

TEE TIME BOOKING SERVICE

SWM Golf Management recommends that golfers take the hassle out of finding a tee-time by joining the UK's biggest tee-time booking service, www.teegenius.co.uk

Covering all the major golf destinations, this site will allow you the freedom to check golf green fees and book your golf tee times when and where you want at a time that suits you, and is not restricted to the opening hours of a traditional golf tour operator.

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SUZUKI KINGQUAD 450 LIVES UP TO THE LEGACY

The latest edition to the KingQuad range is about to be launched in the UK by Suzuki GB PLC. Living up to the high ATV standards set by the 700, the KingQuad LT-A450X sets new levels of performance in its power range and has the advantage of extra fuel economy.

The KingQuad 450 has the power to perform virtually any task encountered in the working ATV user's day.

For more information visit: www.suzuki.com



NEW LANDSCAPING CHAINSAW

Echo has launched a new chainsaw, the CS-370ES, with 38cm bar, and running

on a 36cm³ engine. The CS-370ES provides the user with a powerful yet lightweight saw able to address most landscaping needs.

For more information visit: www.countax.com



THE ZERO-TURN WITH A STEERING WHEEL

Parts Depot UK has launched Gizmow Formula, the only commercial zero-turn mower with a steering wheel, making it as easy to drive as a car but with all the productivity advantages of a stick-steer zero-turn.

For more information visit: www.partsdepotuk.com



CLEANING UP

JSM Distribution has launched a new, environmentally friendly detergent, ideal for the grounds care machinery market.

Principally aimed at the wash and care of machinery, Citrus Bio-Clean is a naturally based product that can be used for a variety of cleaning applications.

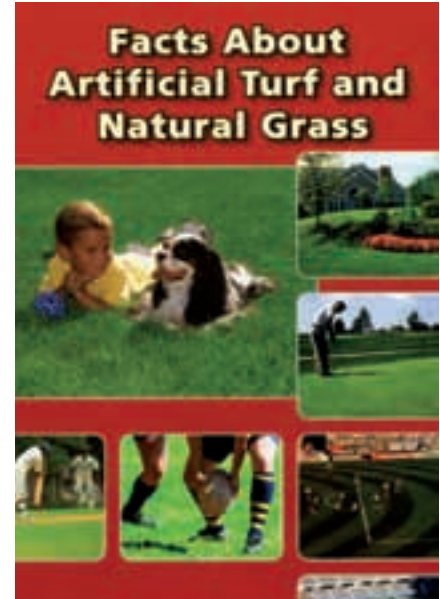
For more information call: 0845 0260064.



FACTS ABOUT TURF AND GRASS

Facts About Artificial Turf and Natural Grass is the new booklet published by the Turf Resource Center to help decision-makers and the general public make informed judgments regarding the installation of artificial turf or natural grass in their communities.

A downloadable version of the booklet and an order form is available at: www.TurfResourceCenter.org



SENSO GRIP

Lloyds of Letchworth has introduced an advanced operator presence control for their range of Paladin mowers. SensoGrip is a touch sensitive operator presence control, which requires no levers or switches to operate. The system comprises of touch sensitive grips mounted on both sides of the handle, therefore as long as the operator is touching either one of the handle grips the machine will continue to run.

For more information visit: www.lloydsandco.com



In the Shed

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

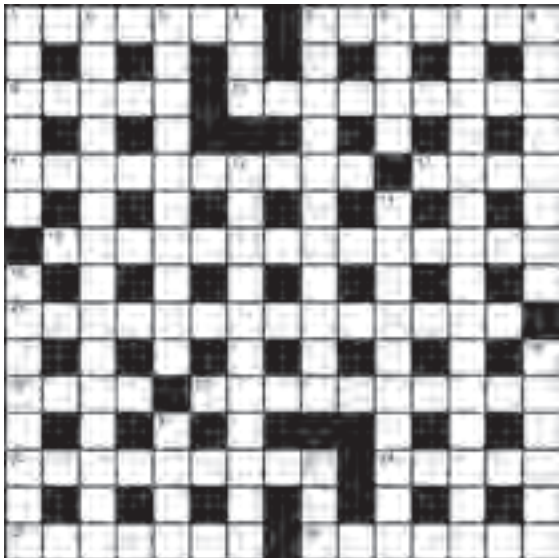
CROSSWORD Compiled by Anax

ACROSS

- 1 How acetylsalicylic acid (in tablet form) is better known (7)
- 5 Arrangement of flowers for presentation (7)
- 9 Remote, unconcerned (5)
- 10 Have a contradicting opinion (4,5)
- 11 Laughing jackass, an Australian kingfisher (10)
- 13 Share a boundary with another object (4)
- 15 Eye inflammation also called pinkeye (14)
- 17 Household activity traditionally marking the end of winter (6-8)
- 19 Influence by gentle urging or flattery (4)
- 20 Relating to parrots (anagram of ANTISEPTIC) (10)
- 22 Two conflicts between Britain and China, centred on substance often used as a drug (5,4)
- 24 Mark used to indicate a word above should be repeated (5)
- 25 Type of grass grown for hay (7)
- 26 March 25th festival celebrating the Annunciation (4,3)

DOWN

- 1 N American state referred to as the Last Frontier (6)
- 2 Media coverage which represents stories primarily through pictures (15)
- 3 Iranian president from 1989 to 1997 (10)
- 4 Hexagonal metal block with internal thread (3)
- 5 Gerry Rafferty hit of 1978 (5,6)
- 6 Computer operating system developed by Bell Telephone Laboratories (4)
- 7 Not supported by evidence (15)
- 8 Exposition, formal piece of writing (8)
- 12 Superfluous, a word sometimes used to mean tearful (11)
- 14 Fair, impartial (4-6)
- 16 Mentally intimidate the opposition (5-3)
- 18 Any serious crime (6)
- 21 Leave out, overlook (4)
- 23 Roman god who personified the sun (3)



QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ

1. Who had a hit with the song 19th Nervous Breakdown?
2. With which sport do you associated Andre Agassi?
3. Who missed their penalty in Euro 96 to stop England's dream of football coming home?
4. Who is married to Louise Nurdling?
5. Who had a hit with the song Two Hearts?
6. Who captained Europe's victorious Ryder Cup Team in 2004?
7. With which sport do you associate Michael Jordan?
8. Which runner managed to avoid a fine for having an outside toilet event in 2005?
9. Which cricket star was recently sacked as England's Vice-Captain?

MONSTER SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9 and the letters A, B and C.

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

SQUIGGLY SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 12 box shape contains the numbers 1 to 9.

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

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TORO

Count on it.

Essex-based Madonna lookalike, Louise.

Delivering Safe use of Pesticides for Effective Weed, Pest and Disease Control

Richard Minton offers some useful advice on eradicating the unwanted from your golf course – within the law.

The recent EU Strategy Document into the Safe use of Pesticides highlights the possibility of pesticide use being totally withdrawn or at least severely restricted in public areas which includes golf courses. No weed, pest or disease control on golf courses or sports fields would eventually lead to deterioration of the surface and would be a seriously retrograde step when there is so much pressure to maintain standards.



The only way we can try to avoid a total withdrawal does not ensue is to abide by the rules and stick to the legislation, ensuring best practice is adopted at all times. The Code of Practice for using Plant Protection Products (available from DEFRA) gives advice on how to use pesticides safely.

Website: www.defra.gov.uk

By law everyone who uses pesticides professionally must have received adequate training in using pesticides safely and be skilled in the job they are carrying out. This applies to:

- Users, operators and technicians (including contractors)
- Managers
- Employers
- Self-employed people
- People giving instruction to others on how to use pesticides

Subjects they need to know about:

- The relevant laws
- The risks associated with pesticides
- The risks that may result from using the pesticides
- Safe working practices
- Emergency action
- Health monitoring
- Record keeping
- Using equipment for applying pesticide

Considerations and Contacts

Before considering use of pesticides you should always look at alternative methods of control, consider the risks to people, wildlife and the environment and if using pesticide the policy should be to keep its use to the lowest possible level.

Advice on chemical use should only be taken from qualified personnel - everyone who sells pesticides must have a certificate of competence or be working under the direct supervision of someone who has. BASIS (Registration) Ltd will give advice in this area.



Website: www.basis-reg.com

For a pesticide to be as effective as possible it is essential that you use the correct product at the right time and in the right way. Always use a product in line with its approved conditions of use – Read the Label.



Website: www.pesticides.gov.uk

Application must be undertaken by a suitably qualified person, certificated to apply pesticide in the proposed way. NPTC should be contacted for details.



Website: www.nptc.org.uk

The equipment chosen should be suitable for the intended method of applying the pesticide. It should be regularly calibrated and tested. NSTS offer a service to test all spraying equipment.



Website: www.nsts.org.uk

Disposal of any waste should be in a safe and legal way to keep any unwanted effect on the environment or humans as low as possible, if you cause any pollution of air, water or soil you can be prosecuted. The Waste Management (England and Wales) Regulations 2006 must be adhered to.

Website: www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Keeping records is critical to the whole operation, with far more documentation than expected, some needing to be kept for up to 40 years.

A summary of the records to be kept:

- Pesticide storage records
- Pesticide application records
- COSHH assessment and environmental risk assessment
- Maintenance inspection and testing of measures to control exposure
- Monitoring exposure in the workplace
- Monitoring exposure of individuals
- Health surveillance
- Disposal records

Choosing a Contractor

A solution to ensure all legislation is adhered to is to appoint a contractor; this does not absolve the manager of responsibility, as they must ensure the contractor fulfils all the criteria laid down in the Code of Practice. A new accreditation scheme "Amenity Assured" has recently been launched by BASIS, NAAC and NPTC and is fully supported by the Amenity Forum who represents the whole industry, giving the assurance to customers that the contractors who sign up to the scheme are regularly audited and fulfil all the requirements laid down in the Code of Practice for using Plant Protection Products.

Website: www.naac.co.uk

Conclusion

Pesticide application is a specialist business, governed by strict legislation: the Code of Practice for using Plant Protection Products is essential reading, giving clear and concise detail about choosing a pesticide, the storage, the application, waste disposal and record keeping, all essential in delivering effective weed, disease and pest control. The EU Directive are currently reviewing pesticide use, in the UK the necessary legislation is in place and if adhered to there should be no reason to reduce or withdraw pesticide use from public areas.

As stated, application of any pesticide to hard surfaces, grass, shrub beds or water is a specialist service, governed by strict regulations; it remains the least favourite job of almost everyone and is much maligned by the environmentalists, but remains an essential service if high standards are to be maintained.

Richard Minton is Managing Director, JPCS Weed Control Ltd
www.jpcs.co.uk

Chairman of the NAAC (National Association of Agricultural and Amenity Contractors) and a Member of the BASIS Professional Register.



News from the Chief Executive

BIGGA BULLETIN BOARD

There has been much debate of late on the BIGGA Bulletin Board regarding the facility to edit postings, or more correctly the lack of edit facility. I personally am not in favour of giving contributors the chance to go back at a later date and change what they write. This, I hasten to add, is not the reason why this facility is missing. The main reason is unnecessary expense. Unlike some businesses we have to contract out all web programming since we cannot afford the luxury of employing someone with this skill.

Anyway, why would you wish to go back on what you have written? Bad spelling? Poor grammar? Something said in haste and later regretted? A mis-informed statement? The better answer is to be sure of what you write and if you are not sure then don't write it! As regards to grammar and spelling, then the solution is simple. Create your postings in MSWord and then use the grammar and spell check before copying the text and pasting it onto the bulletin board. It is surprising how your spelling will improve over time, some people have a natural ability for words or numbers, others have to work at it. I often find it useful to print out and proof read any lengthy text to make sure that it flows and that everything is kept in context. Using this method also ensures that you do not 'time out' from the website and removes the need for speed when writing. Carefully consider what you are going to write, perhaps make a few notes on paper of things that you wish to include, and above all else do not make 'knee jerk' responses to existing postings. The age old maxim of 'less haste more speed' is always a good one to bear in mind.

Harrogate Week 2007 has been a much better financial success than budgeted for due to a combination of increased revenue and savings on expenditure. The Association's Profit and Loss Account will still return a deficit for the current financial year although this will now not be as bad as anticipated. Next year should see a return to profit, but what of future years? This is one of the major issues facing the Board and one that does not have an easy answer. There was a further meeting with the IOG towards the end of April but there is no doubt that, with or without the IOG, the Association needs to strengthen its membership base and this is something that I intend to address over the coming months. BIGGA will continue to work for the benefit of both its members and the turf management profession, in particular greenkeeping and it will commit all reasonable resources in order to achieve this.

My colleagues and I at HQ are always open to constructive suggestions for improvement.

John Pemberton

Central

Hi all, sorry there wasn't any news in last month's mag, but as you can appreciate getting our courses ready for the start of the season takes up all of our spare time. Welcome to all our new members. An updated list will follow next month.

The Section was well represented at the annual Secretaries' Match held at Glenbervie on April 5. The greenkeepers managed to regain the trophy in a 7-3 victory. Many thanks go to the staff at Glenbervie for having the course looking great, and the clubhouse for a superb meal. Anyone who would like to be considered for the next Secretaries' match next year should get in touch with the committee and will be added to the draw for places.

Congratulations go to Mike Lindsay, from Scoonie, on another addition to his family. A wee boy, Campbell. Well done Mike - the snip awaits!

Congratulations to Euan Grant on his appointment to the new project at Machrihanish. Euan has been an enthusiastic and active supporter of the Section and has helped enormously in developing all the activities we have been arranging for our members. He will continue as Vice Chairman until the AGM, after which he will be sorely missed. Perhaps a Section visit to Machrihanish could be arranged? Congratulations to Gordon Mckie, on his appointment to replace Euan as Head Greenkeeper at the Old Course, and to Davie Wilson on his move to the New Course. Good luck guys.

The Spring Outing at Panmure approaches, with an excellent field entered. It looks like being a great day. A full report will be included next month.

We have been very busy on the educational front, with four separate events.

First up was the Disturbance Theory presentation by Henry Bechelet and Richard Windows, from STRI, held at St Andrews. This was very informative and thought provoking. Next on the agenda was Kevin Cavanaugh, from Floratine, and Kevin Brunton, from Greentech Sportsturf, who discussed the importance of soil analysis for effective turf nutrition management. Adrian Mortram carried out a one day workshop on "Using Water Wisely", and this will definitely be a significant factor in the current climate. Finally, we had an excellent turnout to listen to three esteemed American speakers, who took a pleasant April evening off from their Scottish Golf Tour to provide three excellent presentations which sparked much discussion thereafter. Stanley J. Zontek, Director of USGA Green Section, gave an excellent presentation on the alterations at Oakmont GC to prepare for the US Open, Peter J. Landschoot Ph.D. discussed the advantages/disadvantages of the grass species used in the Northern U.S, and Peter H. Dernoeden Ph.D explained the "yellow" turfgrass diseases common to our climatic conditions, some of which will probably become more frequent as expected climatic changes develop. It was good to see so many new faces. If anyone has any requests for any other training, get in touch and if possible we will arrange it for you.

Please also let us know of any news. For up to the minute updates on Section events, check out the website: www.biggacentralsection.org.uk, or call Andrew Mellon, Secretary on: 01334 658914
Derek Scott

East

Firstly I must apologise for the omission of our report last month. It was submitted but unfortunately doesn't appear to have arrived! We started on a sad note with the news that our Chairman, Graeme Wood, who was in the Western General Hospital in Edinburgh having suffered a major stroke. He was travelling to Stirling for a BIGGA meeting in the company of Stuart Greenwood when he became unwell. The latest news is that Graeme has been moved from the Western to the Stroke Recovery Unit at the Royal Victoria Hospital, on Craigmyle Road in Edinburgh. Although at present he is only allowed visits

from family and close friends, I am sure everyone will join me in wishing Graeme a speedy recovery.

On Tuesday, March 6, the Scottish Conference was held at Lauder College in Dunfermline. The event was superbly organised by Peter Boyd who had enlisted some excellent speakers for the large turnout of Greenkeepers, who had arrived in Dunfermline from all corners of Scotland and the North East of England. It is often said in life that you save the best for last and true to form Kerran Daly, a former BIGGA Chairman, brought the house down with a witty talk on course presentation, and then finished with a sing song aided by a borrowed guitar.

A gentleman on the move is Jimmy Coombe, Head Greenkeeper at Gifford GC, who is retiring after 15 years loyal service. Originally employed in the building trade, Jimmy worked part time at Gifford, before seeing the light and joining the staff at Muirfield in 1982. He moved to Gifford immediately after the 1992 Open Championship at Muirfield, where he has been employed ever since. I understand Jimmy hopes to play lots of bowls and golf on his retirement. However, I have it on good authority that his wife, Helen, has other ideas and painting and decorating rather than golf could be the order of the day. I am sure all his friends in the trade will join me in wishing Jimmy all the best for the future. His successor at Gifford is Jamie Martin who commenced his career at Gifford and in fact was Jimmy's first YTS Trainee. In 1996 he moved to Royal Musselburgh where he has worked under the expert tutelage of John Reid. I am sure he will prove to be a worthy successor to Jimmy.

On Friday, March 2, Ratho Park held their environmental forum for golf club members and greenkeepers. Despite the weather there was a good turnout from members. However, apart from Tom Murray and his deputy Billy Hudson, only one other greenkeeper (Andy Hastie) put in an appearance. The speakers on the night were very informative and included Richard Windows, of the STRI, who gave a talk on managing clay push up greens.

The saying one man's loss is another's gain, became a reality when Douglas Mackenzie, of Prestonfield, turned down a trip to the American Greenkeepers show in Anaheim, LA due to personal commitments. His replacement, Hamish Brough, had a whale of a time, and would like to thank John Deere dealer, Double AA, for their hospitality. On Wednesday, March 28, a meeting was held at Oatridge College to discuss "Education – the way forward" The meeting was chaired by Steve Miller when a wide range of topics were discussed including Level 4 and HND Courses. One of the key decisions made on the day was the removal of horticulture from all greenkeeping courses. On a negative note only seven greenkeepers attended, which is disappointing for the organisers.

It is now April and most members are reporting a good start to the season, helped a great deal by the very mild winter. The first golf outing of the new season was held at Glenbervie GC on Thursday, April 5, when the greenkeepers, captained by Stuart Greenwood played a team from the Scottish Secretaries' Association. The match ended with a resounding 7-3 win for the greenkeeping team, which included East Section members Kenny Mail, Chris Yeoman, Kevin Hodges and last, but certainly not least, Stuart Greenwood. Joe Wallace and his team presented the course in pristine condition, and the clubhouse staff ensured everyone was well fed and watered.

Mike Dooner

North

How's it going folks? Hope the weather is suiting you and there is plenty of growth to keep you busy. The Spring Outing is at Oldmeldrum GC this year, so we're hoping for a good turnout to support Robert O Donnell and his staff on the day. Robert and his able Deputy, Graeme Gordon, have been very busy this past winter upgrading the course. Several new bunkers have been added and more have been rebuilt and modernised. Four new tees have been built, a new pond and several other areas of the course have been re-landscaped to improve the course overall. The additional tees have stretched the course to over 6000yds and increased the SSS from 69 to 70. Graeme Gordon has been promoted to Deputy Head as a reward for several years' service and hard work to the club. Well done lads for all your hard work and we look forward to playing the course in the Spring Outing.

The weather during March and early April has been very dry which will probably help most of the inland courses but it is making the Links courses crusty already and the summer hasn't even started yet. Maybe this is the trend to come with global warming starting to have an effect on the weather.

Ross Macrae has left Newmacher GC to become Head Greenkeeper at Huntly GC. This happened a while ago so my apologies Ross for not mentioning it earlier. Good luck to you at Huntly. Ben Brookes and Euan Rankin have moved to Murcar GC from Newmacher, so good luck guys in your new posts.

Gavin Cameron, who has worked at Royal Aberdeen GC for 12 years, has left to try his luck in the oil business. I have worked with Gavin for over nine years and he proved to be a very competent greenkeeper in all areas of the job. It is a pity that people like him are leaving the profession to do other work, this trend is happening all over the UK now because there are very few opportunities in the Deputy category that guys like Gavin can actually move into. I wish Gavin all the best and thank him for his efforts over the past 12 years at Royal Aberdeen. Another greenkeeper who is moving into the oil business is Chris Murdoch, from Murcar GC. I posted a link on the BIGGA website about this trend of people leaving their jobs, and hoped to get a better response than I did, I think in five to 10 years time there might be a shortage of quality greenkeepers around to become head men. I'm interested in any comments that you have on this topic, email: grassman351@aol.com

I recently attended a demonstration at Newmacher GC, by Kevin Strachan Construction services, that demonstrated his Viper screening machine. This machine can screen any material like rubble, general golf course organic material, into re-useable material for construction projects. I recently had Kevin screen about 500 tonne of organic material we had dumped over the years into very good root zone for tee and bunker work. I would imagine every course has material dumped somewhere that can be re-cycled into a re-useable product for divots or construction work.

Robert N Patterson



North East

Not a lot to write again this month. As most of you will probably be aware,

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

Greenlay have moved from Choppington, after being based there for 36 years, to new, purpose built premises at Baker Rd, Cramlington. The premises have been designed to include a showroom, offices, stores and workshop. This relocation project is part of Greenlays planned future growth. A new Head Greenkeeper and an Assistant have been appointed at Stocksfield GC - taking over from Roy White and Andrew Morrison. Also to welcome to the Section is Jamie Smith, from Slaley Hall, who is moving to Hexham GC, replacing John Moutrie who is retiring.

I have been asked by Regional Administrator, Peter Larter, to remind you that a golf team event is hopefully being played at Matfen Hall GC sometime this summer (this was played at Teeside GC last year) and will be sponsored by Scotts, we are just waiting for confirmation.

Another suggestion from Peter Larter was if any member needs to use the Legal Helpline with any dispute regarding work, get in touch with him and he will put you in touch with the necessary persons to handle the situation.

As soon as I hear anything about the Scotts competition I will be in touch either by Section news or by phone, in the meantime if anyone is interested in this event get in touch with me and I will forward entries to Peter Larter. Jimmy Richardson

North West

We had a great day at Withington GC recently, to raise money for Stuart Bridge. The course and the turnout was fantastic with all the tee times booked, I think many more greenkeepers and trade members would like to have taken part but could not get in. I know a lot of money was raised but unfortunately do not have all the details, needless to say it was a lovely day. Stuart actually turned up on the day which was a great surprise. I would just like to thank everyone who organised the day, you all know who you are. It was very heartwarming to know that people in our business can pull together and help out a fellow greenkeeper in times of need. We have a misprint in our yearly fixture list, the summer tournament at Denton GC will be played on June 28 and not 14 as stated. Sorry about that.

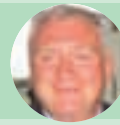
If you wish to play in any of the tournaments please send a cheque for £20 to: Bill Merritt, The Lodge, Beacon Park GC, Beacon Lane, Dalton, Wigan, WN8 7RU. If you wish to play in any of the team events please contact Bill too. I read something the other week which I think might be of some help to us greenkeepers and it was something like this, you have 10% of the members who like you. You have 10% of the members who hate you. You have to try and please the other 80% because the other 20% won't change their minds. Chris Sheehan

Cleveland

Well, April has started fine and dry with many courses completing their winter work on time and without too much mess. Do we get the wetting agents in now in case the dry spell continues? WARNING - their arrival always prompts a prolonged period of rain!

I would like to start by thanking Henry Bechelet of the STRI who presented a very interesting lecture on the 'Disturbance Theory' to our members last month. This was up to Henry's usual high standard and his wit and repartee added to the night. He's not a bad lad for a Saints fan. Thanks to Teesside GC for hosting the event and making us very welcome.

I was speaking to Mark Davison, Head Groundsman at Sedgefield Racecourse recently. They have a six-race 'Ladies Night' meeting on Thursday, May 31. In conjunction with the local greenkeepers sections we are planning a night out and a betting extravaganza. Why not treat the lady in your life to a night out (make sure the wife doesn't find out mind!) Course tickets are available at a very reasonable £6 (gets only basic facilities in the centre of



Peter Larter
NORTHERN & MIDLAND
 Tel: 01476 550115

the track) and only £11.20 for a Grandstand paddock ticket. However, I am working on getting a 'bit of a deal' so please ring me to book your tickets as soon as possible. I'm afraid it's payment up front folks.

Ian Pemberton has taken over the reigns at Cleveland GC, Redcar. Ian has already received loads of help from Les and the other lads at the club and he has asked me to thank them publicly. Ian's place is to be taken by Kevin Scarce, who returns to Bedale after a spell at Easingwold. Good luck to you both.

Alan Reed (Saltburn GC) and Barry Walker (City of Newcastle GC) recently figured in the final of the TSL darts competition, held at Castle Eden Cricket Club. Alan lost to Glen Baxter (South Shields GC) in the semi final. Barry won his semi final beating Andrew Cook of Medomsley Cricket Club. In a fantastic best of five leg final the standard of play was top class. Glen, a Super League player, and Barry, a former Durham County player, served up some great games. However, Barry's lack of competitive tournament play resulted in a deserved 3-0 win to Glen. Glen received the inaugural 'Champions Shield' and a cheque for £100. Barry received the 'Runners Up' medal and a cheque for £50. Finally Alan received his 'Finalists Medal' and a cheque for £20. Thanks are due to Castle Eden Cricket Club for their hospitality on the night. They provided Pie and Peas for everyone and then Kevin Carr of TSL organised a Domino Handicap for us visitors and the regulars. With over £30 at stake the competition was fierce. Karen Hopper of TSL beat one of the locals in the final. All the best. Any news: 07831 214879 Terry El Prez Charlton

Midland

Firstly, my apologies for the lack of notes last month - Such was down to my lateness of submission and a problem with my broadband provider. It happens! Last month's calendar page was sponsored by our old friends and long-suffering supporters of the Section, Bathgate Leisure. Our greatest of thanks to them.

I have just realised that my phone number as printed within our blue programme for 2007 is incorrect, please use the one as printed within our calendar: 07908421015. Sorry for any inconvenience. Ed, you had better check the voicemails on my old phone, you may be some time (if only!). This month's calendar page is sponsored by our young friends and short-suffering supporters of our Section, Rigby Taylor/Tony Cheese. Our greatest of thanks to them. Rigby's have in fact been supporters of the Section for more years than I can remember.

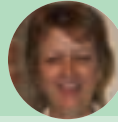
Another supporter over many a year has been Mr R. Minton. Richard has taken a position outside of the greenkeeping remit. Our best of wishes to you, and many thanks for your support over the years.

The closing date for the Scotts Doubles is May 8, the draw is to be held at Ludlow GC on May 9. I understand that a few of you have not received an entry form. My advice is to firstly question your local postal sorting office. Secondly, if you have read these notes in time and wish to enter contact Rhys Thomas (Comp Sec) on: 0775581615. Please remember that late entries are at his discretion and may well be out of his hands, but you might as well try. Also those who have not received entry forms for any other events please contact me and I shall be pleased to send you one in the post.

I'd better rap it up - I'm in danger of sending these notes in late. Just time to welcome six new members: Ian Cureton, John Meade, Andrew Wilkinson, Ian Turley, Craig Souter and Daniel Rowe. Also don't forget our summer event at Coventry GC on July 4 at 2pm. Entry closing date: June 8. See you there. Sean McDade



Clive Osgood
SOUTH EAST
Tel: 01737 819343



Jane Jones
SOUTH WEST AND WALES
Tel: 01454 270850



SOUTH EAST

Berks/Bucks and Oxon

Easter and Augusta! The King Pins walked off Augusta National much the same way they came on it, two by two, wrapped up against the cold. Their misery finally over, they trudged into the scorer's hut where the carnage could be tallied. If this is the new, improved Augusta National, welcome to the world of fewer birdies and more bogeys as Tiger and the best golfers in the world, reminding us at times of the human side to battling the beautifully manicured fairways with billions of trees and oceans of water, to threaten wayward balls. It seems that, with greens as fast as lightning and course changes implemented several years ago, gone are the days of 20 under par and Oh look - I nearly managed level par! This year I really enjoyed watching a tournament that became unpredictable with the beauty of the course and the beast playing together as one to provide a challenging climax to this major event. To combat the cold this year, I wonder whether Augusta have ordered any of those new solar plants from Venezuela?

Anyway welcome to May! Our first event this year is on May 17, at Wycombe Heights GC, which by the time you are reading this is nearly upon us, so be quick and check out the new web page at: www.bbo-greenkeepers.co.uk for all the last minute information. If you haven't already done so, get on the blower and welcome our newest member of the first time dad club, Phil Plater, from Magnolia Park GC, who is the proud dad of newly arrived daughter, Mia Annabelle, who weighed in at 5lb 12oz. Congratulations to Phil and his wife, Jan, who apparently played an important role in the birth.

Alec MacIndoe has recently lost his football shirt while playing his beloved game, if anyone comes across a green and white garment with hoops on it, can they please forward the Celtic shirt to Newbury and Cookham GC where Alec has promised a reward for the kind hearted soul.

Section Secretary, Dean Jones, can always be contacted on: d.jones51@tiscali.co.uk for any news or views, or just to log your new email address if it has changed. Dean can also be contacted through the BB&O web page. Wishing you all a good start to the summer season.

Mark Day

BB&O, Chairman's Message:

As we fast approach a new greenkeeping season, I thought it appropriate to send you my best wishes for the oncoming year. I am sure that for many of you the winter has been quite problematic due to the high levels of rainfall. However, now that the weather seems to be settling down somewhat I expect that you will all be feeling more in control, so good luck to you all.

Good news from your committee that the new BB&O website is well into the final stages of design and will be available shortly. The site will be full of up-to-date information regarding the Section, making communication much easier, so we hope you all enjoy it and welcome any ideas for future improvements.

Finally we extend a warm welcome from the Section to Chris Lomas MG and 10 of his colleagues from The Berkshire GC. We look forward to seeing you soon. Please try to support your Section throughout the season as often as you can, as we have some wonderful days organised for your benefit and enjoyment. Best Wishes

Sid Arrowsmith MG

Surrey

Friday, April 6. Hello readers and welcome to another quota of the Surrey Section's belated news gossip and intrigue. We start with news. Dave Langheim has now officially gone into shorts from April 2, while my eight year-old grandson is now old enough to wear long trousers. Gareth Roberts has had another very successful charity day at Hankley Common GC, in aid of Autistic Children and has raised over £12,000. A fantastic achievement on a day that was really warm and sunny. I was fortunate to be able to play in this event along with my usual partners Phil, Winchester Machinery; Greg, West Surrey GC, and Mark, Cranleigh GC, and for the fourth year running managed to enter the frame coming 4th. However, should any one of them want to bet money against you in a putting competition at a maximum distance of 18 inches, jump at the chance you'll make a fortune! Barry Robertson has had an operation on something but he is keeping the something secret until it heals or falls off.

Surrey Section's first golf event was a great success at Dukes Meadows GC on March 23. Although a few of the early starters had some showers most of the teams enjoyed dry conditions, apart from those, like me, who could not resist the overpowering necessity to pop the odd ball into one of the well stocked lakes, much to the amusement of my playing partners. The winning teams were 1. Darren Lee, Dean Churchill, Daren Pearl and Andy Reason; 2. David Gerson, Rodney Friend, Hany Abbas and Des Folliard; 3. Bobby Rogers, Andy Dennis, Adam Watts and Gregory Sutton.

The Nearest the Pin winners, who must have played really well to have got so near to pins in exceptionally difficult positions, were Brian Willmott on the 1st and my fellow team member Roger Tydeman on the 9th. As there was no gossip or intrigue I finish with a tale of exceptional coincidence that happened when I played in a two ball at Epsom GC a week after Dukes Meadows. On the 3rd par three tee, we were held up and a single player, who we did not know, caught us up. I invited him to join us and he did. Having introduced ourselves we talked about golf and where we had played recently. I mentioned to him what a delightful and well-kept par three course Dukes Meadows was and that it was ideal for improving one's short game. He said that his son had played there last week in a BIGGA tournament and I asked him where his son worked. Croham Hurst GC he replied. So I was able to say that his son's name was Tom. That then surprised him for the coincidence was that his son Tom was the fourth member of my team at Dukes Meadow and was only bought in as a substitute at the last minute. It was the first time I had played with Tom and the first time I had played with his dad, Steve, a two handicapper and a member at Epsom GC.

If you have any odd experiences that you think the readers will be interested in, please, don't tell me, keep them to yourself, and bore the wife.
Brian Willmott

Kent

Hi Guys, hope you're well and the dreaded "Augusta Syndrome" has settled down at your respective courses. It was great to see such a fantastic

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tournament despite the controversy surrounding how the hallowed course has been altered to nullify the effect of the advances in technology on the equipment and the athleticism of the players. The debate about the rights and wrongs of it all will, no doubt, surface year on year as the powers that be in the US do their best to belittle the best golfers in the world.

Kent Section recently played our Spring Tournament at the Kings Hill GC. Many thanks to Duncan Kelso and his team for providing such a great course and to all who attended on the day. The warm day threatened to have us all boiling over but the ubiquitous Vic Maynard and his faithful refreshment buggy came to the aid of many a weary golfer. Many thanks to Vic, and Ernest Doe's, for supplying this essential service again.

Despite the pressure of this event being our National Qualifier and the enforced three-quarters handicap, some good scores were returned at the end of this very challenging course. I'm just glad we got to play it before the rough got to its full height!

Full results were as follows: 1. Wayne Syers, Lullingstone GC, 37 pts; 2. Dan McGrath, North Foreland GC, 36 pts. Both of these players have qualified for the National finals so good luck to them there! 3. Rob Holland, Birchwood Park, 34 pts; Longest Drive, Dan McGrath; Nearest Pin 8th, Dan McGrath; Nearest Pin 11th, Neil Pullen; Trade prize went to Stewart Clayton, of Midlube. Many thanks again to everyone at Kings Hill for a great day and also to all our trade supporters who were kind enough to donate raffle prizes.

Our next event will be held on June 12 at the Westgate and Birchington GC at Westgate on Sea. Please check our website for entry forms and up to date news on all forthcoming events. Please contact me with any news from the Section or to leave a message on our forum board when you visit us at: kentgreenkeepers.co.uk

Rob Holland

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Sussex

Sorry for not writing last month but there was not a great deal going on. Since then we have had the Gentlemen's Dinner at Walton Heath, which was a great day. The weather was in our favour and the course was exceptional. It's the first time I have played at Walton Heath and I thoroughly enjoyed it. It's certainly a challenge. A big thanks to Ian McMillan and his staff for providing the course in such great order. Also a big thank you must go to Clive Osgood, who organised the day for us all to enjoy.

I did receive a phone call from Dave Hinks (Nick Faldo to his friends) about some machinery he had stolen from Peacehaven golf club. It actually happened during work hours while Dave was busy in another area of the course. When he returned to the sheds someone had broken the padlock off and stolen two trimmers from his sheds, one was a Stihl and the other an Allen. This all happened between 14.05 and 14.30. I know he is a bit annoyed about it and if anyone did have any information he would be grateful.

I have given you the dates of golf days but here they are again: May 24 - Ham Manor; early July - Cophorne; August - Surrey v Sussex; September 13 - Cooden Beach and also Sussex v Kent - TBA. I hope to see you at some of the golf days this year. If you need to contact me please call: 07776223234 or email: robert.hudson77@btinternet.com

Rob Hudson

London

Hello to you all in the London Section. I hope you are all ready for the busy season ahead!

Not a great deal of news to report from the area. I would like to welcome back to greenkeeping Craig Handyside, who has joined our Old Fold Manor team. I will report on the Brookman's Park Spring meeting in next month's ATG, as we have not played the event at the time of writing this report. Please remember these dates of the forthcoming events: Summer Meeting, Gerrard's Cross GC, Thursday, August 16 tees from 1.45pm; Turkey Trot Meeting (Scotts Trophy), Porters Park GC, Wednesday, December 12 tees from 10am; Paintballing, Saturday, June 9 at Bricketwood. Anyone wishing to partake, the fee is £10 including lunch. This does not include cost of paintballs. Contact London Section Secretary, Aaron Percival on: 07966 247913 - there are limited spaces left.

Finally, if you have any information e.g. achievements, good or bad news, or anything interesting, please let me know on: 07818410333, thank you. Matt Plested

Essex

Well if you didn't already know. We now have our own Section website: www.essexbigga.co.uk set up by Tom Smith, from Colne Valley (Thanks Tom). We will be posting the latest information on the site to keep you all up to date with what we are doing in the Section, plus what is going on around the county, mainly information from head office - Other news as it arrives. Information on the golf days will be posted along with your tee off times and other relative information of the day, how to get there etc. If you see anything you would like added, the committee can take a look at it and maybe add in your requirements. If you have anything constructive that you want aired on the website or if you have any equipment for sale, let Martin Forrester know and we will see what we can do for you.

Just a note, if anyone has moved or has not been getting correspondence from the Section, please notify Martin Forrester on: 07984-867.939 or: mdwforrester@hotmail.com. Don't forget the forthcoming Essex BIGGA v Trade cricket match, on Thursday, May 17 at Brookweald Cricket Club, Weald Road, South Weald Park, Brentwood, Start time is 2.30pm. Information