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North Wales

Hopefully this magazine gets through your door in time for the IOG Show down in Windsor, I believe the BIGGA team have a shared stand there with the GTC so if you are traveling down make sure you pop in for a chat and receive all the latest information on courses and what benefits are available to you.

Sorry that the August notes did not go to print, I just missed the deadline. Anyway back to July and LFQ at Lundin Links in the Kingdom of Fife, what a class golf course that is! It's a true test even though wind was calm and the sun shining we still managed two day's scoring over par and hopes of another Open bag job faded in the harr (the name for Scottish mist) that came in from the sea over the home of golf. I must congratulate Willie, the Head Greenkeeper, and his staff for presenting a fine Open Qualifying links and the time they spent early in the morning until late after practicing had finished fine tuning the cut.

Respect also to Brad Faxon and Lars Broveld for the 64's and 65's and if you have the time to dedicate your soul to playing golf you should get back all you put in and with a little rub of the green and lady luck thrown in on top these guy's deserve just that. No that's not disappointment in my voice, it's credit where credit is due and at the end of the day we are all in with a chance and after two Open's back to back it would be rude to expect another. Anyway here is to Hoylake next year! Watch out world we'll be back.

On home turf in the Wales Section Geriant, from Llangefni GC, has been up to the Shetland Islands to represent Wales at bowls. Flat green Bowls that is and he has had to practice miles from home as there is nothing flat in Wales, I am sure it's just an excuse for a lad's weekend but we will keep it quiet from his wife and I will let you have the results for you next month.

The Second Neil Thomas Memorial Day was held up at Aldwark Manor at the end of June and a North Wales team that was hand picked. We plotted our way around the tricky parkland course in York, finishing leaders in the clubhouse, it was not until the last quarter of the field came in were we relegated to 2nd, then 3rd and then just out of the prizes into 4th place. Neil's wife and family were there to present the prizes and a good day was had by all.

A little story this month from one of our members, who shall remain nameless, who had a visit from the turf excellence delegation, comprising of members from all over the world, including Asia and Japan. When asked a question from an American delegate: "Do you get any trouble with vermin on the course?" Our Head Greenkeeper said do you mean rabbits and the like? Yes was the response, do you have anything in place for that? The greenkeeper quickly replied: "Yes we have a recycling programme for rabbits, during the night a local guy comes with his gun, shoots the rabbits and bags them up, the next day he takes them along to Chester Zoo, where they are then fed to the Lion's and once they have worked their way through, he brings them back to the golf course and we put the deposits around the flower beds to help growth!" This just goes to show you do need a good imagination when questions are asked of you on the spot. Well done Richard.

September is here so book your hotels for Harrogate 2006 to make sure you get a room or why not book the trip to the GCSAA Show in New Orleans in February and grab some Oysters from the ACME Oyster bar or do some jiggling around in the Mardi Gras? I have got some bead necklaces if you want any. See you next month for our Autumn Tournament at Eaton GC.

Mesen Cymru

Andrew Acorn - andrew@acorngolf.co.uk



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; Health & Safety Update; The Need for Healthy Soil; and a Course Walk at the adjacent Northampton County Golf Club, an Open Qualifying Course.

Invitations will be sent to all BIGGA Midland Region members during September, but if you don'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 mobile or by email at petelarter972@aol.com.

East Midland

This year our Autumn Tournament was transferred to a Summer Tournament as numbers needed to be increased, as the turnout consisted of 37 members this proved to be the correct decision. So on July 7 at Cosby GC we held our first Summer Tournament. The day's weather however must have thought it was an autumn competition as it was fairly cool and cloudy with a little rain. The course was set up in excellent condition by Andy Wood and his staff, although the greens proved rather to quick for most competitors. The eventual winner, with 34 points, was Nigel White, Scraftoft GC.

Category 1. 1. Dave Leatherland, Kedleston Park, 29pts; 2. Chris Brown, Horsley Lodge, 26pts. Category 2. 1. Adi Porter, Greetham Valley, 30pts; 2. Antony Bindley, Kirby Muxloe, 30pts. Category 3. Chris Hingle, Cosby, 30pts. 2. Thomas Dann, Cosby, 30pts. Trade Winner. Simon Banks, Banks Amenity Products, 28pts.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Cosby GC for courtesy and hospitality of their fine course and to also thank David Flanagan and his staff for an excellent meal. Special thanks should go to Banks Amenity Products for sponsoring the prizes and to Tacit for Nearest the Pin and Longest Drive. Our next event is the AGM Tournament at Norwood Park on November 2, so don't forget to contact me for your form as they will not be posted.

Antony Bindley

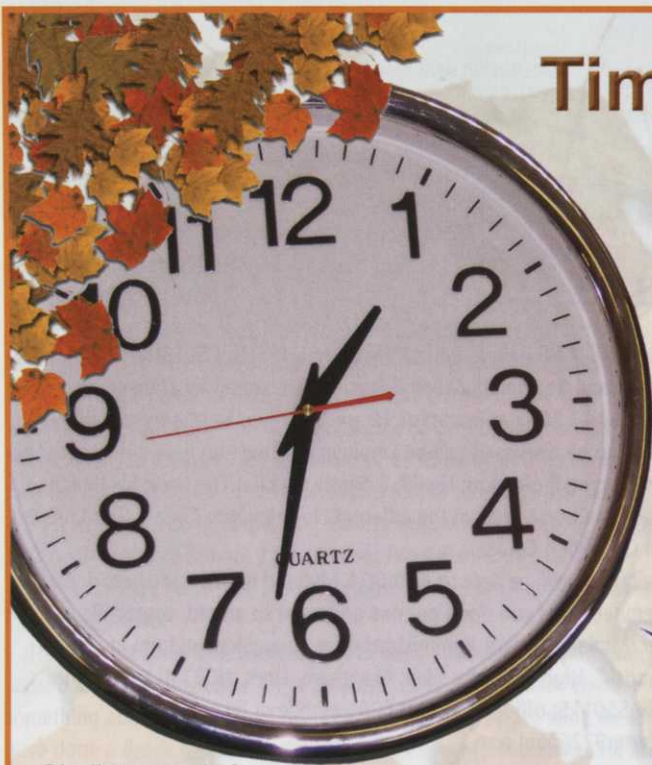
Midland

Well autumn is on the way, our last chance to enjoy the luxury of sitting on a mower without tears streaming down one's face with cold. Just the usual drainage repairs, construction projects and, if lucky, a little aeration to look forward too. Well at least the trout are fat, the berries are ripe and the leaves are in colour. Just keep that picture in mind during our lovely winter.

Our Summer Tournament was held at Redditch GC on July 22. We were blessed with great weather of which made the day all the more enjoyable. The course was in excellent condition and stands as testament to the qualities of Phil Thorington and his very fine team. Thank you to you all for your fine efforts. Also our thanks to the Capitan for making us so very welcome.

The results of the day were: Best Gross. M. Hughes. Nett. 1. D. Croton,

Time to think of Autumn



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40pts; 2. S. Mucklow, 37pts; 3. M. Hughes, 35pts; 4. P. Woodham, 34pts; 5. G. Cunningham, 32pts; 6. D. Underhill, 32pts; 7. S. Hall; 32pts. Trade. N. Tyler, 32pts. Longest Drive. P. Dunstan. Nearest the Pin. P. Woodham. Our thanks to Amenity Technology for sponsoring the main prize table. Also thanks to WWB Minerals for Longest Drive and Nearest the Pin and Turner Ground Care for drinks on the course.

And now for the births and marriages section. Congratulations to Richard "Tiny" Dimmock and partner, Sophie, with the birth of a little girl, Faith, also to Kevin Booth and partner, Lesley, on the arrival of baby girl, Charlotte. Also congratulations to Lee Swann who was married in August, I believe that one of the gifts was a rolling pin Lee.

It is with the greatest of fondness and respect that Mike Hughes and the team at Edgbaston GC wish Mathew Palmer all the very best in his new venture in Yorkshire. Mathew has given 11 years of excellent service at Edgbaston and is moving to Leeds to join his fiancée, Amanda. You shall be sorely missed by your old work mates, but there are some great pubs up there, if she lets you out. It'll be right though.

By the time you read this you should have received the revised/amended fixture entry forms for the autumn golf event, Shirley GC, September 13. Don't forget that the AGM is also to be held there at around 5pm. The Christmas event is on Friday December 2 at Formby GC. Also enclosed are details of this year's Angling Match, which is to be held at a private pool in Hopwood on Sunday September 18. The event is being sponsored by our old friend Nigel Tyler, of Alpha Amenity. For further details please call me on 07816 410 552.

I have the unfortunate duty of reporting that Hughie McIlwaine has passed away following sometime of illness. Hughie was a devoted member of the green staff at Walsall GC for some 30 years. I personally shall always remember him when salmon fishing as he gave me a recipe for such that the main ingredient was Juniper Berries. Our condolences to his family and friends. Hughie shall be sorely missed, but fondly remembered.

Finally it gives me great pleasure to welcome five new members to our Section, these are A. Brougham, D. Underhill, E. Devenney, S. Mapes and P. Dunstan. Please remember that we run many different events to which we hope you shall find of benefit in both an educational and social manner. Please support them and be assured that you shall be made very welcome.

Sean McDade

East of England

Well boys just about another season over - it doesn't seem five minutes ago that it started. Doesn't time fly when you are enjoying yourself.

Not much news this month, so give me a phone lads, even if it's only to tell me that Burghley have broken the land speed record - Hey, Simon! There are two bits of news from Milton however. Firstly, I must congratulate Geoff Davis on his retirement. 32 years at PMGC, no wonder you have gone bald mate. Good luck and best wishes for the future and may all your bells ring true. Also well done to Tim Parsons, 25 years at PMGC, there must be something in the water around here.

The results for Immingham are as follows: 1. Les Howkins, 38pts; 2. Rob Welford, 37pts; 3. Russ Moody, 35pts; 4. John Jarrel, 33pts. Guest Prize. Robin Purtes, 37pts. Longest Drive. John Jarrel. Nearest the Pin. Robin Purtes.

Well done Rob, the course was in super condition, and I do mean all of the course because there was a few of us who saw parts of the course possibly you didn't know existed. Our thanks also go to Nigel Lovatt, Toro, who did us proud with sponsorship.

Allan Walker

BB&O

What a Gem! Henley GC, in all its green splendour was a fantastic venue for The Gem Summer Rose Bowl Tournament held on June 30. Just a few miles away, the Royal Regatta was in full swing, with rowers competing at every level and the pimms and pink gin brigade blocking up the already congested traffic through Henley Town. This did not deter us in any way as 40 hopefuls, from all over the Section, managed the road network, arriving on time to compete for the Gem Crystal Rose Bowl.

Clive Parnell, Gary Tait and the Governor, Richard Haynes from Gem Professional, were the main sponsors, and together with Harry White, Captain of Henley GC, presented the Gem Trophy and prizes to the winners. On behalf of the Section, Sid Arrowsmith presented Harry White, Captain of Henley GC, with a cheque for £50 to aid the Captain's yearly charity fund.

The results were as follows. In 3rd place was Carl Small (disabled) with 36 points, in 2nd was John Bowness, Deanwood Park GC, and in 1st place with a magnificent score of 46 points, having played his career best game of golf, was Dominic Lewis, Datchet GC.

The Rigby Taylor Nearest the Pin and Longest Drive was won by Matt Smith, Sonning GC, and the Turner Putting Green Competition was won by Ian Upton, Rye Hill GC. Yours truly took the Trade Prize and a sovereign from Bob the Builder.

Thank you to Henley GC for courtesy of the course and the excellent gastronomic delights served by the Henley catering department. The course was in tip top condition and credit to Steve Shaw, Mitch Stewart and all the Henley green staff for their efforts in preparing the course which was much appreciated by all.

The next event on the agenda is a social Clay Pigeon Shooting Day to be held on the September 20 this year, at West London Shooting Grounds. So, clean up that blunderbuss and stick it in your diary before you forget.

Damien, from Lambourne GC, replaces Jason Brooks, from Burnham Beeches GC, who has started a new job and relocated to Lincolnshire where the challenge of Woodhall Spa GC awaits him. We wish Damien and Jason best of luck in their new positions. Ray Rosser has borrowed Brian Payne's super duper NHS crutches after losing his footing and has been off work for several weeks. We all wish you a speedy recovery back to the Section events.

Dominic Lewis, Datchet GC, after his splendid win, which must have gone to his head, got down on one knee in Dublin and proposed to his girlfriend, Sam. Congratulations! Honeymooner Rob Surgey has tied the knot after a church wedding in Derby (where on earth is Derby?) and is now taking advice from the local family planning clinic.

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 John Scoones on 07880 550 380.

Mark Day

The BB&O Chairman's Message

Dear Member

Those of you who were able to attend the Summer Tournament at Henley GC in June enjoyed a great day and therefore congratulations are due to Steve Shaw, Mitch Stewart and the greenkeeping team for a superbly presented course.

Please keep an eye on future events within the BB&O Section with the Invitational Tournament soon at Southfield GC and the popular clay pigeon shooting - so, as always, please try to support your Section and Committee.

Interesting news comes from the trade regarding fungicides. More environmental products are now available for our usage that should help us all in the battle against fusarium in the damp, warm late autumn weather.

Good greenkeeping to you all.
Sid Arrowsmith - BB&O Chairman

Mid Anglia

The summer meeting was held at Mount Pleasant Golf Club, the course was in fantastic condition so big thanks go out to Gav and his team. The day was sponsored by Tacit, who supplied some excellent prizes. So thanks also go out to them.

We all sat down to a great meal after some great golf, so once again thanks to the Simkins family for their hospitality. The results were as follows: 1. D. Hodkin, Knebworth; 2. J. Smith, South Beds; 3. G. Simkins, Mt. Pleasant. Trade. S. Crossdale. Nearest the Pin and Longest Drive. Tim Webb. Our next event is at Heydon Grange, near Royston, on October 6. Get your entries in now!

One last thing, ex BIGGA member, Mark Ellis, has been in touch and would like his friends to email him all the latest news. Mark moved to Spain around about a year ago and is missing his mates. His address is mjellis@tiscali.es.

Bob Butfoy

SOUTH EAST

SOUTH EAST 2006 REGIONAL SEMINAR

The 2005 South East Region Seminar is to be held at Benton Hall Golf Club on November 9 2005.

The day promises interesting, entertaining and informative subjects and lively debate. For more details and to book your place contact Clive Osgood, Regional Administrator, on 01737 819343.

Surrey

I'm writing September's report on my birthday, August 2, and once again I am grateful for my continuing youthful looks and athletic figure. As I approach the end of another decade I often reflect on how fortunate I have been to have met such a very agreeable section of the population. Yes, you've guessed, its you members of the greenkeeping profession. I write this in all sincerity and now think of many of you as my adopted sons and very occasionally daughters, and hope that you see me as more of a father figure than a business acquaintance.

In another few years I will retire and hope that this gentle reminder ensures that you will, like all good sons and daughters, remember that my Jaguar car is very thirsty, my booze bill will not diminish as my age increases, and that I hope to continue with my two holidays a year. If this brought a tear to your eye, please place anonymous cash donations in the box provided (marked pension) in the rear of my van.

Now to the McMillan Tankard Competition, played for on the new course at Sunningdale. We thank Mark Openshaw, Deputy Course Manager, for providing us with this excellent venue, the artisans for the use of their clubhouse and our own John Ross for arranging the buffet. The weather was reasonable for the early starters, but rain did affect many of us who started later and I personally blame it for my and my playing partner's bad scores.

Due to problems beyond the Committee's control and the inability of anyone to remember the correct placings, the following is the best I can report. 1. Andrew Dennis, Lalcham GC, 43 pts; 3. Anthony Freeman (our beloved Chairman), 37 pts; 4. Gareth Roberts, Hankley Common GC. Longest Drive. Simon Kirkham. Nearest the Pin. Andy Reason. Not only will Andy Dennis be cut from handicap 18 but he will always regret that he was the only player not to enter the sweep!

Steve Swanson has left Claudon Regis GC and is now Course Manager at Wild Wood GC. Nigel Moms, ex RAC GC, is now Deputy Head Greenkeeper at Epsom GC.

The Surrey Bowl has now reached the semi final stage. Ron Christie and Roger Tydeman play Simon Kirkham and Darren Woodward at West Surrey GC. Mark Harvey and yours truly play Barry Roberison and Gary Rowe at either Epsom or Banstead GC. The final will be played at Foxhills GC and the result will be in next month's edition.

Brian Willmott

Sussex

It was great to see so many people at the last golf day, which was held at Haywardsheath Golf Club on July 14. We had a turnout of 39 to the team event, with three man teams. On the day it was baking hot and may be one of the last real days of summer. The course was in fine form unlike my team's performance. I would like to thank Haywardsheath GC for a great day, with a special thanks going to the greenkeeping team.

Now to the golf, this event was sponsored by Rigby Taylor, so thanks to them. In 1st place, with 116 points, were Chris Wells, Jak Edmonds and Dave Roddis. 2nd place, with 104 points, was Darren Mitchel, Aaron and Stuart Stacey. The individual prizes could not be won by a player who had already won a prize, so the winners were: 1. Ian Beale (aka Gary Ogilvy), 40 points; 2. Kevin Murray, 37 points. Congratulations to all those guys who won.

Away from the golf there have been something happening within the Sussex Section. We must say a fond farewell to Stefan Antolik, who is moving over to South Africa. So we all wish him the very best for the future and he will be greatly missed. On that note I would like to congratulate John Hills on his appointment as Course Manager at Cooden Beach. Also I would like to congratulate Matthew Crosslegs, who got married on July 2 to Clare Gilby at Worthing GC. Some more good news is the birth of a baby daughter for Steve Vogels and the birth of a baby boy, Jamie, for myself. So congratulations to us both.

The next golf is on August 31 at the Dyke for Sussex v Surrey. Good luck to both teams.

Rob Hudson

Essex

The Essex Golf Day that was originally planned for October 6, is now happening on September 29 at Bentley Golf Club.

**SOUTH WEST
& SOUTH WALES**

SOUTH WEST & SOUTH WALES 2006 REGIONAL SEMINAR

This year's South West and South Wales Regional Seminar 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; Kenny MacKay, Course Manager at The Forest Of Arden; Frank Ainsworth, Head Greenkeeper at Hilton Templepatrick, Belfast; Andy Campbell, Head Greenkeeper at Carden Park; Jay Dobson, Agronomist. These speakers will make the day both informative and interesting.

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

South West

Hi guys. What a long season this is turning out to be. Just as we all thought that the worst of the hot weather was behind us, and the courses would recover nicely for the autumn competition season, out comes the sun again and adieu to most of the grass. Is it my imagination or are drought symptoms and effects worse this year than normal? Considering that there hadn't really been a prolonged period of hot dry weather, we seemed to go pretty brown pretty quickly. Maybe the grass had grown more than usual in the cooler, damper periods and then been really knocked for six by the sun. Why worry? By the time this hits the shelves, it'll be pouring with rain again.

There was certainly a warm welcome at Long Ashton for the Section Summer Tournament. "A bit crispy" was James Braithwaites' description in the bar before the tee off. He was being a little over critical I thought, the course was in really good shape given the conditions and there was much to be proud about. I hadn't played Long Ashton for maybe nine or 10 years and was seriously impressed with the amount of bent grass that has developed in the greens during that time. James and I chatted about maintenance and under cross examination he confirmed the greens receive around 5kg N each year, and cut at 4mm in the summer and top dressed twice per season.

James would like to top dress more often and will invest in more efficient spreading equipment in the near future. A wetting agent has been applied this year and has certainly helped protect against dry patch. He has a programme of tree maintenance and removal, some 40 trees, mostly Leylandii, were removed last winter. The development of the trees was certainly one of the biggest changes over the 10 years, the course was much tighter than I remembered it.

I had the very great pleasure of partnering Matt Hawker and Richard Carter for the afternoon. Richard is a one handicap county player from Lansdown, but Matt and I soon wore him down to our level. Erratic was the only way to describe my golf and the fourth hole was a good example. A tweaked drive left into the heavy rough and a hack forward left me still half buried in the rough, but now behind a single tree less stake. No chance of a drop, as it wasn't on a direct to the pin nor interfering with swing or stance. Not much chance of moving the stake either as it had obviously been hammered in by Geoff Capes or someone. So I hit the ball and hoped for the best.

Actually, I aimed for the stake thinking that like every other shot that afternoon it was bound to miss. I felt the ball part my hair before the sound of it hitting the stake top dead centre with a hefty thwack prompted me to duck. The rebound went about 50 yards back down the hole but at least had the common decency to stay out of the long rough, and seven was not a bad score for the hole after that. After that things got really bad. Richard Carter however carried on playing imperiously, hitting both the par four 8th and 16th greens with his tee shots and getting two putt birdies on two of the par fives - not too shabby.

Matt, on the other hand, carried on cheerfully holing nothing, before hitting a gem of a tee shot on the par 3 17th hole comfortably winning the Nearest the Pin. Unfortunately, he tempted providence as he walked up to the green remarking that the last time he won a Nearest the Pin he was so excited he three putted. Happily the prize then had been a bottle of whisky. So half right this time.

John Bachelor, of Long Ashton, was the worthy winner of the competition with a net 68, which unbelievably included a ten, from Pete Havard with a 71 and Jamie Acton also with a 71. Matt Hawker won Nearest the Pin and Paul Godwin won Nearest the Pin in two shots on the par 5 18th hole. By far the bravest guy in the room was Dave Rosselli who didn't even look slightly embarrassed at picking up a prize for the highest score of the day (108), but never gave up. One notable casualty was Craig Fudge. Having lost a couple of balls early on and turned his wrist or something in the long rough, the lure of the first day of the Ashes Test on the widescreen TV proved too much. Dashing into the lounge after walking in from the 10th. England had bowled the Aussies out and were just about to commence batting. In Craig's own words, by the time he'd had a comfort break, grabbed a cold beer and settled comfortably in an armchair, England were 10 for two and effectively out of the match.

John Bachelor wins the chance to represent the Section at the National Tournament in the autumn, the sponsorship of our patronage partners has provided this prize. We wish John the best of luck. I'm sure the fact that John changed the holes that morning had nothing to do with his winning. It never works for me.

Thanks very much to Long Ashton for their friendly welcome and hospitality. Thanks particularly to Ivor, James and the team for the fantastic condition of the course and to our patronage partners for their sponsorship. As James said at the dinner, as a Section we very much appreciate this sponsorship, please remember our patronage partners in your purchasing decisions.

Finally, there's one golfer at Minchinhampton who won't mess with me again. I was cutting around the practice chipping green with our Toro Rotary Sidewinder when a guy turned up and started pitching balls onto the green before I'd finished. He was totally oblivious to me glaring at him, but I managed to finish without being hit and lifted the units to drive away through the long rough.

As I did so, the blades hit a stray range ball, which arced spectacularly out of the back of the deck right at head height. I actually had to shout fore and he just managed to duck out of the way. Last I saw of him, he was striding purposefully across the driving range, presumably to deliver a stinging lecture of safety to the Pro, who was minding his own business quietly giving a lesson. Whoops. Keep the information coming in. 07768 394593 or 01453 837355.

Paul Worster

South Coast

What a great summer of sport we've been treated to so far this year. Tiger Woods was back to his very best in winning his second Major of the year at St Andrews. The Open Championship lived up to everyone's expectations and we were treated to some fantastic golf from the field which also saw Colin Montgomerie re-emerging as a force in the Majors, thoroughly enjoying it too. Euan Grant and his team must have felt very proud in producing superb playing conditions for the week and it was great to see Euan in the presentation party. Congratulations Euan, you are a great credit to our profession and Association!

I have just spent a very tense weekend watching an enthralling second Ashes Test match. I have to say it is without doubt the best Test match I have ever seen, although I didn't enjoy the Sunday morning as much as I anticipated. With the Series now level it's everything to play for and I'm very hopeful that we can at last keep the Ashes in this country. Sadly I am jetting off to Spain for two weeks and will now miss most of the action but will scour the local bars for some live coverage if my wife will let me!

We've had a fairly quiet month in the Section again with the irrigation systems trying to keep our courses alive during the hot and dry spell. Moors Valley was again the venue this year for the Scott's Management Trophy. The sun was shining and a keen breeze made for testing conditions, although it didn't reflect in the scoring. Winners on the day were: 1. Upavon GC, 82pts; 2. Alresford GC, 81pts; 3. Sherborne GC, 77pts. Longest Drive. Mike Ricketts. Nearest the Pin. Derek Sweetenham. Nearest the Pin in 2 on the 18th was Mike Ricketts.

Many thanks to Moors Valley for their superb hospitality. Desmond Meharg was a great help in organising the day. Thanks Desmond. Many thanks to Ian Noble, Shane Hodgkins and the greenkeeping team for producing an excellent course; we take it for granted now. Also thank you to the catering staff for keeping us fed and watered so well. Tournament Organiser, Chris Sturgess, did a great job in organising the day as usual, thanks Chris!

The Management Trophy continues to be a great success and this would not be possible without the valued sponsorship from Scotts. Many thanks for your continued support, long may it continue.

Our next golf day will be the Autumn Tournament at Sherborne Golf Club on October 11. We will also be holding our AGM as well so if you would like to bring up anything to do with the running of the Section then make sure you are there. You may even wish to join the Committee, drop me a line if you do. Those wishing to play golf please send a cheque for £19 made payable to BIGGA South Coast to Chris Sturgess, 31 Bay Road, Sholing, SO19 8EZ.

My contact details are email: a.mccombie@ntlworld.com; mobile: 07966 386232

Until next month.

Alex McCombie

Devon & Cornwall

In my last report for Around the Green I mentioned that the rain in Spain falls mainly in Devon and Cornwall. Now having recently spent 10 days in France on a golfing holiday with Liz, my wife, the greenkeepers would give their right arm for a splash. We played golf in the Vendee area in the South West Region, just above Sablé D'Olonne, where the average temperature was 35°C and on two days reached 37/38°C. Having been visiting the area for some 20 years I have been lucky enough to get to know some of the greenkeepers and professionals. On paying the green fees they apologised for the lack of grass on the tees and fairways. It is really becoming quite

serious, in spite of the drought conditions one advantage is that my golf improved dramatically with the balls going much further than they would do normally.

It was very interesting to talk to some of the greenkeepers and learn that they face similar problems to the UK, lack of money, too many members or directors telling them how to manage their course. Nothing changes does it!

On my return I commenced work by visiting golf clubs on the north coast of Cornwall and Devon, and I suddenly realised how lucky we are. That it is the golfers who are blessed with such fantastic links courses in the area, such as West Cornwall, Trevoze, St. Enodoc, Perranporth, Bude, RND, and further up the coast the East and West Courses at Saunton. I would like to draw your attention to one course in particular, St. Enodoc.

Last year the club approached Peter McEvoy, of Walker Cup Fame and brilliant amateur playing career, to look at the course and come up with proposals for a Course Development Plan for the future. It is worth noting that James Braid altered the course three times after it was constructed in 1890. Peter McEvoy stated if you are standing still you are going backwards. It was not long before John O'Sullivan and an agronomist from Ireland came to assist Stuart Dymond, the Head Greenkeeper, and his staff to bring about some changes to the Church course.

In January this year Stuart and his team commenced to re-vet 18 original bunkers. Once this was completed a further 11 new bunkers were constructed and also re-vetted. This September the English Amateur County Championships are being held at St. Enodoc, so further alterations are being prepared for the Tournament. In spite of the fact that the Church course is very challenging it is only 6243 yards off the white tees, so to lengthen the course a further 9 tees have been constructed. Stuart mentioned that this should give the course a further 400 hundred yards.

In the autumn the 13th green will be reconstructed and sometime early next year the 16th will also be done. It is very pleasing to note that in spite of all the alterations the Church course still maintains its character. Just before I left St. Enodoc I stood on the 2nd Green with Stuart, what a marvellous view looking down the fairway. The greens were full of fescues, fairways with more grass than I had seen them for sometime and blue skies. I think Peter McEvoy summed it up when he said: "St Enodoc defends itself as a test of golf in the subtle way that only a genuine links course can." Congratulations Stuart and your staff, I have never seen the course in such superb condition. I just hope the members appreciate it.

Finally I would like to conclude by reminding students that the Duchy College have the following announcement:

1. Work Based Learning (Apprenticeships and NVQ Training) programmes in Greenkeeping start at the Duchy College in September for NVQ 2, and in January '06 for NVQ 3. Proposed candidate names to the Duchy ASAP please. There is a limited number of supported places for the over 25's on a first come first served basis. Contact Liz Clarkson at Duchy College on 01579 372220 for further information.

2. All Head Greenkeeper Assessors with candidates registered with Duchy College should attend update training at Stoke Climsland October 19. Contact as above.

Donovan O Hunt - Events Co-ordinator

South Wales

We are well into the summer, going through a mini heat wave, hope all you links boys are coping. In addition to the sun, I bet Peter (Fescue) Lacey is burning his Poa with a blowtorch.

Our Vice President, Henry Steads' wife, Norma, is home following her

NORTHERN IRELAND

recent operation, she starts radiotherapy and chemotherapy soon. She is in remarkably good spirit considering what she's going through. On behalf of the Section we wish her a speedy recovery. The Section would like to wish our President, Ray Burrows, a long and happy retirement. He will be sadly missed. He would always meet you with a hearty laugh, tough act to follow as President, we will still be able to catch up with him at our various functions. He was a Sales Rep with many years' service with Avoncrop. Congratulations to his replacement Ceri Richards and we wish you all the best in your new position.

The new Nicklaus designed Mychynys Peninsula Golf Club officially opened on Sunday July 10 with a match between Brian Huggett and Gary Nicklaus, son of Jack Nicklaus. In addition, it is also hosting the Ladies European Tour Competition in August, all the best to Course Manager, Jeff Robinson, and his team.

The Scotts Golf Management Trophy is full with a team of 20 golf courses taking part, at Llanishen Golf Club, the results will be in next month's magazine.

Rigby Taylor Matchplay results: Kerry Jones & Jamie Probert beat Henry Stead & Colin Thomas, Adrian Panks & Gary Humphries beat Phil Williamson & John Pettifer, Graham Blum & Steve Barley beat Barry Smith & Mark Parson, Russell Anderson & Peter Holmstrom beat Nigel Edmunds & Andrew Edmunds, J.B Jones & Ceri Richards beat Alan Abel & A N Other, Andy Roach & Mickey Davies beat David Gladwin & Tony Horne, Peter Lacey & Steve Mills beat Mike Norfolk & Andrew Hatcher and Craig Campbell & Joe Curtis beat Graham Down & Chris Sharp.

Shock result just in, the defending champions for the last five years, Daryl Bray and Leigh Davies, have been knocked out by Daryl Jones and Leyton Seymour and apparently they had already booked the day off for the finals.

Pencoed Open Day went well, the Section held a stand, thanks to Peter Lacey for flying the flag again for BIGGA. Glorious weather and it was encouraging to see interest in greenkeeping from school leavers. I think the careers advisors and BIGGA need to get together and promote our industry to school leavers looking for a very good profession outdoors.

Congratulations to Andy Roach, our Match Captain, for winning Student of the Year at Pencoed College for his Level 3 portfolio. All the best to Paul Discome, Greenkeeping Lecturer at Pencoed, on his one week placement at Southerndown. I am sure Gary has some good jobs lined up relating to sheep.

Dates to remember, Autumn Tournament to be held at Raglan Park on Thursday October 20 at Raglan Park. 1.30pm tee off. Also on this date is the AGM, an agenda will be sent with the details. I am to be kicked of as my two year stint as Chairman is over, so please attend, it is the last time you will have to tip your hat to me.

Match v South West at St. Pierre Resort, Thursday August 18. Tee off at 12.30pm, sponsored by Inturf and Scotts. Shirts will be provided on the day.

Angus Macleod


The past month has passed so quickly everyone seems so busy with work commitments it is becoming increasingly difficult to switch off and take a break. My notes for this month I'm afraid are going to be very brief as I have basically been unable to meet the deadline with reports from Clondeboye GC Charity Gold Day ran by Terry Crawford and our Section National Championship Qualifier played at Royal co Down on August 9. A full report on both the events will be featured in next month's Greenkeeper International.

The Qualifier Competition was well attended and the two worthy winners on the day were Noel Crawford and Michael King, from the home club. Local knowledge and guys on their game proved the deciding factor, so well done lads. Enjoy the trip to the Championship in Nottinghamshire in October.

I would encourage our golfing members to consider travelling over to the National Championship on October 3 & 4 at Worksop GC and Sherwood Forest GC and join Michael and Noel in supporting the event. So why not contact the lads at Royal Co Down and get advice on travel and accommodation arrangements. Also contact BIGGA HOUSE on 01347 833800 to book your place on the Championship and get advice.

Finally, best wishes go to Noel Crawford, who is getting married to his fiancée, Sandra, in Las Vegas on August 31.

Ken Henderson

In the  Shed ANSWERS

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