

England. Trip was Sunday to Sunday.

Day 1: Pouring rain. Visits to East Lake Atlanta Athletic Club, Dormant Bermuda and Zoysia was stunning to see. Maintenance facilities were something else fertiliser and chemical stoics were bigger than our entire maintenance facility.

Day 2: Full day of GCSAA seminar on communication. An American politician as speaker, whole thing was interesting and definitely worthwhile. Interesting that the exact issues American Superintendents have replicate what we deal with.

Day 3: GCSAA field trip seminar. Full day out and about visiting Georgia Olympia Centennial Park \$17 million on a park, not a huge park at that! East Lake again only this time it was dry! Ainsley CC 9 hole average members club (still it had loads of machinery) Georgia Tech. University, impressive Stadium, training facilities, golf practice, baseball practice 'thing' cracking day.

Day 4: full day in Golf Industry Show, immense. Every possible supplier you can think of and then some! Amazing how many familiar faces you bump into when you are the other side of the world! Met Georgia chapter of GCSAA for a question and answer session, informal chat about differences/similarities between British And American greenkeeping. Interesting One guy's June fertiliser budget was the equivalent of my annual budget in its entirety.

Day 5: another full day in Golf Industry bow, and needed, wouldn't be possible to take it all in one day.

Day 6: shopping, Georgia Aquarium (biggest in the world apparently) We attended several 'official' functions throughout the week. Bernhard's prestige dinner, GCSAA functions etc.

Thoroughly enjoyable week and an experience of a lifetime, made better by good company from a wide range of backgrounds. Huge thank you must go to all involved with the trip at BIGGA and Bernhard, particularly Stephen and Sam for their time during what must be a very busy week and Kim for all her hard work that ensured the week was well organised and enjoyable.'

Finally, a big thank you to Ian for his contribution this month, and a reminder to everybody in the East, that this is your report, not mine, and your input is vitally important. So keep the news and views coming.

Mike Dooner

North

At the time of writing this report April 10 the temperature is 2 degrees. Who said we had an easy job! We are certainly suffering at the moment for the mild spell during December and January when it was 13 degrees and warm.

I hope the weather is not causing too many problems on your Courses and that you are seeing some signs of life on your greens etc.

The Scottish Conference in Dunfermline was a great success with quality speakers throughout the day. (Well done to Peter Boyd in attracting the speakers on the day).

The people I have spoken to really enjoyed the day out away from their snow bound courses. Euan Grant, from St Andrews, gave a very informative talk on life at St Andrews and management of a links in modern day greenkeeping. The conference was well supported by the Sections with a particularly good turnout from the North Section. (Well done lads).

The spring meeting is at Montrose GC links this year so lets' have a good turnout for this one.

On a sad note I learnt that a former member of the North Section Stuart Hogg lost his father to long illness a few weeks ago, so our thoughts are with him at this time.

One of my own staff at Royal Aberdeen Golf Club, Stewart Mckenzie is moving on to do a course run through Ohio State University in America. The course runs for 18 months in which time he will gain an insight into the American way of greenkeeping and course presentation. He has gained a place at Merion GC, which has held the American Amateur Championship and US Open in the past and is one of the top ranked courses in the States. This will be a valuable experience for him and all at Royal Aberdeen GC wish him all the best.

Stuart McColm has left Kingsbarns GC to manage the new project at Castle Stuart near Inverness. This is a magnificent site and one that I am sure Stuart will develop into a world-class facility.

One new member this month is Mark Spence who is First Assistant at Aspire Golf Centre in Aberdeen.

That's about it folks, hope the weather improves shortly and we get some decent growing conditions. Any news or gossip let me know on grassman 351@aol.com

Cheers,

Robert Patterson

West

Welcome to this month's report, our football match with the Ayrshire section was cancelled due to the heavy snow in the region of 12 inches it would have been better to go skiing. Hopefully in the near future a game will take place.

Once again our annual conference took place in Lauder College Dunfermline, 160 attended on the day with a first class range of speakers.

Many thanks to those in attendance and to all the helpers for there assistance also to Peter Boyd for his hard work arranging the venue and speakers. Next years conference will be in the same venue date 6th of March.

The Fairways group will be holding an open day on Wednesday May 24, they will be showing a wide range of Ransomes Jacobsen Equipment also the Iseki tractor range and a run down on their sports ground company, please come along and meet up with the team at Inchinnan and you will see a first class set up.

As part of the day there will be some light hearted competition on the go also a buffet lunch. There will be ample time to test drive equipment on show.

Fairways will be sending out letters to members in the near future on the run down of the days programme.

During March BIGGA, the STRI and the Scottish Golf Union held a seminar at East Kilbride Golf club on communication between Greenkeepers and Greens convenors Richard Windows, STRI, Kevin Weir, SGU, and Ian Barr, BIGGA, all spoke on the matter which lead to an interesting question and answer session.

Around 20 clubs attended on the night.

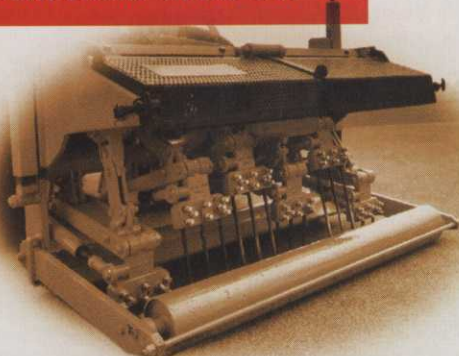
Fixture list anyone that has not received their fixture list please get in contact.

Well some news just of the press my good friend Ian MacKay formally of SISIS is back on the Golf scene, he has started at Gledoch Golf Club in Langbank as part time Gardener so hopefully we will see him back at our Golf outings. Gledoch is now part of the Swallow group.

Also a short note to Kenny Hunter after many years service in the Section recently



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with Scottish Grass Machinery. Kenny is on his way to a warmer climate as he has been appointed the Toro rep for Dubai and the surrounding area.

All the best Kenny with your new challenge. Well that's all for now 'til next month.

Fraser Ross

NORTHERN REGION

GOLF MANAGEMENT TROPHY

The Golf Management Trophy event is an invitation team event sponsored by Scotts UK Professional. It is open to golf clubs which have green staff who are members of BIGGA. The event has been running successfully by the Northern Region since 2004.

The format is a Fourball Stableford (best 2 to count) and is aimed at bringing together the various management elements of golf clubs with the opportunity to win Scotts Products for the golf club plus individual prizes. Teams comprise a greenkeeper, who must be a member of BIGGA; Golf Club Secretary or Manager; Club Captain or Vice Captain and Chairman of Green or a Member of the Club Committee, or suitable substitutes.

This year's Northern Region events will be at Sandiway Golf Club on Tuesday July 11 and Hornsea Golf Club on Wednesday August 2.

Invitations will be sent to golf clubs in each Section. If your golf club wishes to enter a team and does not receive an invitation please contact Peter Larter on 01476 550115, Regional Administrator for the Midland and Northern Region.

Golf Clubs outside of these Regions are welcome to play, so please apply as appropriate for an invitation.

Northern

He went, he sold and now he returns! Former Section Chairman Tito Arana has returned to the industry. After a short spell as a car sales man Tito is working for Boxer Chemicals as a rep covering both West and North Yorkshire. We all wish him well in his new job and hope to see him back playing in the Section events.

April 5 was the date for the first event of the year and was held at a very impressive Selby Golf Club. After weeks of heavy rain, snow, sleet and anything else that falls from the sky, Gordon and his team had the course looking superb so thank you lads for great course. It was also good to see a few new faces at Selby, I do hope to see you all again. I know one or two had some tough journeys to make via buses and trains so we hope you all enjoyed your day.

The results on the day were: Scratch Cup - Rob Gee.

Div 1. 1. T. Gerrard; 2. P. Rowbottom; 3. A. Baxter

Div 2. 1. J. Watts; 2. F. Stewart; 3. R. Armitage

Div 3. 1. S. Rothwell; 2. A. Scaman; 3. P. Colley.

Trade 1. R. Lathem; 2. J. Dobson.

A thank you must go to Ed Carter, and the Scotts Company, for sponsoring the day and supplying the excellent prizes.

If anybody has any news they want to share with the section then please do get in touch. Please don't forget that President's Day will be held on June 14 at Northcliffe Golf Club so get your names and cheques in early.

Mobile: 07739 319360, 16a Hodgson Fold, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD2 4EB
Adam Speight

North West

Well after all the snow things are starting to wake up including our Section members. I have had a few phone calls this month. Here are some moves that have taken place. Peter Pattenden, from Gleneagles, is the new Golf Courses Manager at Carden Park. Two new posts have been filled at Fiddlers Ferry GC, namely James Cope, who was formerly at Henley Park, and Gary Curran has also moved there from Childwall GC. Last but not least one of our popular members has been welcomed back into the fold, namely Alec Davies who has been appointed Course Manager at Denton Golf Club. We wish them all the best of luck in their new posts.

I have heard a rumour, I don't know how true it is so I won't name any names but it seems that one of our members went to Harrogate in his car and could not

remember where he had left it, so off he went home without it. He then phoned the police in Harrogate to report it stolen. The police found it and put a sticker on it so the traffic wardens would not fine him.

All fine up to there you might think, then this happens. The police ask him, if it is stolen how come there is no damage done to it and no locks broken. They then ask him if he had just forgotten where he had left it, so he comes clean and admits he had. They tell him where it is and he travels back to Harrogate to pick it up. The very kind police had removed the sticker because it was not stolen and low and behold there was five parking tickets on it at £30 each. So be warned.

We are looking for 12 members to compete in the annual match against the North Wales Section. This will take place on Thursday May 18 at Sutton Hall Golf Club and is free of charge as the day is sponsored. If you feel up to the challenge please phone me on the number below as Bert is on holiday and has asked me to organise it. I guarantee you will enjoy the day.

As always if anyone has any news or just needs a little bit of advice, please contact the secretary Bert Cross on 0151 724 5412 or myself on 0151 289 4625. If you are on the world wide web, my email address is jsheehan@blueyonder.co.uk.

Chris Sheehan

North East

Well the only news this month I can write about is that Close House GC has started making improvements to their existing course by building new greens on about five holes at the moment and also constructing extra bunkers on various holes. Planning permission for the new championship course is expected to be granted sometime in the near future.

Garry Batson, formally at Longhirst GC, has moved to Alnmouth GC, replacing John Hood, who by the time you read this has left the greenkeeping profession to start up on his own. Two former members of the Section have also done the same, namely Guy Martin, from City of Newcastle, and Ian Patterson, from Gosforth GC.

New members welcomed to the Section are Geoff Morgan, from Crook GC, Martin McCirrick, from South Shields GC and Scott Robson, from Whitley Bay GC.

The AGM for 2005 will be held on either the last week in October or the beginning of November. A golf club has been approached and we are awaiting a reply at the moment. Before the AGM we will be playing a 18 hole competition starting in the afternoon. As soon as I hear the date I will let you know via the Section News.

Jimmy Richardson

North Wales

Another US Masters in the bag for North Wales Greenkeeper Wendy O'Brien, Wendy first went out to Augusta on a 12 month sabbatical then each year has been back to help out the staff in their preparation for the first Major tournament of the year, hand mowing double cutting and holding a length of wood along the fringe of the green to stop the balls dropping off the edge from the stimpmeter readings! Well done once again Wendy and please remember next time to snaffle a few free tickets for us back home.

Along the coast at Rhuddlan GC one of Paul Lowe's assistant's has been picked to play for North Wales Football team under 19's, Miles Johnson will play his first match will be against a Scottish International team. The results will be in our next issue.

Paul Taylor, from the Princess Course Henllys Hall on Anglesey, has told me about what he believes is the best greenkeeping job in Wales or anywhere to be exact, he had an assistant start working and after completing one full week went off on the sick, nine month's later!, he returned to work completed another week then went off on the sick again. Anyone interested in a job like this please give Paul a ring (he will be out when you call!).

Carden Park have appointed a new Course Manager to take over where Andy Campbell left off, he is Peter Pattenden, from The Gleneagles golf resort in Scotland was chosen over many applicants for this prestigious post he will formally start this month.

On a sad note I would like to send our thoughts on behalf of all the committee and friends of Pete Wooldridge, Head Greenkeeper, Hawarden GC, by Chester, who lost his wife to a relatively short illness in March, I have known Pete for many years since the late 80s and his times in charge at Burton-On-Trent GC, Pete & his wife moved back to his homeland of Chester some years back and has enjoyed life with their Great Dane dogs. Our sympathies are with him at this time.

Just two golf day reminders to close this month's notes, Peter Sproston, Jeff Jago and the team at Sutton Hall GC are looking forward to hosting the N.West Vs N.Wales

team match on May 18 and spaces are still available as I write, Peter has said you can forget about Augusta's green speeds as Sutton Hall will have them cutt down to 2mm and running about 14 on the stimp to retain the shield from the N.West team.

The second golf date is our first spring competition being held at Oswestry GC on May 31, it has been a while since we have been back to this venue and a new Head greenkeeper in the form of Gareth Woosenham at the helm, hopefully see many of you there?

Mesen Cymru
Andrew Acorn

MIDLAND REGION

GOLF MANAGEMENT TROPHY

The Golf Management Trophy event is an invitation team event sponsored by Scotts UK Professional. It is open to golf clubs which have green staff who are members of BIGGA. The event has been running successfully in the Midland Region since 1997.

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This year the Midland Region events will be held at Verulam Golf Club on Thursday July 27, and Boston Golf Club on Wednesday August 9.

Invitations will be sent to golf clubs in each Section. If your golf club wishes to enter a team and does not receive an invitation please Peter Larter on 01476 550115, Regional Administrator for the Midland and Northern Region.

Golf Clubs outside of these Regions are welcome to play, so please apply as appropriate for an invitation.

East Midland

Whatever happened to the East Midlands Section gone fishing, organising a 5-a-side football match you should be so lucky. Well some confusion as the Midland Section ended up under our heading and nobody knows what happened to our report.

Anyway, on with the business, hopefully you will all have received our Spring Tournament form with the deliberate mistake on the reply slip! AGM Tournament. Don't worry if you attend you will not be up for nomination but Stanton on the Wolds GC have restricted us to 40 places so first come first served.

Congratulations are in order for Greg Skinner, of Lingdale GC, on his move to The Belfry and to Craig Wroughton on his move just down the road from Branston G&CC to Burton upon Trent GC. We wish you both much happiness in your new jobs and

to one of our committee members Craig Watt on his nomination for Toro Student of the Year.

Finally, we are looking for venues for our four tournaments in 2007 (spring summer agm Xmas). Have any of you got a celebration like 25 years or a retirement that you would like to recognise or would you just like to host an event? Let me know sooner than later and I will drop your club a line. That's all folks keep the news coming in!

Richard Barker

Midland

As you will have read in last month's Education Update section, LANTRA are offering European Computer Driving Licence training. ESF funding will mean that eligible candidates will receive £150 subsidy against the £200 cost. In addition to this, BIGGA Midland Section will reimburse the additional £50 costs for six candidate places.

As the training will need to be completed by the end of September, applications for the additional section subsidy will need to be in by May 22. If you are interested in this training, please contact Paul on 07880 734197 or Email paul@ghgc.org.uk. Further details of the course and application forms can be obtained by contacting Lantra Coursefinder on 0845 707 8007.

Sean McDade and Paul Woodham

East of England

There are two parts to this month's news entry. First, a plea, and then secondly the remaining important items.

Imagine this. A glossy invite comes through the post: 'Wanted. Greenkeeper to accept £200'. There's no catch, the qualifier only has to answer some general knowledge questions. He'll be fed and get to meet and socialise with new and old Section members. A nice evening out.

How many takers to this invitation? Yes, you guessed, exactly none.

I make no apologies for the sarcasm, as this lack of response was a real disappointment. When I took on the Chairmanship, part of my remit was to try and get more bodies to join in events. I was very proud and pleased to be taking a part in BIGGA that could help to involve other members and encourage them to take an active part in their own organisation. After all - why pay the fees if you feel there is nothing there for you? All the events and seminars we organise involve a lot of the individual committee member's time and effort. We aim to organise events that have a real interest to our members and to enable networking to become a real factor within BIGGA allowing every member to learn from each other in both formal and informal environments.

The response to this evening, however, was a real kick in the teeth. We are aware that everyone has commitments. Not everyone can attend all the events, or even be interested in all of them, but there must be something that interests you? If we haven't thought of it, then why not help us? What do you want to see for a seminar? What do you want to learn? Who do you want to listen to? What do you want for a golf day? What social events appeal to you? Please phone me or email your opinions - good or bad. Without input from individual members we won't



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know what you want to get involved in or what you want to learn. The East of England Section has a fantastic bunch of lads all committed to increasing our knowledge and having a good time. They are all there to help, not just each other but every member of BIGGA who wants to develop their professional activities (with a pint or two thrown in if wanted).

Now, on to the news. By the time you read this the diary will be with you, so I look forward to seeing you all at Sandilands in May. Congratulations to Mr and Mrs Howkins on the birth of their daughter, Chloe. Watch out Steve, there must be something in the water up there! I would also like to wish Tom Shinkins all the best on his new career at Blec and would like to add that: "It'll cost you more now mate, and can I have a three day demo of the Groundbreaker during Autumn renovation time?" Finally I would like to warn you all about a certain shady character who sneaks up behind you wearing moccasins. Seriously though - good luck with the operation Gary and lets hope they can straighten out your driving as well as your toes.

Any ideas for events or anything you would like to see appear in the section news please feel free to contact me by email at allan@jaxybaby.plus.com or phone me on 07974 816927.

Allan Walker

SOUTH EAST

Surrey

Tuesday April 4. With some rain over the weekend and the possibility of further April showers most of you must have been praying that the drought order will not be enforced and that your own little bit of green will remain that way. When you read this you will know more about what lies in store weather wise, if that emergency bowser purchase was really necessary and if the spraying of partly treated sewerage will help to increase beneficial microbes. One can bet though that this more natural substance will help keep the greens in better order if only by reducing the number of golfers down to those with a more limited sense of smell!

Enough of this crap, if you get my meaning and lets get on with reporting the events of the past weeks. The football bonanza that occurred on March 23 was sponsored by Ernest Doe & Sons Ltd, Esher and we thank Phil Bush the branch Sales Manager for helping to make the game truly memorable. Surrey and Sussex Sections teams plus reserves both arrived at the floodlit pitch in keen anticipation, changed into white and yellow strip respectively and waited with baited breath for the referee's arrival. John Ross, in black, spoke sternly to the captains, Dave Langheim for Surrey and Carl Whyborne for Sussex and putting his whistle to his lips emitted a short sharp peep and the game kicked off at 7.25pm. The pitch was in first class condition with hardly a blade of grass to cover the gravel. Surrey, determined to dominate from the start, attacked with force and it was therefore not with much surprise that the first magnificent corner for Surrey was headed with superb expertise into the Sussex goal by Andy Foulds after only three minutes play. Matt King was soon to follow up with a second goal and after 30 minutes Surrey scored the third also by Matt King. Sussex were in trouble and there must have been some strong words at half time for Sussex looked a better team in the second half and a strong attack only just failed with a great shot hitting the bar. Surrey would not give up and with some effective tackles mainly directed at Gary Ogilvie, who at one point appeared to get tired and rested his head on the ground, would soon find the box again with a fine effort from the scorer of the first, Andy Foulds. Four nil and the match was drawing to a close. Ian A. Sellers player/manager of Surrey with five minutes to go decided that despite his age and physical condition he still had something to offer and subbed with a weary but elated Tony Bremer.

It wasn't long before a waist high pass hurtled Ian's way and with a volley that George Best would have been proud of Ian's shot stormed into the Sussex goal. Five goals and with a final peep the match was over. Well done Surrey. Hard luck Sussex but revenge is sweet as we look forward to a replay on your home ground.

Some Surrey members are on the move and these include, Graham Ball, Walton Heath GC, the new Deputy Course Manager at Bearsted Lakes GC. Kevin Bulman also Walton Heath is going walkabout or around the world in 365 days. Jaey Godchild, Chobham GC joins Richmond GC as deputy and Joachim Holgersson,

Richmond GC, takes on the deputyship at Wyke Green GC. Paul Hobden, Wisley GC, is now the course manager at Gaton Manor GC and finally but not least Ian Morrison is congratulated on accepting the course manager's position at West Hill GC. Sorry, Ian is not the finally but not least after all, as later news of Phil Bennett, Petersfield GC and his transfer to North Hants GC has just come to hand.

The first Surrey section golf competition of this year returned by popular demand to Tony Bremers Dorking GC. A warm welcome was extended to all as we prepared to start this team Texas scramble and after some of us had sampled the breakfast menu it was to the first tee to enjoy the delights of this well presented course. Any course manager who is brave enough to have 40 plus greenkeepers play at this time of the year is to be congratulated but to agree to it for a second year, Tony you must be mad!. The format was play nine holes then into the clubhouse for excellent rolls with a variety of fillings, then back out again and from different tees play another nine.

The running buffet on our return to the clubhouse was really enjoyable and we thank Dorking GC for a great day's golf. Tacit sponsored the day and we thank them for quality prizes which were given to the following winners.

1. Darren Peach, Darren Lee, Andrew Reason and Dean Churchill. 2. Dave Langheim, John Jennings, Dave Wyborn and Ian (volley) Sellers.

Longest drive Paul Bacon. Nearest the Pin Mark Harvey, Gary Ogilvie and Jason Hunt. John Bishop retired on April 13 after 50 years at Tandridge GC and as a good customer and friend of mine I hope his retirement is really the enjoyable time he deserves.

Brian Willmott

Kent

Hope you're all enjoying the spring weather now and that your members didn't have too much to whinge about while they watched the U S Masters at Augusta!. If your course did stand up to such a stringent test, perhaps you would like to nominate yourselves as a host venue for the 2007 golfing calendar we are already preparing. We are keen to travel to all corners of the county in order to encourage more regular members to our events. Our Section still only charges assistant greenkeepers £15 per event and this often includes bacon rolls, at least a two course dinner and the chance to play golf at some of the best courses in the country.

Our golf team, which is also open to new participants, shall soon be playing a return match against Essex Section after our win at Orsett last year. Anybody who has played in a regular Kent golf day is eligible to play. Please contact us at our website; kentgreenkeepers.co.uk for details on all upcoming events.

Our next golf day shall be on the hallowed turf of Mid-Kent Golf Club on July 11. We shall be teeing off at about midday after the bacon baps with a dinner afterwards. Entry forms will be posted on the website in due course for you to download and send back to David.

After the success of last winter's seminars at Hadlow College, we shall be running a similar programme this coming winter with one seminar a month. If you have any suggestions on topics you would like to be discussed please contact us via the website.

On the subject of successes, our football team were anything but that when we played against London Section in Beckenham. We started well enough, passing the ball around quite majestically between our seasoned players. Shots rained in on the hapless keeper as the team honed their skills. Then the London team turned up. We knew we were in trouble when we noticed that the opposition had an average age of at least ten years younger than us and they were probably three stone per man lighter as well! We did okay in the first half, going in to the break 1-0 down. Changing ends proved a major downfall, however as we fought against hurricane force winds in the second half and the London team were able to capitalise on the fact that all but one of my defenders (thanks Craig) went AWOL. Final score was Kent 0 London 6.

Thanks to Avoncrop for providing the kit (as worn by Brighton and Hove Albion much to some of our players disapproval!) and for organising post match refreshments.

Finally best wishes to my mate Kev Morris, from Southern Valley Golf Club, who has accepted the Course Manager's post at Redlibbets Golf Club. Good luck mate.

Don't forget to check our website (kentgreenkeepers.co.uk) for all up to date info on what's happening in your county for your benefit.

Happy greenkeeping

Rob Holland



Peter Boyd
SCOTLAND & NORTHERN IRELAND
 Tel/Fax: 0141 616 3440



Peter Larter
NORTHERN & MIDLAND
 Tel: 01476 550115

Essex

Sorry, very thin on the ground for material this month. On the course, the growth has kicked in and the work schedule has upped itself a notch or two. Nothing we can't handle though!

The spring meeting at Ilford GC is just around the corner - May 10 and I hope you have all filled in those entry forms on time. I'm looking forward to seeing a good turn out. Can Sam 'Golfer of the Year' Cook get off to a flying start in the defence of his trophy? Or will fresh blood be snapping at his heels throughout the season? One thing is assured, a cracking day out!

If for any reason you mislay your fixture cards this season, the dates and venues of the golf days can be found on the BIGGA website under the Events section.

Please don't be shy in dropping me a line with any news you would like to share with the Section.

Until next month, be good!

Richard Williams

SOUTH WEST & SOUTH WALES

GOLF MANAGEMENT TROPHY

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The format is a Fourball Stableford (best 2 to count) and is aimed at bringing together the various management elements of golf clubs with the opportunity to

win Scots Products for the golf club plus individual prizes. Teams comprise a greenkeeper, who must be a member of BIGGA; Golf Club Secretary or Manager; Club Captain or Vice Captain and Chairman of Green or a Member of the Club Committee, or suitable substitutes.

This year's South West & South Wales events will be held for the South West Section at Minchinhampton Golf Club on Friday July 14, for the South Wales Section at Neath Golf Club on Thursday July 27 and for the South Coast Section at Moors Valley Golf Club on Wednesday July 26.

Invitations will be sent to golf clubs in each Section. If your golf club wishes to enter a team and does not receive an invitation please contact Jane Jones on 01454 270850, Regional Administrator for the South West and South Wales Region.

Golf Clubs outside of these Regions are welcome to play, so please apply as appropriate for an invitation.

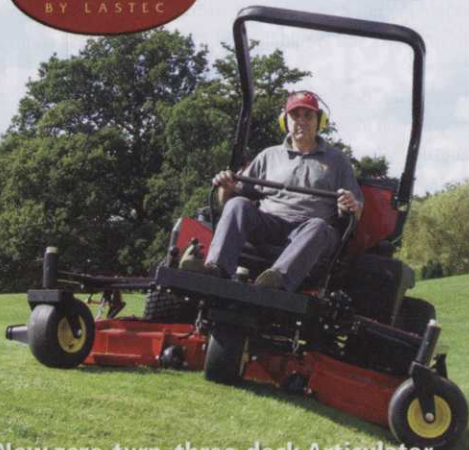
South West

Not much feedback this month about your spring renovation, so here's a run-down on mine. At the New Courses we deep aerated our 16 red-sand greens with the vertidrain, or Drill & Fill, before Gradening the lot of them. We took about 20 tonnes of material out of each 18 greens with the Graden GS04 set at 45mm, and managed between four and seven greens a day over a two-week period (freezing cold north east wind - after doing 35 greens I felt like having a cab fitted!). Followed up with an overseed of fescue and bent, an application of a granular seaweed, and then top-dressed. It was quite worrying to hit the greens that hard, that early, but as the weather abruptly changed from cold dry and windy, to mild and wet, it looked like a stroke of genius (at least that's what I told the members). In fact, the greens recovered within a couple of weeks and have got off to a really good start.

Over on the Old Course, we solid tined with the verti drain, before overseeding and top-dressing. Steve Isaac, Deputy Director of the R&A walked round the Old Course greens with me a couple of weeks ago and enjoyed the experience. The Old

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Course may be a bit rough and ready at times, but the greens certainly fall into the category of fescue greens, which have been so highlighted recently by the R&A.

My talk in Minchinhampton Market Hall went really well to about 50 local people, mainly from outside of golf. Having done a couple of talks in early March to the Glos Golf Union Secretaries, and the South Coast BIGGA, I had naively imagined that a similar talk would suffice for all three audiences. However, I realised while rehearsing for the Minch. talk, that something was missing, but couldn't really put a finger on it. Then a couple of days before, the penny finally dropped. The Golf Club is a local facility for local people, and I needed to somehow make that link, early in the talk. There actually used to be another golf course, on the nearby Rodborough Common, in the 1900's. I came across an old black & white photo of part of it with people playing, and returning to that same spot, could clearly see the old greens and tees just as in the photo. In taking some digi-photos and then slotting them into the presentation, I then realised that in the intervening 100 years, literally dozens of properties had been built on what was probably once common land.

This showed up really well, and enabled me to pretty well prove that the golf course was actually a very positive asset for the community. Couple that with the fact that the formation of the club had provided thousands, if not tens of thousands of local people with the chance to enjoy the sport of golf, I was on a winner. The moral is that while people may have negative attitudes towards golf because of environmental concerns, in fact, most golf clubs are major local assets for local communities and I don't think we make that point often enough or loudly enough.

The Section fixture list for the coming season has been published in conjunction with our Patronage Partners Scheme, but could I draw your attention to an amendment. The South Coast Match at Knighton Heath is on Wednesday September 7.

The R&A have confirmed their "roadshow" for the Cannington seminar in November, and this, coupled with a speaker from the PGA European Tour to give a pro's perspective on the greens, should be another very worthwhile day.

The whole Section would like to wish Nobby Knight all the very best in his new venture as a self-employed landscape contractor. Nobby, who had been at Marlborough for some seven years, felt that with the new man coming in, this was as good a time as any to break away and fulfil his ambition. Nobby hopes to continue as Section Secretary, at least in the short term, and the Committee would like to recognise his huge commitment to the Section.

Finally, back at home with the Spring DIY season upon us, after a massive stroke of luck I've been banned from our local B&Q. We were mooching around the paint department the other night - up and down endless aisles of similar looking paints, fast losing the will to live when my wife stumbled over a pack of brushes that some muppet had left lying on the floor. She recovered her balance, but not before her handbag had slipped from her shoulder, and being jammed full of the type of heavyweight junk that only women see fit to lug around with them the whole time, had swung through the air like a wreckers ball and completely demolished a pyramid of wood preserver tins.

There was the sort of splintering crash normally only associated with Megabowl, and then a stunned silence. At this point you could sense all the security cameras being hastily retrained in our direction. We dispatched Rob, our youngest, to the tills to summon assistance, and off he went leaving a trail of little creosoty footprints behind him. A few moments later, I was enraged to see a scruffy looking guy in sandals and jeans picking his way through the middle of it all. "For Christs' sake go round the other way" I screamed, "can't you see there's a problem here?" The scruffy one turned, "This is my store" he boomed, "I happen to be the manager here". Whoops.

How about some feedback for next month - just let me know you're alive out there. paulw@mgcnew.co.uk; 01453 837355.

Paul Worster



Jane Jones
SOUTH WEST AND WALES
Tel: 01454 270850

South Wales

Our last presentation in the Winter Evening Lecture Series was made by Chris Briggs, Technical Manager of Avoncrop, on the selection and registration processes of amenity pesticides and an update in relation to pesticide legislation. The timescales and costs involved in bringing new products to the amenity market place, an enlightening presentation made to the 20 or so in attendance. Our sincere thanks to Avoncrop for their continued support of the Section, to Rod, Chris and to Ceri Richards for supplying the much needed refreshments. I hope that you've completed and returned your Spring entry forms for the "Amtec Shield" which is to be held at the Garnant Parc Golf Club on Thursday, May 18. This will be the Section's first visit to this demanding, picturesque course, with some distinctive tricky greens. Remember if you haven't it is going to cost you an extra £1.50 I'm sure that Course Manager (or is it General Manager) the infamous Kerry (Joco) Jones will have the course in tip-top condition for us! The Section would like to pass on its sincere best wishes to Russell Anderson and his family, who are off to Copenhagen (in search of Fescue). Russell who is Course Manager of the Cardiff Golf Club, Cyncoed, has been i'm sure the shortest serving Chairman of the Section for many years. After accepting the position at the AGM in October, after having been Vice-Chairman to Angus MacLeod, Russell has had to resign from the post in order to take up the challenge of developing a 36 hole golf course in Denmark. We wish him well and thank him for the contributions that he has made to both the section and industry. I hope that he'll keep in touch and keep us up to the minute in relation to the sustainable debate, from the horses mouth, so to speak (and that his pad is large enough for a fourball, every now and again). Cheers and good luck. Last month was a busy one, with seminars and presentations popping-up all over the place. It was a good job the grass wasn't moving, down to the chilly easterly winds, that never seemed to relent. Hopefully by now, we will all have experienced some sward movement, dressings will have been busily worked in, the last of the moss will have been burnt off and the fescue will be off and running and trying to catch up with the rye's and bents (Gary). Scotts and Syngenta held a promotional day at the Celtic Manor recently, to launch the "Primo Maxx" product. Dr Carl Danneberger talked us through the chemistry of this all new plant growth and its effects. ie; 50% increase in plant tillering and 30% increase in rooting. Extensive field tests have been carried out throughout the country and the results appear to be quite fascinating. Around 60 delegates attended the day, which was formerly introduced by Simon Elsworth, Business Manager for Syngenta, and Nick Martin, European Sales Manager for Scotts. An excellent presentation, which should really of attracted a lot more! The "Tower Chemicals" sponsored "Smart Talk" seminar at the Wiltshire Golf Club attracted around 30 delegates and again witnessed an excellent presentation by one of America's top speakers in his field. Dr Jim Turner presented the latest technology in relation to soil penetrants and wetting agents and their diverse range of products. Our sincere thanks to Tower Chemicals and Sue Malone for making us so welcome, also to Gareth Knight for his generous hospitality and for acting as taxi driver. No feedback on the fixture cards yet - they must be good! PS; I'm penning this one as Angus threw me the one about his computer's packed-up, i think he's out working all hours with the burners, blowing the ice off and trying to get a head start on us all.

Peter Lacey

Devon & Cornwall

On Wednesday February 15. Our Section held a meeting at the Warren Golf Club near Dawlish, kindly sponsored by Barenbrug. In spite of nearly 25mm of heavy rain overnight the course was in excellent condition, thanks to John Weisford, Head Greenkeeper, and his staff.

33 members played for the Barenbrug Trophy over 17 holes, the seventh hole was closed owing to the wet conditions. This hole is the only one on the course which is below sea level.

28 non golfers were guided on a course walk led by John, the Head Greenkeeper. Thankfully they all returned to the Clubhouse before the heavens opened. The non golfers draw prize was won by Victor Dyer, who has recently become the new Head Greenkeeper at Thurlstone Golf Club.

The Winners of the Competition were as follows: 1. P. Brooks, Warren Golf Club, who has recently joined the profession, 38pts; 2. S. Green, Exeter Golf and Country Club, 36pts; 3. G. Childs retired and who needs know introduction, 35pts. A big thank you to Dave Singleton and John Palfrey, for seeing the golfers off on the first Tee.

After lunch, and the prize presentation, the Educational Talk was given by Stuart Ashworth, well known to us all, on Wetting Agents. It was an excellent talk, and not one member fell asleep, that's a record. Well done Stuart and many thanks.

I was very sorry to learn recently learn that we are losing one of our members, Marcus Gilbert. The first assistant at Launceston Golf Club is moving to pastures new. Marcus has been on the staff for 16 years, before joining the profession he worked in the Pros Shop. Marcus procured his NVQ 2, a couple of years ago. He is very well known in Cornwall for being a top class wicket keeper, and opening bat, and has played in top class cricket for many a year.

I know he will be sadly missed by G. Gallimore, the Head Greenkeeper, and staff at Launceston. Marcus is relocating to the Cheshire Area. Our loss their gain. We all wish you every success Marcus, and hope you will visit us some time in the near future.

Another greenkeeper on the move is the Pete Rabson, First Assistant at Bowood Park Golf Club, near Carnelford in Cornwall. Pete is leaving the profession to train to become a Paramedic - a very worthwhile career. Pete, we are all sorry to lose you from greenkeeping, but wish you every success.

Congratulations. What do most daughters give to their Mother on Mothering Sunday? Flowers, Chocolates, or may be take their Mother out for dinner? Well surprise, surprise, not in Devon, Tracey Newlands, daughter of Steve and Lyn Evans, presented to Lyn their first Granddaughter, Caitlin, weighing in at 6lb 4oz on Mothering Sunday. Steve told me at a recent meeting Lyn has been walking around with a grin from ear to ear ever since. Caitlin's father, Tony, is the second in command at Tavistock Golf Club, and, of course, we all know that Granddad is number one at Yelverton Golf Club or so he tells me.

On Tuesday March 28 we ended our winter Golf meetings at Staddon Heights Golf Club, with fantastic views over looking Plymouth Sound. If your golf was not on form one could watch the Naval Ships coming and going from the Dock Yard, not to mention the new Brittany Ferry. Having had heavy rain, wind, and fog for the previous days, we were blessed with a fine dry, sunny day, although still very windy.

Their were two competitions on the day, Vitax sponsored the match for the Head Greenkeepers and Bayer sponsored the match for the Assistant Greenkeepers. 29 members played in the matches and the remaining 25 members were led on a course walk with the Head Greenkeeper, Jonathan Bullen, in company with Jane Jones, our Regional Administrator.

The result of the two competitions were as follows:

Head Greenkeepers sponsored by Vitax. 1. Anthony James, Killiow Golf Club Truro, 37pts; 2. Justin Austin, Windwhistle Golf Club, 34pts; 3. Gerald Ayliffe, Wrangaton Golf Club, 31pts. Assistant Greenkeepers sponsored by Bayer. 1. C. Ralph, Hele Park Golf Club, 39pts; 2. A. George, Dartmouth Golf Club, 34pts; 3. P. Brooks, The Warren Golf Club, 31pts.

The Vitax prizes were presented by John Mullins, the south West Representative. Unfortunately Paul Clifton was unable to attend from Bayer owing to a rather busy work load.

After an excellent lunch and prize giving our educational talk was presented by Terry Farkins, the Course Manager at the Dartmouth Golf and Country Club. The paper he presented was called: Fulfilling Your Job Description On Course Management. It was an excellent presentation by Terry with some very interesting questions and answers to end with.

A first for our Section was to entertain students from the Duchy College, and have their NVQ level two and NVQ three certificates presented. Unfortunately not all the students could participate owing to work commitments, however we were delighted to see the following lads receive their certificates.

NVQ 3: Vincent Vosper, from St Austell Golf Club, accompanied by his Chairman of Greens Mitchell Harris. NVQ 2: Keith Kellow, from Falmouth Golf Club; Ben Hosking, from Tehidy Golf Club; Jack Kirby, from Dartmouth Golf Club; Victor Dyer, from Thurlestone Golf Club; Henry Yeoman, Thurlestone Golf Club; David Moulding, from Bigbury Golf Club. Congratulations and good luck to them all.

To present the students with their certificates the Duchy College staff were on hand. Bill Pile, Ron Skinner, Brian Summers and, last but not least, Terry Farkins, who was very helpful in helping them achieve their objectives as all the liaison officers were.

Finally by the next issue I will have all the dates and fixtures for the 2006/2007 year, including this year's mid-summer meeting. Have just heard this forecast up until June 21. Above average rainfall, below average sun, and very mild, did you really want to know that, I doubt it. Good luck to all.

Donovan O Hunt.
Administrator & Events Coordinator

SECTION NOTES INFORMATION

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

Word limited for Section notes: 500-600.

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 HQ.

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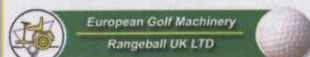
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