your participation and use of the coach by contacting your Section Secretary ASAP!

The Winter Evening Lecture Series 2006. This has been finalised and I will give out details next month. If you have any further queries, please contact your Section Secretary.

Any news please get in touch on 07725 040878.

Angus Macleod

NORTHERN IRELAND

The Section's final golf competition of the season took place at Royal Co Down in early September. A stroke play competition was played to find our two National Championship Section Qualifiers. We also had a Stableford competition for the competitors who found the stroke play around RCD too tough. Course Manager, Alan Strachan, and his team had the course in magnificent condition, the greens were truly superb. Noel Crawford and Michael King won, so went to the National Championship.

The Stableford results were: 1. Gareth Abernethy, Balmoral GC, 28pts; 2. Gary Crawford, Royal Co Down, 27pts; 3. Eamonn Crawford, RCD, 27pts. Closest to the Pin. Gary Crawford, RCD. Longest Drive. Michael King, RCD.

Many thanks must go to the Royal County Down GC and our generous sponsors of the competition, Coburns of Banbridge. The company representatives, William Cartmill and David Eager, joined us on the day and were able to present the prizes. They also sponsored the airfares of Noel Crawford and Michael King to the National Championship. Thanks also to Liam, at Amenity Technology, who gave sponsorship towards the prizes.

I've just heard the news that Noel Crawford won his return from the BIGGA National Championship, in Nottingham, as the Overall Gross winner at Sherwood Forest GC and Worksop GC. This is another great achievement by Noel, who has now won the gross prize three times in the past five years. He returned a 75 and 75 to win by one shot. Noel receives our congratulations from the entire Section for his super performance.

I am unable to give a report on Jerry Crawford's Charity Golf Day this month, but I will add the event in my notes next month. Our AGM will take place in November this year, so members will soon be notified of the venue, date and time.

Ken Henderson

CHECK OUT THE EVENTS PAGE ON THE BIGGA WEBSITE FOR AN UP TO DATE LIST OF ALL THE HAPPENINGS IN YOUR SECTION AND REGION.

From Tournaments to Seminars, AGM's to Dinners it's all covered at www.bigga.org.uk.

If you have a BIGGA event that you wish to place on the Events Page contact Gareth at BIGGA HOUSE on gareth@bigga.co.uk or 01347 833800

In the Shed ANSWERS

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A QUICK NINE HOLES

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3. Daniel Craig
4. Jacques Kallis
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Letters ▶▶

A Proud Day

I just wanted to write a short note of thanks to everyone at BIGGA for making the 2005 Toro Student of the Year Competition such a great experience and to Toro itself for sponsoring the Award.

The standard of my fellow finalists was very high indeed and I think that they should all be very proud of their achievements. We all made new friends during the weekend that will stay with us for life.

A big thank you to Andrew Pledger, 2001 winner, and Alex Shore, 2004 victor, for all their support and advice during this year's competition. Thank you to the other judges, Peter Mansfield, Bruce Jamieson, Ken Richardson.

Also I must apologise to Bruce and Andrew for my bowling skills afterwards, good job the final wasn't judged on that!

Alan Pierce,

Ham Manor Golf Club

2005 Toro Student of the Year

Looking Forward

I would just like to say thanks to Ken Richardson, all the judges and all the staff at BIGGA HQ for looking after us all so well at the Toro Student of the Year Award. I also have to thank Toro for sponsoring the event so generously.

It was a privilege to be in the final eight and a real honour to be one of the prize winners. I met so many people and made a lot of new friends. It will be an experience I won't forget for a long time.

Congratulations to Alan, he was a very worthy winner and I'm sure he will do well in the States.

I look forward to seeing everyone again at Harrogate Week 2006.

James Lindsay

2005 Toro Student of the Year runner up

The article by James De Havilland on Utility Vehicles, which appeared on pages 25-27 of last month's magazine, did not include models from the E-Z-GO range. This was an oversight and we apologise to Ransomes Jacobsen Ltd for the unfortunate omission.

YOUR LETTERS ARE REQUESTED!

Send to: Scott MacCallum, Editor, Greenkeeper International, BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Alne, York YO61 1UF, or email them to: scott@bigga.co.uk

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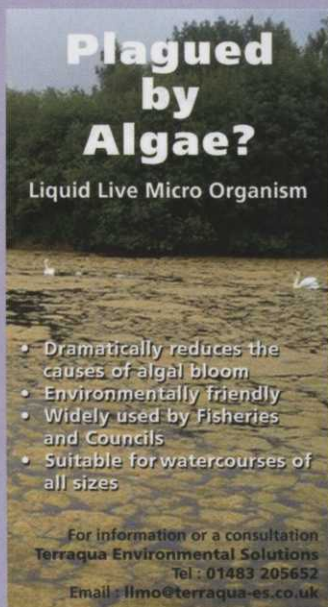
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