

2

Do you like to give your team an in house project to do or do you prefer to use contractors?

All construction work is done in house. Every year we refurbish around 30 bunkers which are of the revetted type. We employ an architect when considering new tees or bunkers and then construct to agreed specifications.

Most of our construction work is done in house. They learn more and take pride in the course and the construction work carried out, alterations to greens, tees, bunkers and things along those lines. The only work carried out by contractors is tree felling and drainage work using their machines with assistance from the staff.

Wherever possible I will utilise the skills of my staff on all projects, as it is usually far more cost effective to do everything in house. However, some of the larger projects, like drainage, may need specialist machines and operators and in this case we would use a contractor.

Whatever the project or scale of the work we do here at Harwich & Dovercourt we do it in house, every time with the team of three.

We rebuilt all of our bunkers here at Knighton two years ago. This project was completed by contractors in this case. All the other work that is done on the course is normally done in house by my team. This includes tees and greens and things along those lines.

I would prefer using my own staff when possible. Of course, there are limitations to what can be undertaken using your own staff and this should be carefully considered when planning any future projects. There is no point in undertaking an in house project if you feel the maintenance of the golf course as a whole will suffer due to the staff being too stretched.

We do a lot of our projects in house for several reasons. Mainly the fact that we can do them and that our teams take pride in doing them. It also means we can control the flow and pace of the project. We have total control of the cost of the project and we can control the collateral damage of the work.

3

Which construction job are you most proud of?

Bunker work can be particularly satisfying but any job where the land has been contoured to an extent where nobody notices the join is always pleasing. A couple of winters ago we turned an untidy three surface tee complex into a nicely shaped two tier tee. It looks much better than before and now has almost double the available tee marker positions.

All our jobs are done with pride, but if we had to choose it would have to be the mounding around the course that is six metres high, goes three quarters of the way around the course, at the back of 3 greens and was built without losing one single day's golf over two years. The mound was then over-planted with trees.

I believe that the job that has given me the most satisfaction was to renovate an old sleepered bunker, which had started to collapse and become dangerous. We replaced it with a complete 360 degree bunker that was fully revetted. It took many hours and tons of turf, but was worth it.

The 200m long, large open ditch from the river to the 8th green that allowed me to drain the green.

Last October we rebuilt one green, which would not drain. We stripped the turf off, removed the soil down to the free draining undersoil. The soil was then mixed in with free draining sand and replaced with new contours. The original turf was re-laid to keep the green similar to the other on the course. The green was back in play after six months.

That's a difficult question. Probably a series of winter tees built by a team of First Assistants who were teaching two Apprentices the correct techniques involved. Their enthusiasm and pride in the quality of finish and the care they took in producing final levels, followed by excellent laying of sods made the job very gratifying to observe.

We are most proud of the improvements we make that are seamless. If we execute properly and finish correctly, golfers can't find the seams of the improvements, so it appears we did nothing. The beauty of this is no complaints and no whining, and American golfers are world class whiners.

4

How do you communicate plans and disruption to the membership?

A winter work programme is available for all members to look at. We also produce a newsletter two or three times each year which includes up coming projects and the reasons for doing them. Course walks with interested members provide a good opportunity to discuss planned construction projects.

We have a five year plan of work reviewed every three years. Members are informed via the notice board and when it gets nearer the time of the project we place a large notice on the 1st tee of starting times, rules of golf, the alteration to the course and safety to staff.

We have good communication channels so that our membership is always informed of forthcoming works. We use email and paper copy in house memos and notices on all the members' boards. We also have signage on the first tee to tell of all activities.

For any plans we have a Course Policy Statement. As for any disruption my Captain and Greens Chairman are unrivalled at notice posting, which helps a lot.

There are various ways that we can communicate with the members regarding any course issue, but espically when major work is being done. We normally use open forums at club, along with having a policy document and using the notice board to highlight upcoming plans and work.

We have a notice board dedicated to all matters related to the course. Any major reconstruction work will have been discussed at an EGM, voted on and been approved. This would be followed by a mail shot to the entire Membership to cover people not attending the EGM. We have a club magazine where important course maintenance dates can be highlighted.

We work closely with our golf professional, Bill Davis, and our Club Manager, Atilla Kartes. We have a website as well as a newsletter and we keep posting bulletins in the locker rooms and pro shop. I make myself available in the pro shop, at the first tee and the men's locker room so the information is conveyed accurately.

5

What are the main jobs you will be doing this winter?

As usual we will be refurbishing a number of bunkers on the two courses. Also this year we have identified three teeing grounds which are uneven and will be levelled.

The continuation of our bunker programme will be the main project this winter. Also we plan to remove some large trees and install new drains in four greens. We'll try to keep the course open and playable at all times during these schemes.

In addition to routine course maintenance we plan to continue up grading the bunkers by replacing the sand and renewing the drainage systems. We intend to enlarge and re level some of our tee areas. Also, we will construct some new pathways in areas of heavy footfall.

The plans for this winter are redesigning the 2nd fairway to create a Dog Leg. Also we'll open a ditch across the 2nd fairway as part of the redesign works we are doing currently. A large open ditch will appear on the 3rd too.

Rebuilding a tee and path will be this winter's major jobs. Also we will be keeping a close eye on the Electricity Board, who are running a cable through the course.

We have just started a major redesign project involving the reconstruction of seven green and tee complexes. There are also some new and realigned bunkers to be made. We are removing the existing green sods and reusing them on the new greens. This is not an in house project, but our own staff will be heavily involved with the grow in.

Recently we've rebuilt one practice range, the east tee of another range, a short game practice area and installed new collars on both courses. Of course, that didn't phase me as I was playing in Ireland. Next my plan is to be in the UK, the cradle of the game, while we completely redo our Hills' course.

Ticking all the Boxes

R&A

Steve Isaac takes a trip to Littlestone GC, who are the first club to complete The R&A's best practice checklist.

By now you should all be aware of our course management best practice website, www.bestcourseforgolf.org. If you have not registered to it, do so now. The ultimate aim is for clubs to work through the checklist system to the site - only available to registered users - which is, effectively, an auditing process through which you can compare your management and recording against our view of best practice. This not only allows your club to assess its performance, it also provides The R&A with information to support our work in promoting best practice and the case of the benefit of golf to legislators around the world. We believe the implementation of best practice ensures sustainability in golf course management.



L-R, Colonel Charles Moorhouse, Malcolm Grand & Tim Taylor

Our definition of sustainability is: "Optimising the playing quality of the golf course in harmony with the conservation of its natural environment under economically sound and socially responsible management".

The other potential value of completing the checklists is that it is ideal preparation for any club considering working towards one of the environmental accreditation schemes, e.g. Committed to Green, EMAS or ISO14001. Working through the checklists honestly is not a simple process. It is challenging and demands a high level of record keeping and documentation. However, as these are now vital aspects of good course management it should be in the best interests of all clubs to be able to complete this auditing process.

In March 2005, Littlestone became the very first golf club in the world to complete the checklist auditing system on www.bestcourseforgolf.org. To mark this achievement, Tim Taylor, Chairman of The R&A Golf Course Committee, and I visited the club. Here we met Colonel Charles Moorhouse, Secretary, and Malcolm Grand, Head Greenkeeper, and walked the course with them, discussing their work and the many interesting features on and surrounding the course.

LITTLESTONE GOLF CLUB

There are two courses at Littlestone, which is situated on the edge of Romney Marsh, between Folkestone and Hastings. The championship links is home to the Private Members Club, and Romney Warren is run as a pay and play facility. Littlestone is a Local Final Qualifying venue for The Open Championship when it is held at Royal St George's and hosted the Ladies' British Open Amateur Championship in June 2005.

The clubhouse overlooks the practice putting green and 1st tee and has a very homely feel. The walls of the lounge are filled with photographs tracing the history of the club and

its course maintenance. Images of the irrigation available in the 1920s are a reminder that the more difficult it is to water, the more chance you have of retaining true links character. Fortunately, even with a modern automatic system, on tees and greens only, Littlestone retains putting surfaces dominated by bent and fescue grasses.

Laidlaw Purves laid out the original links, which was modified in 1892 before a final layout was designed by Purves and David Herd, Club Professional for 43 years. This was given significant additional bunkering by James Braid in 1905 and 1909. Since then, Alister Mackenzie, Frank Penninck, Peter Alliss and Donald Steel have all had an influence on the layout. Alliss and Steel advised on the introduction of five new tees, which were opened in 2000, providing a Blue Course measuring 6,676 yards with a Standard Scratch Score of 73.



The 16th green, showing the superbly consistent surfaces produced at Littlestone



The dog's graveyard



The triangle of land fenced off for sheep grazing

With the exception of parts of the 1st, 2nd and 18th, the land on which the championship course lies is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The site was an estuary until the Romans arrived on the shores of Britain. They drained the land and the dykes which cut across the course still serve this purpose. The course is vulnerable to flooding, as much of it lies below sea level, and the Environment Agency has overall responsibility for flood control. Between the EA and the club, the dykes are dug out as necessary to maintain their function. The club added extra drains in 2001, which stood them in good stead in November 2003 when, despite 200mm of rain, the course remained open to play.

The subsoil across the site is a sand/shingle mix and in places the topsoil is only millimetres thick. Topsoil depth is greater to the holes lying closest to the clubhouse and here the soil has a relatively high silt content. Through the reclaimed land a series of shingle banks run for miles across the marsh, interspersed with infill that produces more luxurious grass growth. The banks are known as "fuls" and the infill "innings".

HABITAT MANAGEMENT

Littlestone Golf Club is not afraid to try novel means of managing the variety of different habitat on site. One of the more daring ventures has been the use of sheep to graze the rough in selected areas. English Nature paid for fencing off a sheep field in the triangle between the 7th, 11th and 12th holes. The benefit of grazing to the quality of the rough grassland can clearly be seen by comparing that inside the fence to the rather rank rough immediately outside.

A gorse planting programme is trying to enhance the appearance of some holes and a hawthorn management scheme, operated in conjunction with EN, is controlling the spread of this non-indigenous bush, which is often seen invading rough grassland to links and heathland courses. One of the more unusual features, which shows the caring side of the greenkeeping staff, is the sight of gravestones on a small plot near the maintenance facility. This is not a graveyard of Past Captains, fertiliser salesmen or agronomists. It is where the pet dogs of greenkeepers and some members have been buried.

Littlestone is a fascinating place to visit. Its history, landscapes and designation make it unique. The red brick water tower that dominates the skyline to the left of the 18th fairway is yet another landmark. Everywhere you look there is something of interest.

COMPLETING THE CHECKLISTS

Charles Moorhouse has compiled excellent documentation in the form of a rolling plan, records of past performance and future plans for the course and the club, including a 10 year capital expenditure for greenkeeping machinery, irrigation and accommodation. There is another document that records any changes made to the course since 1970. The club also has an excellent website, which is well worth visiting at www.littlestonegolfclub.org.uk.

The availability of these records made working through The R&A best practice checklists relatively straightforward, but an achievement nonetheless. Littlestone were the recipients of the very first certificate to acknowledge this - a feat which should be put into perspective. There are now over 1,200 clubs registered to the site from 85 different countries.

Record keeping and planning are essential aspects of course management. They mean little unless best practice is implemented. Receipt of The R&A certificate is a reflection of the standard of playing surfaces and presentation at Littlestone and recognition for Malcolm Grand, Head Greenkeeper, and his hard working team.

CAN YOU TAKE ON THE LITTLESTONE CHALLENGE?

Littlestone has shown that good management these days relies on implementation backed up by documentation. However interesting the site and no matter the quality of the course, if you do not keep up with the paperwork and carry out all of the tasks necessary to achieve sustainability you will not produce what the golfer and regulators require.

The R&A course management best practice auditing checklists can help you achieve this, so register to www.bestcourseforgolf.org and start working the site today.

Steve Isaac is Assistant Director - Golf Course Management at The R&A, who can be contacted on 01334 460000.



The 1st green with the water tower in the background

In the Shed

Sponsored by:



Greenkeeper International brings you 'In the Shed', a new puzzle page to keep you entertained when the weather forces you in or for when times are slow.

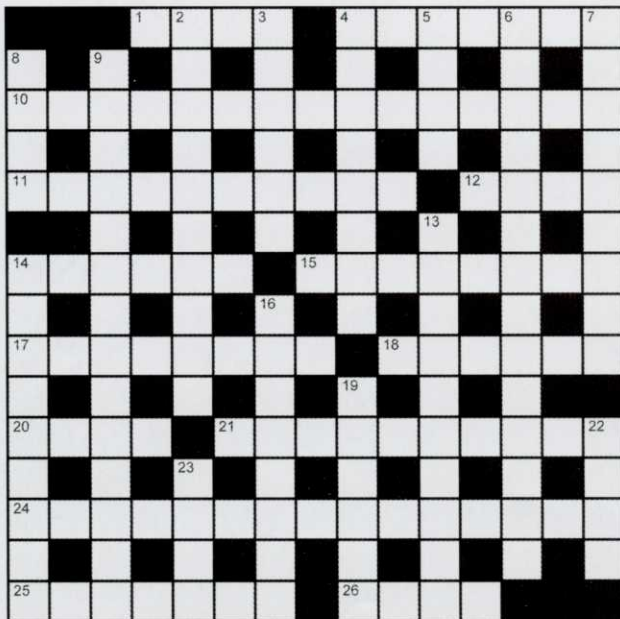
CROSSWORD - Compiled by Anax

ACROSS

- 1 What's left of a cheque? (4)
- 4 Ghostly figure (7)
- 10 Membranous passage also called "digestive tract" (10,5)
- 11 Discussion forum, usually for people of similar status (5,5)
- 12 Spiritedness, invigoration (4)
- 14 Family name of 1960s TV comedy characters Gomez and Morticia (6)
- 15 Vulture, predator (8)
- 17 Bone, more commonly called the collarbone (8)
- 18 Mahogany-like wood often used in furniture (6)
- 20 OT king of Israel, husband of Jezebel (4)
- 21 Term applied to the former site of the World Trade Center (6,4)
- 24 Make an intended decisive attack (2,3,3,7)
- 25 Powerful medieval weapon drawn by hand (7)
- 26 Play music in public, especially for money (4)

DOWN

- 2 Scottish hillside region, source of river which serves Berwick (10)
- 3 English cricketer who briefly played soccer for Scunthorpe United (6)
- 4 The apparent displacement of an object when viewed from different points (8)
- 5 Curved supporting structure (4)
- 6 Spa town given Royal status by King Edward VII (9,5)
- 7 Australia's second largest city, capital of Victoria (9)
- 8 1960s hippie musical by James Rado and Gerome Ragni (4)
- 9 Mineral oil derived from petroleum (6,8)
- 13 Breakfast dish gang mashed (anag.) (3,3,4)
- 14 Highest-ranking intermediary between heaven and earth (9)
- 16 Four-line satirical verse concerning an individual (8)
- 19 Indian region whose name means "five rivers" (6)
- 22 Old World plant whose pods are often used in soups and stews (4)
- 23 Wormlike larva of some insects (4)



ANSWERS TO ALL THE PUZZLES ARE SHOWN ON PAGE 52

ANAGRAM

Can you work out these two football stars? One is a stopper, the other a scorer.

I CHEW A LEMON

CIRCLE THEM SHEEP

QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ

1. Who is coach of the Great Britain rugby league team?
2. Can you name the fictional town where A Touch Of Frost is set?
3. How many Chelsea players were named in the FIFPro World XI?
4. The movie Raging Bull is the true story of which world middleweight boxing champion?
5. How many players are there on a handball team?
6. Who has been named the favourite soap star of all time?
7. Which Spanish side play at the Vicente Calderon stadium?
8. Which Desperate Housewife won an Emmy for best actress in a comedy?
9. Who won the 2005 Great North Run?

SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

		9	2					
1	2		3					4
6			9	1				8
7	1							
2			8		7			3
							2	7
	5			6	8			9
	7				3		1	8
					2	7		

Supplied by www.dailysudoku.com

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

Look closely at the pictures below and try and spot the difference between them. You should be able to spot six!





News from the Chief Executive

This month's article is coming from Jonkoping in Sweden where I am visiting the conference and exhibition of the Swedish Greenkeepers Association. The SGA and BIGGA have a long history of association and the Swedish greenkeepers feel that they have a strong bond with their counterparts in the UK. When I sit and talk to them it surprises me how similar many of the working conditions, golfer's expectations, politics and pressures are. If it were not for the language then I could well imagine that I was sat in any group in Harrogate during our own event in January.

Everyone that I have met has made me very welcome, they have always tried to speak English when in my company and speak highly of BIGGA and its members. Thank you everyone for your hospitality. There are about 600 golf courses in Sweden and the SGA has 2,000 members making it the next largest in Europe after BIGGA.

The Swedish greenkeepers are coming over to Harrogate in greater numbers thanks to the increased contact by BIGGA and this widens the networking opportunities and also helps keep exhibitors happy. The SGA also sit on the board of FEGGA and I have been having discussions with representatives about FEGGA's business plans and looking at BIGGA's possible involvement again. Membership of FEGGA is by no means part of our Association's current plans, however we continue to look to the future and I am in regular communication with FEGGA's Chief Executive.

Arrangements for Harrogate Week 2006 demand more and more of everyone's time at HQ and I find it hard to believe that it is now only just over three months away. This event is vital to the future well being of the Association and each year we strive to develop both the education and the Exhibition in an attempt to attract new visitors, not just from the UK but also from all around the world. Please take some time to study the brochure or visit the dedicated website, www.harrogateweek.org.uk.

As you should know from my previous articles the Association is under great pressure to arrange an Exhibition only once every two years. Under the current conditions then this could spell disaster for BIGGA. It certainly could not stand the significant reduction in income and there would have to be savings made elsewhere. In the long term this can only be to the disadvantage of the member and the industry.

I like to think that the Association enjoys a very good working relationship with the exhibitors but every member has a part to play in the success of the event. Please support your Association and I am always open to suggestions for improvement, both with Harrogate Week and generally.

During the coming weeks I and my colleagues from HQ will be visiting some Section and Region events and we look forward to hearing your views.

John Pemberton

Around the Green

SCOTTISH REGION

The Scottish Region has several changes to announce in relation to Harrogate Week 2006. It has been decided to withdraw travel to and from the Conference venue at Harrogate. Having taken everything into consideration the Board has decided it is no longer practical or cost effective to continue with this service.

As in previous years Harrogate Week will provide Seminars and Workshops. Two day, one day and half day workshops will be available. The cost of these will be intimated nearer the time but it should be noted they are not part of the Scottish Region package. However there will be a series of Seminars run by Trade firms at which everyone is welcome to attend free of charge.

The Regional Administrator will continue to arrange and book accommodation for anyone who wishes to attend. The accommodation will, as usual, be the Moat House Hotel, Harrogate. The cost of three nights accommodation on a bed and breakfast basis in en-suite rooms on January 24, 25 and 26 2006 costs £155.00.

Once all accommodation has been confirmed the Regional Administrator can provide names of all attendees, this will allow members to contact each other, make travel arrangements and perhaps share the cost of travel. The Regional Administrator has already contacted the National Rail Help line, 0845 7 225 225, and has confirmed that competitive rates and lower cost travel is widely available.

Booking forms for accommodation at Harrogate Week 2006 are available from the Regional Administrator.

Peter J. Boyd.
Regional Administrator

East

It has been a strange year - wet during May and June followed by the long dry weeks of July and August. However the exception to the rule has been the Northumberland coast where George Thompson, at Berwick Golf Club, tells me they had 112ml of rain during a four week period in July/August compared to Colin Irvine, at Muirfield, who had 12ml.

On behalf of the Section I would like to offer congratulations to Stuart Greenwood, Course Manager at North Berwick Golf Club, on his appointment as Vice Chairman (Elect) of the Scottish Region. Stuart will commence his duties in November 2005.

I have two golfing events to report this month, the first of which is Willie Woods Tournament held at Haddington Golf Club on Thursday August 25. Our thanks go to the Captain for granting courtesy of the course, the club steward and staff for keeping all the competitors fed and watered and finally Norman Wood and his greens staff for presenting the course in excellent condition.

Results based on the better ball format were as follows: 1. Kenny Mail & Maurice Hood, West Linton GC; 2. Alan Campbell & H. Hogg, Jedburgh GC; 3. Kevin Hodges & D. Robson, Longniddre GC.

The fourth Christopher Yeaman Junior Trophy was held at West Linton Golf Club on Saturday August 27. This event is held annually to raise funds for hospital and care charities and has already raised about £12,750 for various good causes. The event takes its name from the son of the Course Manager, Chris Yeaman, and is organised by the family on his behalf. Christopher has received two liver transplants and extensive health care since he was hurt in a sledging accident almost 10 years ago.

The competition takes the form of a Texas Scramble and this year 65 teams of four played, starting at 7am and finishing at twilight. Scores were low with two teams achieving 54.25. Christopher's own team achieved a commendable 56.8 but failed to repeat the winning performance of an earlier year. With the benefit of a raffle and auction the total funds raised this year were approximately £5,200 which has been donated to Ward 6 at the Sick Children's Hospital in Edinburgh, and Radio Lollipop. Finally, Christopher would like to thank everyone within the fine turf industry, who contributed financially or otherwise, to help make the event such a big success.



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NORTHERN & MIDLAND
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The Course Manager at Kingsknowe Golf Club, Stevie Dixon, has informed me that these are exciting times for his club. Four years ago, after years of trying and failing to improve the drainage on their puddle clay, dewpond system greens that are designed to hold water, they embarked on a program of reconstruction. Enlisting the services of Greentech Limited of Bannockburn, near Stirling, they have now completed six greens. The work is carried out on a cut fill basis (core cut) with a gravel raft and capped by 300mm of a USGA 80/20 style rootzone. By carrying out the works during August/September and reusing the existing turf, the greens are playable 10 weeks after construction. The club plan eventually to reconstruct all 18 greens, making winter greens a thing of the past.

Finally, hopefully by the time you read this I will be enjoying a Greek Salad and a beer in sunny Crete.

Until next month
 Mike Dooner

North

Well here we go, another Section news. Good grief it doesn't seem 10 minutes since I did the last one. The first thing I have to do is to say well done to our Section in retaining the Norrie Whytock Trophy three times in a row and something like six times out of nine. I think we should keep the trophy, don't you? Never mind the rest of the Sections, there is always next year. The winning team (oh no I said it again) was Team Captain John Geddes, Mark Main, Dean Mitchell and Neil Kidd.

The autumn outing was at Garmouth & Kingston Golf Club on September 15 and all 46 competitors had a great day. The course was in superb condition and our thanks go to Richard Roy and his staff for all their hard work and the golf club for allowing us courtesy of the course. I was speaking to Richard and he said he had not been keeping in the best of health lately so I am sure we all wish him a speedy recovery.

The winners on the day were: Scratch. Bradley Wood, 75(bih). Class 1. Ross McLeod, 76-5-71 (bih). Class 2. Dean Mitchell, 79-12-67. Class 3. David Duggan, 95-28-67. Best Veteran, 36 Holes. Donald Patience. The Apprentice Trophy. Marc Millar, 81-6-75. Best Nett. David Duggan. Veterans' Winner. George Asher. Committee Winner. Dale Robertson. Trade and Sweep Winner. Garry Moyes, of Alph groundcare, 82-18-64, also he was the winner of the Mexican hat and guns for the rest of the day. The guest winner was our very own Peter Boyd with a great score of 72-4-68. Nearest the Pin was won by Alan Grant and the Longest Drive was: Class 1. Ross McLeod; Class 2. Mike Key and Class 3. Steven Simpson. So very well done to all the winners.

There is also six new members, Nicholas Marsland, of Tain Golf Club, George Simpson, of Oldmeldrum Golf Club, Euan MacDonald, Shaun MacDonald, Andrew Mackay and Craig MacKay, all of Royal Dornoch Golf Club. So welcome to the Section and I look forward to meeting you at an outing near you.

The Committee is trying to get back all the trophies as they have to be valued and insured so could anybody who has one or even two could you please get them back to me as soon as possible. A lot of trophies have gone missing over the years so could you all have a look in the loft or maybe the wife has got a pot plant stuck in one, or your mother is using it to take the coal in with. Please have a look, as we would like them back.

I heard that Mark Main, from Moray, will be unable to represent the Section at the BIGGA National Championship, in October, as he has to attend collage. Never mind, your education must come first (a bit of a bummer I know). So best wishes go to Jim McCormack, of Kirriemuir Golf Club, and I will let you know how he gets on in the next Section news.

One of our members is on the move, Neil Kidd has left Keith Golf Club after 16 years of faithful service and started with Martin and the boys up at Moray. So best wishes to him in his new job.

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Well I think that is everything for now just to say I hope to see a good turnout at Newmachar Golf Club (Swailend Course) on October 13 for the AGM.

Dale Robertson

West

Welcome to this month's report. The weather in the west of Scotland has been great over the past few months so I hope everyone has enjoyed the good working conditions having a dry cut for a change and putting on sun cream.

During August I attended the Norrie Whitock Trophy at Aucharder GC as part of the West Section team, but I'm afraid on the day our golf wasn't up to scratch. Many thanks to my team on the day, Stuart Taylor, Chris Kerr and Robert Phillips. Thanks to Bayer for their continued sponsorship of this event.

There will be a seminar held at Renfrew GC on Wednesday November 2, hosted by Aitkins, also two to three guest speakers from within the trade. The topic will be the use of products in the Greenkeeping and Horticultural industry. There will also a demonstration of equipment. Start time is 10am for coffee and lunch will also be provided.

New Members are Martin Watt, Mark Cook and David McLeish. I apologise for not having their courses. Tickets are going well for the annual dinner so get in quick or you might miss out.

Fraser Ross



Jane Jones
SOUTH WEST AND WALES
Tel: 01454 270850

everyone who took part would agree. 60 players took part on the day with Scott Baxter and his guest, Alan Taylor, top scoring with a superb 52 points. Second place went to Mike Harris and John Sutcliffe, with 47 points, just knocking Richard Harris and Nick Kelly into third with a better back 9 score. Again, thank you to Mike, Simon and Ian, of Rigby Taylor, for their sponsorship and assistance in setting up the day.

Next month I will be bringing you the date and venue for the Christmas golf, but in the meantime if you have any news for the Section, then please do get in touch.

Adam Speight

Sheffield

Firstly, it is with deepest regret that I have to inform you that Neil Maltby's wife, Marian, died recently after a long illness, all our condolences go you Neil and all your family.

Our October seminar is on track and by now you should have received your invitations, if you have not please contact Chris Astle on 01709548759. The seminar is on the 24th of this month.

Congratulations and good luck go to Stuart Pigott on his appointment as First Assistant at Grange Park Golf Club, Stuart moved from Retford. All the best Stuart! Also moving to Grange, after a short time out of the industry, is Mark Knowles. Mark was previously at Rufford. Good luck Mark. Steve Pickering has recently got married to Lisa, all the best to you both.

Just a small message from Dave and Stuart. They just wanted to announce the bucking bronco has finally been saddled! Remember your stag do Steve? I think these notes should be renamed Steve Pickering monthly! I appreciate all the news thank you.

As usual any news you know where I am, 0779311845 or jv.lax@tesco.net.
John Lax



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 will be sent to all BIGGA Northern Region members during September, but if you don'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

Northern

May I take the opportunity to remind everyone that the Northern Region Seminar on Environmental Issues will be held at Penrith Golf Club on Thursday November 24. The day is open to anybody, so why not try to get your Club Secretaries, Greens Chairmen, etc to come along. The speakers on the day are Maggie Lawton from General Legal Protection (BIGGA's legal helpline), who will be speaking about Employment Law and Tony Smith, Course Manager at Teesside Golf Club, who will be speaking about Golf Club policies and management. Following lunch, Martin Ward, of Symbio, will speak on how great playing surfaces need healthy soil and the day will be rounded off with John Allbutt, Jon Allbutt Associates, giving a health and safety update. The cost of the day is £10 for BIGGA members and £15 for non-members. If anyone is interested in attending please contact Peter Larter on 01476 550115.

July 13 saw the much awaited return match against the Sheffield Section and it gives me great pleasure to announce that yet again the trophy is in our hands. It was a very well contested match with the Northern Section just managing to scrape home with 3.5 points to 2.5. A huge thank you to all involved from both Sections, but most of all thanks to both Rigby Taylor for sponsoring the day and making the match possible, and to Hillsborough Golf Club for allowing us to play their excellent course.

Speaking of excellent courses, Chris Martin and his team at the York Golf Club produced a perfect course for us on Invitation Day on August 10, as I'm sure



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.

East Midland

Please remember that no forms will be sent out for this year's AGM and Christmas Tournaments. So if you wish to attend, please get in touch with me so I can forward you a form. AGM is November 2, at Norwood Park, Christmas golf is at Charnwood Forest on December 15.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish Kristian Hibberd, formerly of Birstall Golf Club and Kirby Muxloe Golf Club, all the best in his new job. Kristian provided sterling service to both clubs for many years.

Finally, I am still waiting for information from all members for, news, anything really to go in this article. So far this month I have received nothing from all 250 of you, so therefore I can only tell you about myself. In the Wollaton Park Golf Club Open, on August 14, Alan Roberts and myself finished first with a stableford score of 45pts.

Antony Bindley

Midland

To open this month's notes a question. Why are people asking me to style their hair? Cut grass yes, cut hair no. I recall cutting my own hair (when very young). I wanted a crew-cut; mother said: "no way". So with her dress-making scissors I did it myself. You have never seen so many bald spots on a child's head, unless they have set it alight of course.

"Wait till your father gets home," came from mother. On father's arrival I was expecting a thrashing. He simply laughed and said: "Well done, baldy locks". So, to answer the question, it's something to do with my car apparently.

In August, Rigby Taylor, through Tony Cheese and his counterpart Phil Dewhurst, held their annual Singles Stableford event at Trentham Park. The afternoon was a great success and the course was, as expected, in great condition as presented by Gary Cunningham and his fine team. There was, however, just one disappointment. On the sixth hole nobody was able to hit their drive 'between the lines', thus Tony had to return the prize of a sports Jaguar.

Well I'm afraid that's it for this month. Please let me have some news.

Sean McDade

East of England

Well, who would have thought it, Adi and Bruce 'Top Golfers'. Not a phrase you hear everyday, but it's true! Greenkeepers versus Trade, one match left on the course, the score is 3/2 to the Greenkeepers and all square going up the 18th, with not a sign of nerves apart from Adi going out of bounds off the tee. Bruce calmly slotted his drive down the middle, chipped close, sank the putt (eventually) and clinched the half for a resounding win for the Greenkeepers. Our thanks go to Pottergate Golf Club for their hospitality and commiserations to the Trade lads (not). Better luck next year.

Don't forget the AGM lads - Newark in October. I believe Les is buying the beers.

Allan Walker

BB&O

Oxford City! What do you think of? The City of Dreaming Spires, Historic Buildings, Inspector Morse, Magdalen Tower and ancient University campus which has been a home to Royalty and scholars since the 9th century! Yes I hear you say, but tucked away in the centre of this hive of activity and steeped with history is a fine parkland golf course surrounded by mature trees, and on the Hill Top has stunning views over this magnificent City.

The BB&O held their Autumn Invitational Tournament at Oxford City Golf Club on a day blessed with cool breezes, fine weather and clear skies. Many people in the golf world became confused over the relationship of Oxford City Golf Club and Southfield Golf Club. In 1899 Oxford City Golf Club was founded, and in 1946 Southfield Golf Club Ltd was registered to assume responsibility for the increasing burden of administration. Legends in their own lifetime, Harry Colt and James Braid have left their influence and touch over this piece of treasured land in the heart of Oxford.

Another legend in the making is former gunner and Head Greenkeeper Justin Lee, the footballer with a green touch, who in his past has represented England and played for Arsenal FC. He and his staff are proud as punch of their little wilderness in the centre of Oxford. From all the golfers who played on the day, a big thank you to the lads for preparing the course to a first class standard.

Ian Richardson, from Headland, and Jon Beck, from Sherriff Amenity, were the main sponsors of the day and also the main cooks! With the usual chequered apron and chef hat the duo set up Beck's Barbie at the halfway point and served burgers and refreshments that even Gordon Ramsey would be proud of.

It was a Burnham Beeches Boys day as Damien Wood cleaned up with Nearest the Pin and Longest Drive going to Brian Payne Jnr and then in first place with Brian Payne Jnr and Chris Doyle scooping up with 41 points (I hope you got all of that). In 2nd place, Bert Moore and Carl Small (disabled) with 39 points and in 3rd place was The Crystal Boys, Clive Parnell and Gary Tait, with 38 1/2 points. The putting green competition as ever brilliantly organised by Peter Helps and was comfortably won by Bert Moore. Good ole Bert!

Thank you to Mike Blight, the Secretary at Oxford City Golf Club, for arranging the magnificent facilities and to Terry Rumsey the Steward for keeping his cool when a

large water leak appeared as half the roof started to collapse. While coping with a major plumbing problem and mop in hand, Terry ensured that we all remained dry and the bar wet. Thanks too to Paul Castle, the Chef, for an excellent meal and ensuring that all the dinner preparations went according to plan.

Dan Lightfoot leaves Merrist Wood College, where he has been lecturing, and has been appointed as Course Manager to Bearwood Lakes GC. Also on the move is Peter Smith, from Bradfield College, who has taken up a new position as Course Manager at the very exclusive and private Birch Grove Estate, in Sussex. We wish both of you the very best in your new positions and hope to see them at forthcoming Section events.

The next event planned for members of the Section will be at Frilford Heath GC on November 8, which will be an Educational Seminar on Climatic Changes. Entry forms should be well on the way to you by now, so book up and get a check up from the neck up.

If any member has any news or views they would like to share, or would like more information about the Section and forthcoming event details you only have to call the Secretary, John Schoones, on 0788 550 380.

Finally, I am ending on a very sad note. It is with deep regret that I have to inform the Section about the death of Head Greenkeeper Kevin Tilly, from Thorney Park GC. Kevin was tragically killed in a motorcycle accident in August 2005. Kevin's career started at Newbury & Cookham and later Bishopswood GC, Sutton Green GC and Thorney Park GC. Kevin was a keen all rounder, who would have a go at anything, played Spanish classical guitar, had a passion for motorcycling and an unquenchable thirst for greenkeeping that earned him the admiring respect of his work colleagues.

With a heart of gold and zest to always move forward and live life to the full, this will come as a shock to all our members and staff who worked with Kevin over several years. From all his past work colleagues and the Section, our deepest sympathy goes out to his fiancée and beloved family. Kevin Tilly Rest in Peace.

Mark Day



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 McMillan, 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 receive invitations, but if you don'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.

Surrey

Torrential rain and floods in Austria, Germany and Switzerland, drought and forest fires in Portugal, yet in good old Blighty, rain, then sun, then rain and sun. Weather conditions to make all good greenkeepers smile and to prompt golf club members to make remarks like "the course has never looked better!" Don't let this fool you. Somewhere, someone in the 19th is ready with the dagger and as soon as temporary greens and tee mats are mentioned, he will strike and once again the joys of greenkeeping will wither, as they do every year, and fall with the autumn leaves.

Tandridge GC was the excellent venue for the Cresta Cup and on August 11 we had a large turnout of 54 Surrey members to enjoy this gem of a golf course that so

many did not know and had never played before. John Bishop, the Head Greenkeeper, and his staff must be congratulated for the course condition and although John did not play, he was seen strolling around enjoying this picturesque course. While watching the rest of us he was probably wondering why we did not do the same as him and leave our clubs at home.

Some, however, did score well and those that did were: Andy Dennis, 41 pts; Shaun Sturrock, 38 pts; Michael Sawicki, 38 pts. Longest Drive was Simon Kirkham and Nearest the Pin was Gary Ogilvie. The day was sponsored by Amenity Technology.

John Bishop, who will retire next year after 50 years at Tandridge GC, was presented with champagne from the Surrey Section. The captain of Tandridge was thanked for allowing us courtesy of the course and the caterers, who presented an excellent meal, were applauded with much enthusiasm. I played with a guest from the Sussex Section, Mike Gould, Copthorne GC, and Jim Russell. Jim, I have since learnt, has passed his motorcycle test without the help of stabilisers and can now be seen hunting through cycle magazines looking for a bargain sidecar for his family.

Having not been able to report the whole and correct results from the McMillan Tankard in last month's edition, I am pleased to announce that the winners were as follows: 1. Andy Dennis, 43 pts; 2. Andy Reason, 39 pts; 3. Anthony (our illustrious Chairman) Freeman, 38 pts; 4. Gareth Roberts, 37 pts; 5. Martin Shacklock, 37 pts. Nearest the Pin. Tony Stephen. Longest Drive. Peter Fletcher.

West Surrey, September 21, is the Autumn Tournament venue and results will appear in the November edition of Greenkeeper International.

Mark Harvey is claiming the Guinness Book of Records for the most number of road vehicles to drive over his 15th green in one day. These were a van (not mine), a car driven by a lady who had stopped to help the driver of the van and another car, driven by Sir Galahad, which had stopped to help the lady driver help the van driver. Nobody was hurt so they all took the easiest way off the course across the green.

Greenkeeper movements include Nigel Morris, now Deputy at Epsom GC. Dan McGrath's short visit to Surrey has ended and he has moved back to Kent as Head Greenkeeper at North Foreland GC and Matt, Dan's Deputy, has taken over from him as Course Manager at Pyrford.

Most members in Surrey have heard about the troubles that new Head Greenkeeper, Vince Ley, is experiencing at Oak Park GC. We can all appreciate his problems and hope that new growth, patience and understanding will make the next few months more bearable.

On August 31 the Surrey Section played the annual match against Sussex. The venue was the Dyke GC on the South Downs and the weather was superb, one of the hottest days this year. Surrey won 4 games to 2 and retained the trophy.

The Surrey Bowl final was played at Foxhills Golf Club on the Bernard Hunt course. The five members of the Surrey Committee who followed the play were the good looking and well groomed Chairman, Anthony Freeman, that rugged but personable Handicap Secretary, Derek Cunliffe, the articulate, young for his age yours truly, "I only wear shorts from March to November" Dave Langheim, and I never squeak until spoken to John Ross, Section Secretary. It was a tight game but plenty of loose shots, long drives and short missed putts on a course in excellent condition.

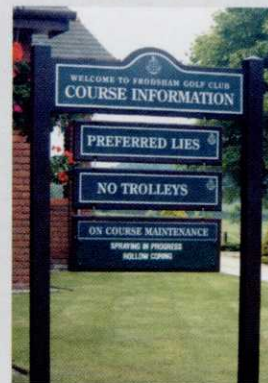
The sponsors of the Surrey Bowl, TYM Tractors, presented the cheque for £500 to our Chairman, and congratulated the finalists, who were Simon Kirkham and Darren Woodward, from West Surrey GC, and Barry Robinson and Gary Rowe, from Barnstead Downs GC. After being down 2 holes after 6 the winners clawed their way back and won 2 and 1. You can see a photo of the finalists in the News Section of the magazine.

The winners were Barry (baby face) Robinson and Gary (cool hand) Rowe. If Barry's professional at Barnstead reads this make sure you charge him for the Cobra Driver before the guarantee runs out.

Brian Willmott

East Anglia

What a lovely day it was at Felixstowe Ferry Golf Club. Organisation was superb, we even had a starter, John Cook, who did a sterling job. The course was in good nick thanks to John Huston and his staff. Catering first rate.



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The golf went well, but that's another story. The main sponsors for the day were Lely, Toro and the main man, Julian Copping, presented the prizes to:

0-9 Section. 1. Mathew Gill, 39pts; 2. Mike Virley, 36pts; 3. Peter Howard, 36pts.
10-18 Section. 1. Neil Worger, 36pts; 2. James Gill, 35pts; 3. Glen Rayfield, 33pts.
19-28 Section. 1. Neil Rowlandson, 40pts - winner of the Lely Toro prize; 2. Robert Ransome, 37pts; 3. Don Clark, 31pts. Trade Boys. 1. Mark Day, 39pts (shorts and all); 2. Stuart Patterson, 37pts; 3. Eddy Jack, 36pts. Guests. 1. Ray Fonnan, 39pts; 2. Mick Pryke, 35pts; 3. Thomas Fance, 35pts. Captains and Greenkeepers Shield. 1. Mark Henderson & Ray Fonnan, 74pts; 2. Neil Rowlandson & A. Britain, 72pts; 3. Mike Virley & Mick Pryke, 71pts. The Longest Drive and Nearest the Pin were won by the evergreen Peter Howard. Julian Copping won the loo seat, but I can't think why. Someone will remind me I'm sure.

Talking of reminding, I did not mention two of our very supportive trade members in the last few write up. They are Scotts and ETT. Sorry lads. The rest of the lads are: Aitkins, Amenity Wise, Atherton & Ettis, Bartram Mowers, Ben Burgess, CMW, Collier Turf Care, Consultant Clarkson, ETT, Headland Turf, Prime Irrigation, Rigby Taylor, Scotts, Sherriff, Sisis, Tacit; Textron, Tomlinson Ground Care, Toro and Vitax.

70 people played that day. Everyone enjoyed it, especially our old mate, George Newsome, lovely to see him there. Thanks go to the Club Captain, Brian Benneworth, and all at Felixstowe for a super day.

Mick Lathrope

Essex

Our summer tournament attracted good numbers to The South Essex Golf & country club that with its undulating fairways proved to be a tough test, even for the prize hunting crew from Colchester. That's with the exception of Sam Cooke who managed to take the overall prize for the day. Main sponsors for the day were CMW equipment, for which we must thank Mick Moss. Further thanks go to The Crown Golf Group and South Essex Golf Club themselves for allowing us to compete on their fine course.

Course Manager, Pete Dawson, Deputy, Paul Selby, and the lads did a fine job in preparing and presenting a well manicured challenging course and firm true greens which were a pleasure to putt on. Well done!

The greenkeepers attending were split into two handicap categories 0 -15 and 16 -28, the winners of those categories were: Cat 1, 0-15 h/cap. 1. Greg Knight, Abridge GC; 2. Paul Brown, Ballards Gore Golf Club; 3. Bradley Adams, Hainault Forest GC. Cat 2, 16-28 h/cap. 1. Mark Stopps, Bentley; 2. Andy Cracknell, Orsett; 3. Don Clark, Orsett. Trade Prize. Steve Crosdale, Headland Amenity Ltd. Guest Prize. Stefan Kaczmarek. Nearest the Pin. Dave McCready, South Essex. Longest Drive. Richard Hare, Abridge GC. Overall Winner. Sam Cooke, Colchester. Scores have been withheld to avoid any embarrassment.

After the evening meal the competition type secretary of our Section, Don Clark, thanked the chef and staff for the meal and handed over to our main sponsors of the day, CMW. Mick Moss also thanked the club and staff, commenting that the greens were the best he had played on this year then proceeded to award the prizes. Our thanks go to suppliers of the raffle prizes: Avoncrop, Headland Amenity, Vitax, Dennis Smith, Sherriff Amenity, Scotts, Symbio, Ernest Doe, Textron, Tuckwells, Seoul Nassau, Banks Amenity and Avoncrop. Anybody that donated raffle prizes and is not mentioned here, and there always seems to be one, please accept our apologies.

I have been asked not to mention that our Section was well and truly thrashed by a visiting team from the Kent Section. The match was played at Orsett Golf Club.

Any other Section that fancies their chances please contact Don Clark, losing team Captain at Orsett Golf Club.

Adrian Cornell is organising more tractor driving courses which I understand may be compulsory to anyone wishing to use these in the future. You can contact Adrian for details on (01376) 562835. The South East Regional Conference will be taking place on November 9, at Benton hall GC, Witham, Essex.

Congratulations must go to Simon Banks and wife as they had a beautiful baby girl, Alicia, on July 15. She weighed in at a healthy 7lbs 15oz, ouch! Hope all are doing well mate.

Finally, we are still looking for venues for next year, if you would be prepared to offer your club forward please contact Don Clark, 07958697417.

Steve Crosdale