



MIDLAND REGION - EAST MIDLANDS

Just to remind everybody that this year's Summer Tournament takes place at Mickleover Golf Club, Derby, on Thursday, July 24. If you have not received an entry form please contact myself, Dan Rodgers.

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MIDLAND

The annual BIGGA Midland Section's Match against the President's Team at Handsworth Golf Club was played on a lovely warm spring day – Tuesday, May 13. The teams this year have been reduced to 16 players/8 teams per side, and for once the Greenkeepers came out victorious winning five games to three.

As always the President's team were a joy to play and magnanimous in defeat. Congratulations to the 16 greenkeepers who took part and represented the Midland Section so admirably, as always. Thank you also to John Hughes and his team for the condition of the course during the busy spring growth period. By God, you can hear the grass growing!

For a number of years our old mate, Dave Gibbons, has served on committee and indeed represented the Section at regional level. However, due to a young family and work commitments, Dave has decided to step down from committee. I'm sure that you all shall join the committee in thanking him for his fine efforts while on committee. Cheers Rocky, and all the best mate.

I daren't ask Richard Beacham how many photos he has received for 2009's calendar! Come on now, get clicking, it's a lovely calendar; imagine the kudos and brownie points you will get from your Club if it is featured in such. Please send your photos to: rich71@btconnect.com This month's calendar page is kindly sponsored by our old friends Burrows Grass Machinery, our thanks to them.

And finally...thanks Billy for the picture, made me laugh mate. Imagine that on the calendar?

We all wish Andy Lane and Trevor Ward of Olton Golf Club speedy recoveries from their recent misfortunes. I'm sure you will both be back raking bunkers very soon. Something to look forward to!

Details of the forthcoming Pesticides Update Course and the latest Irrigation Masterclass Workshop are now available on the website.

For further details visit: www.biggamidlandsection.com or contact Paul Woodham on:
07880 734197 or: paul@ghgc.org.uk

Cheers until next month folks

Sean (the bard) McDade



EAST OF ENGLAND

Hello all.

Reading this will herald the arrival of July, half way through the year already. Where does it all go! July tends to be the busiest month with Club Championships, Captain's Days and Invitation Days all gracing the calendar.

Be careful what you wish for!

I began last month's column by saying hopefully everyone is out in the sunshine cutting grass. However it has been raining now all day and still doesn't look like stopping!

Last month I also wrote of the problems April brought with constant rainfall, someone must have listened because for the first three weeks of May we had a whole 2mm of rain. It dried the course out fantastically, however it went too far and began to dry out everything too much. This always leads to that fun time of year when the irrigation pumps and system have to hit the ground running. It doesn't matter how much you have checked the system and the pump beforehand there is no real way you can test eight hours of constant working. Last year my pump died on me, this year it decided to blow all its electrics, leaving me without water just when it was needed the most. Déjà vu!

However, spare a thought for Rob Welford, of Cleethorpes GC, who lost his entire irrigation control panel meaning he could not water automatically. Call it dedication or madness, but he decided the best way to go was to spend the entire night out on the golf course watering manually. Leaving a green on to water for half an hour he decided to visit Tesco at 4am, apparently it's an interesting experience.

If anyone else would like to share their early season problems with everyone else then let me know.

Our second golf day of the year was held at Burghley Park, on May 20. Family commitments again prevented my attendance, however a good turnout of nearly 30 players enjoyed fantastic greens and the best fairways some people had ever encountered.

The results were as follows: 1. Bruce Hicks, 39pts; 2. Brian Robinson, 36pts; 3. Graham MacDonald, 32pts; 4. Adi Kitchenon, 32pts; 5. Rob Welford, 31pts; Trade winner, Gary Cooper, 35pts; Nearest the Pin, Gavin Merrison; Longest Drive, Alan Walker (somehow!).

Many thanks go to the Burghley Park greenstaff for the condition of the



Around the Green

course, the bar and catering staff for looking after us so well and to Dave Smith, and Mansfield Sands, for sponsoring the day.

All the results and the latest Order of Merit standings can be found on our website.

Our next golf day is at Gainsborough on Tuesday, July 8, tee off is at 1pm and we are playing the Lakes course. Remember to arrive early for coffee and bacon rolls.

For any more information about this event or any others then contact Rob Welford at Cleethorpes GC.

www.eastofenglandbigga.com
steveimminham@aol.com

Many thanks

Steve Beverly



MID ANGLIA

The Spring Tournament was held at Bedfordshire Golf Club, on June 4, and was also the Qualifier for the National Championship to be held at the East Sussex National in October.

The weather did its best to put a dampener on the occasion and 18mm of rain overnight and 11mm the night before, along with heavy rain the previous week, had threatened to flood the greenkeepers sheds again. The clubhouse had been flooded the previous week and that is at the top of the hill! John and his team had had to move machinery out of the sheds in the middle of the night on several occasions, once at 3am, as a precautionary measure as the sheds are prone to flooding. Fortunately, if that is the right word, the water was only lapping at the shed doors this time.

A huge thank you to Bedfordshire Golf Club for hosting the event in such adverse conditions and an equally huge thank you to John and his team for their fantastic dedication to the job for even getting the course open, going far beyond what anybody could reasonably expect. Let's all hope the weather behaves and things can get back to normal. Thanks also to Rigby Taylor for sponsoring the day and to all the other trade members for their continued support.

1. Chris Garnett, Beds and County GC, 40 pts, also Longest Drive; 2. (on count back) M. Wood, Berkhamsted GC, 37 pts and also Nearest the Pin; 3. Steve Mason, Stocks GC, 37pts (on count back) and finally Clive Parnell scored 32pts to take the Trade Prize. First and second places go through to East Sussex National, good luck chaps. Clive, you're stopping at home.

Although it is some while ago now, congratulations to Mark Day and Geoff Fenn for running the London Marathon. Mark completed the course in 5hrs 57mins and raised over £1500 for his chosen charity Sense. Geoff finished in 3hrs 46mins and raised £1125 for the Iain Rennie Hospice at Home. Well done chaps, fantastic effort.

Welcome back to Matt Towler who rejoins the Section after a few years

away at Trent Park. Matt has taken over from James Camfield at Letchworth who in turn succeeds Jim Cassidy at Ashridge, good luck to you both in your new roles.

And finally, by the time you read this the US Open will have come and gone and focus will be on The Open, but here is a little teaser for you. The Head Greenkeeper at which golf club in the Section went on to win the US Open Championship and finish as runner up the following year? Well, you have to go back quite a way in the history books, as far as 1895, to Horace Rawlins who was once employed as both Professional and Head Greenkeeper at Mid-Herts Golf Club. After immigrating to the USA, Rawlins accepted a position as assistant professional at Newport Country Club, Rhode Island which hosted the inaugural US Open in 1895. Playing in just his third tournament, Rawlins was one of 11 participants invited to play and beat, among others, Willie Dunn by 2 strokes over 36 holes. If you're ever at Mid-Herts, there is a plaque on the Greenkeepers sheds commemorating his achievement.

Craig Spooner
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SOUTH EAST REGION - SURREY

Friday, June 6. The rain has stopped and the weekend forecast has promised warm and dry so hopefully the Derby runners will not get wet. My tip is New Approach, so make sure you all have a few quid on it.

Looking over my many acres of garden, with the manor house behind me, I write next month's little epilogue with a contented heart knowing that the £5 worth of petrol in my car is just enough to get to the local pub. I'll walk home, then back in the morning with a full 5ltr can of distilled water and pray that what happened two millennia ago when water turned to wine, in my case, will be water into petroleum spirit. If not, it's the bicycle for me and goodbye to the combustion engine forever.

Mike Kirkham has much to be praised for as West Surrey Golf Club, the venue for the National Qualifier, was in magnificent condition and as always a pleasure to play. My playing partners, Tony Bremer and Adie Locke, for whom I have always had a deep regard, were rubbish and the least said about our ball the better.

Best Gross: 1. Kevin Boxall; 2. Jason Hunt; 3. Greta Ogilvie. Best Nett: 1. Darren Woodward; 2. Eddy Oliver. Nearest the Pin: James Lowe. Longest Drive: Tony Brennan.

Surrey Section will host a Health and Safety day at Foxhills Golf Club on October 27. Other Sections are invited together with club officials. For further details contact Mystic Meg or Ron Christie.

Congratulations to Anna Farley who gave birth to her daughter, Freya Lif, 7lbs 7ozs on April 17. Darren Farley, Deputy at the RAC Golf Club, wants his wife to know that he will move back as soon as Freya starts school.

Also wandering what has hit him is John Budd, Course Manager at Effingham



GC, for his wife, Helen, presented him with his firstborn, a son, Samuel Jack, 6lbs 7ozs on April 13, coincidentally the birth date of my eldest daughter. I've heard rumours that Samuel Jack has already packed his belongings into a large spotted handkerchief and will leave home if his dad persists in grinning madly at him and making burbling noises with his fingers and lips.

I must now confess to a severe attack of memory fatigue for I have been unable to remember who is the father of James Owen, the 9lb 1oz son of Jemma, born on March 15. Daddy please let me know who you are so that I can make amends next month and give little James his father back.

And so to football, sponsored by John Shaw Machinery, played at East Grinstead Sports Ground and featuring some 25-a-side teams from the South East area, who played in wet conditions on May 28. I fear I was not present so the following report is from a player I seconded and after much editing to remove very slanderous and highly contentious remarks "Ronaldo", my reporter's non de plume's communiqué, is as follows.

The tournaments favourite, the team with the very loud player/manager/coach did not even get past the group stages. Although the young Liphook team had much enthusiasm it was not matched by their durability for the most the Addington Palace keeper had to do was chat to Dave Murdoch, the afore mentioned player/manager/coach, who was on the bench that first game having put out his strongest team. Hard luck Liphook for coming up against a team of very older but wiser players.

Hindhead, another strong team, were beaten in the semi final but it was Addington Palace against Sunningdale in the final. Congratulations to Sunningdale for holding out for a 0-0 draw at full time but to the Addington Palace player who missed his penalty and lost the game, is a months strimming not a just reward? Well done Sunningdale.

John Humphries is retiring from Shanks Mowers of Thornton Heath, and he was only 81 in April.

Brian Willmott
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KENT

At last some sunshine to bless our courses! And the ubiquitous smart comment from a member telling us about how great it must be to be a greenkeeper as we're always out in the sunshine. He's obviously forgotten about the horrendous conditions we have had to contend with until very recently yet still produced a fine course for him and his ilk.

The warmer weather has certainly brought the golfers back out at Birchwood and, judging by their gleaming armoury in gleaming new bags, many of them have used the money they saved by not playing golf in the poor weather to invest in the latest clubs and accessories to improve their games. Golfers sure are suckers for new gear!

We've all been there though, buying new irons, drivers, putters and god knows what else thinking it will make us into something approaching semi-pro standard only for us to play half a dozen poor holes before the realisation

kicks in that the problem wasn't with the head of the club but, rather, what stands at the other end of it!

Who cares! As long as the company's right and the weather is half decent then surely the game itself is a mere bit part player in the full enjoyment of a few hours spent with friends admiring the skills of our colleagues in the great English countryside.

It's not a bad old life after all!

Congratulations to my old mate Dan Waghorn, from The London Club, and his far better half, Kimberley, on the birth of their first child at the start of June. At least you'll have a decent excuse for being late for work now mate!

The next event in your Kent Section year is the trip to Canterbury Golf Club on the July 10 (as shown on our calendar). Entry forms are available on the website as is all up to date information and past results.

Enjoy the summer while it lasts guys.

Best of British

Rob Holland



ESSEX

Things are moving fast and furious at the moment and grass leads the way, though it's quickly followed by the events in the Section.

Our spring event has past and by the time you read this so will the summer event. Entry forms are available for download from the website, it helps if you would print this off in the future, then let us know, so we can remove you from the mailing list. I feel this is the most economical way of sending out the entry forms. The rising cost of postage and the time and manpower to get them sent out, make forever-increasing pressure on the modern day Course Manager.

Upminster did us proud! The welcome on arrival, the course and the evening meal were all memorable. Dougie (Ferne) and his team had worked hard to get the course into pristine condition and then the heavens opened. I can just imagine what Dougie was saying and feeling early that morning. The course stood up to it well though and to be fair it was more a continued heavy drizzle than a full onslaught. All those that played in the damp conditions enjoyed their day's golf. The meal in the evening was a delight and although I missed it, reports of the evening were that it rounded the day with a flourish.

Thanks to all the trade who put prizes on the raffle table, and to this year's joint sponsors of the Section. Our thanks also go to the members, committee and staff of Upminster Golf Club, for the use of their course. To the reception we received from all and to Dougie and his team for arranging a really good test of golf.

Results of our first event of the season, Spring Stableford at Upminster Golf Club: Overall: Richard Linin, 38pts, Upminster Golf Club; 1.1 Adam Millward, Orsett Golf Club, 35pts; 2.1 Daniel Hughes, Forrester Park Golf & TC, 35pts; 3.1 Roland Hughes, Forrester Park Golf & TC, 34pts; 1.2 Dougie Fernie, Upminster

Around the Green

Golf Club, 34pts; 2.2 Ben Scrivener, Benton Hall Golf Club, 32pts; 3.2 Sam Cook, Colchester Golf Club, 30pts; Guest: Kevin Royan, 39pts; Trade: Mark Keysell, Rigby Taylor Ltd, 36pts; Longest Drive: Mark Keysell, Rigby Taylor; Nearest the Pin: Simon Barber, Benton Hall Golf Club. 43 played.

Long standing Essex member Alan Sharp, has spent the last two and a half years working on the wilds of the Scottish coastline at Open qualifying course, Scotsraig.

He now returns to Essex to take on the role of Course Manager at The Club Company's, Benton Hall Golf Club.

Course Manager at Chigwell Golf Club some years ago before spending a short period of time abroad, he returned to the UK and took up the position of Course Manager at Scotsraig. But now he has made his return to Essex. Alan will head a team of greenkeepers who have been at the club for a number of years. The Essex Section, wish him well in his new position and hopefully we will see him back at our golf days in the near future, after he has settled into his new position.

Banks Amenity Products Director, Simon Banks, along with his wife, Caroline, have just announced a new arrival to the family. Baby, Thomas, was born on Tuesday, May 6; he joins his sister in the Banks household. Well done, Caroline with a little help from Simon.

The second new arrival in the Essex Section is a second daughter to Richard (Tonto) Lewis, Blade Amenity, and his partner, Alex. Grace was born on Tuesday, May 20 weighing in at 6lbs 13ozs. She joins her sister, Honey, in the Lewis house. Well done, Alex.

It appears the only greenkeeper from our Section to join the BMW support team at Wentworth, was Andy Cracknell, Orsett GC. Well done Andy for your continued support of the event.

Details and links to all our sponsors can be found on the website along with links to other interesting sites, up to date information and other interesting things.

Arnold Phipps-Jones
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SOUTH WEST AND SOUTH WALES REGION **- SOUTH WEST**

Writing this after yet another wild and wet May Bank Holiday Weekend with play and revenues well down. I was in for the "Dawn Chorus" on the Monday - a shotgun-start off 18 tees at 6.30am. Lovely - I did enjoy the 4.30am start to get the course ready. At least it hadn't started raining at that point, but it soon made up for it with gale force winds to boot.

Back at home - a nice breakfast was followed by an enjoyable but all too brief re-acquaintance with my bed before being summarily dragged off to look for hanging baskets at local garden centres. At one point, we were held up in a giant queue - which turned out to be spectators for the local "Cheese-

rolling" event. We found out later that 3000 people had turned out in the pouring rain - many walking several miles to spectate as around 60 madmen hurled themselves down Coopers Hill, just outside Gloucester, in pursuit of the cheeses. The local TV replays showed that cheese rollers can generally be considered complete lunatics, given the right circumstances, with some 19 competitors carted off to hospital on spinal boards. Several competitors and spectators had come from as far a field as Brazil, and incredibly, Japan. Some people will do anything for a slice of Double-Gloucester.

At Minch - we've "got the builders in". An ancient tin clad asbestos-roofed barn is being demolished to make way for a brand new storage facility for dry top-dressing, sand, chemicals, and machinery. To be as environmentally responsible as possible we set up metal recycling, asbestos sheets to go intact to a specialist contractor, concrete blocks to be crushed into ballast, and a little soil and old fertiliser into a large top-soil and compost stack. However, no sooner than we'd started knocking it down with a huge slew (how do they unerringly find the telephone cable with the first bucket?) than a member of the public pitched up on the nearby footpath and started berating anyone who'd listen. "That's a scandal" he screamed - "that barn's perfectly good, and you're just wantonly destroying it". Before anyone could answer he raved on - "you could've offered that to a poor Welsh farmer". By now the lads were sniggering in the background and he stormed off towards the clubhouse determined to cause trouble. As I looked up at the colander-like golf-ball holed asbestos roof, the rusting stanchions, and the dented tin cladding, I couldn't help musing that if many of these were inflicted on the Principality, most of the population would quickly decide that complete Devolution from the lousy English probably wasn't such a bad idea after all.

News from Cannington College;

Newly appointed trainer/assessor, Jake Waites, with 15 years experience in the greenkeeping sector at Goodwood Park, St. Pierre and the Celtic Manor, is now available to offer training in the workplace. This work based training and assessment will allow candidates to achieve NVQ awards with virtually no time away from the workplace and at a time scale to suit both them and the employer. While traditional methods of training (day release) are still available at Cannington, this new scheme may better suit the needs of some greenkeepers and their employers. The college continues to offer NVQ level 3 and full and part time courses at FE and HE level. Government funding is available for most awards especially NVQ level 2 which may be free to the employer through the "Train to Gain" initiative. So if you're an employee or an employer who has no previous NVQ qualification aged 18-64, contact Steve Hasell or Jake at Cannington on 01278 655144 as you may be eligible for a nationally recognised qualification at minimal cost.

Recently, I bumped into an old friend of mine - Trevor Hint - who was Captain at a nearby local golf club last year. He was telling me about how he put a lot of thought into his Captain's Day, and how he wanted to do something "a little different" during the evening party. Well he certainly managed that all right. Having a reputation of something of a hot-head - he came up with the brilliant idea of club-throwing competitions. To start with it was nearest the pin - into a soft bank, and that went well. Then came the longest throw. This started off in good humour, but rapidly developed into an alcohol and testosterone-fuelled war. Eventually, adopting the style made famous by female Russian Hammer-throwers and the like, and straining so hard that he nearly ground all the enamel off his teeth, Trev completely miss-timed the point of release, with the result that the club unexpectedly flew off at left angles and cart-wheeled end-over-end down a row of parked cars in the nearby car park. It broke four windscreens, and did £500's worth



of damage to the bonnet of a Mercedes before coming to rest. Nice idea Trev – talk your way out of that one! Oddly enough – the Merc was written off in the floods a few days later, so no one ever charged him for repairs. I suppose it's an ill wind.

Finally, there have been one or two thefts of red diesel in our area recently. This fuel which has always been traditionally cheap is now so expensive that it is highly attractive to criminals. At a club near to us, a four-wheel drive was actually used to push over a boundary stone wall to gain access to the course. It was reported to be fitted with a large tank in the rear probably with its' own electric pump. Diesel tanks are traditionally poorly protected with only flimsy locks. It's time to revise security. You have been warned!

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SOUTH COAST

As I put these words together, the weather is glorious and England has just beaten New Zealand in the Test Match at Trent Bridge. Happy days! By the time you read this who knows what the weather will be like and the consistence of the England Cricket Team - anyway on to imminent fixtures. The Summer Tournament will be held at Burley Golf Club on Thursday, July 10. If you've not booked already please contact our Tournament Organiser Kevan Glass at the following address: Apartment 1, Forge Side Court, Lepe Road, Langley, Southampton SO45 1SS mobile: 07859 053054 or email: glassy2003@hotmail.com.

The annual match between our Section and the Wessex Secretaries was held at Brockenhurst Golf Club on Wednesday, June 4. A very enjoyable day was had by all. The result was a 3:2 for the Secretaries. Congratulations to their Team. This year's match was the 12th year and the Secretaries win means it is now six wins for each team. To add to this excitement there is one engraved position left on the cup so one would think the winner of next year's match will keep the silverware. Many thanks to the sponsors, Course Care, and a huge thank you to the courtesy of Brockenhurst GC. The course was in excellent condition and we would like to thank Ed McCabe and his Team for the presentation and preparation of the Golf Course. Well done all!

Chris Bitten and I have been doing a bit of work in the background on the educational seminar for next year and things are going well. It goes without saying that if you have any ideas for subjects or speakers for future seminars or any news or information for Around The Green, especially with exam results for students etc coming up in the summer, then please let me know on the number below.

Ok that's that for this month. I'm now off to watch the football (not Big Brother). See you soon or speak to you next month.

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Section Notes -

Can all notes be emailed to: melissa@bigga.co.uk by the 5th of the month prior to publication please. Suggested word guide: 500

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THANK YOU

I attended Wentworth for the BMW PGA Championship, as a volunteer, via BIGGA, for the four days.

The first two days I was on standby for bad weather, and then on Saturday and Sunday I followed play, raking bunkers where necessary.

I am not a golfer, and in my day to day job do not have the time to observe the game. Attending Wentworth, following world-class players around the course, gave me a real opportunity to observe and appreciate the game for the first time.

The Wentworth West Course is always used for Championships as it is the most challenging. The course is very mature and undulating in places, with plenty of interest, and I felt privileged to be able to be there.

I found everyone I came into contact with very friendly, and helpful.

I would like to thank Clive Osgood for making my four days there possible, and wish the other greenkeepers I met all the best for the future, in particular Fred Deaman, for pointing me in the right direction.

Also thanks to Pike Hills GC for giving me the time off to attend Wentworth.

George Jones
Greenkeeper
Pike Hills GC
York

LEUKAEMIA CHARITY DAY

May 18 saw the Leukaemia Classic held at Rhuddlan Golf Club. The charity day competition saw 43 teams of 4 playing stableford, with the best two scores being recorded. A greenkeeping team entered the competition kindly sponsored by Major Owen Ltd. The inside knowledge of the course proved to be no help to the team recording a feeble 68pts - the winning score of 87pts taking the honours on a most enjoyable day.

Over £10,000 was taken on the day with further donations and raffle takings to be added. Rhuddlan Golf Club would like to thank Major Owen Ltd, Jason Moody of Seoul Nassau, Gerald of Farmura and Dave Austin of Rigby Taylor for their generosity.

Many thanks
John Morris
Course Manager
Rhuddlan Golf Club

Greenkeeping team from left to right, Jonathan Pritchard, Miles Johnson - Rhuddlan GC, Darren Anderson MG - Abergele GC, John Morris - Rhuddlan GC.



BMW SUPPORT TEAM WENTWORTH 2008

A team of volunteer Greenkeepers were on hand at The Wentworth Club for the BMW PGA Championship held at the end of May.

A small team were on stand-by duty on the Thursday and Friday of the event in case of bad weather. Fortunately the weather was kind on these two days and the monsoon threat predicted for the Saturday, and particularly for Sunday, did not materialise.

A full contingent of over 40 volunteers were available for the last two days of the Championship for what turned out to be routine bunker duties, although some were armed with squeegees just in case!

Welcome guests this year included Past Chairman, Billy McMillan and Vice Chairman, Peter Todd both enjoying the day's golf and hospitality.

Chris Kennedy and his team of Greenstaff presented the West Course as a great test of golf for the large early season field of contenders of this prestigious event.

The winner of this year's event was Miguel Angel Jimenez who beat Oliver

Wilson on the second extra hole of a sudden-death play-off after tying on 11 under par 277 in the regulation 72 holes.

Clive Osgood
S E Regional Administrator



Some of the 2008 Support Team with Chris Kennedy and the winner, Miguel Angel Jimenez.



Please email your letters to Scott MacCallum, scott@bigga.co.uk
 or Melissa Jones, melissa@bigga.co.uk
 or post to: BIGGA House, Aldwark Manor, Alne, York YO61 1UF

VEHICLE REGISTRATION INFORMATION

We recently bought a Kubota Utility vehicle for general greenkeeping duties at my home course of Eaglescliffe Golf Club.

Through the supplier – Lloyds – it was registered to go on the public roads necessary in order to maintain boundaries and distribute goods and equipment to different parts of the course etc, via any one of four different access points.

No problems were experienced relating to the registration - apart from one thing – it came back as “Private/Light Goods” or “PLG”. Thinking this was an over-sight I took all of the relevant paperwork down to our local DVLA office.

The assistant checked everything through but said she would need to confirm the change was OK. After some time she came back saying she had consulted the DVLA “hotline” and the information received said that golf course use was not considered agricultural. I asked why this was the case as the vehicle is fairly specialised and does not even have an enclosed cab. I asked why the use was different to say a dairy farmer who was maintaining grass; she said we are not classed as an agricultural producer. I informed her we already have two tractors which I have just re-taxed that have been on an agricultural classification for over ten years! She was unable to answer on this point, but advised me to contact DVLA in Swansea direct.

If the argument is that a tangible agri-product has to be produced, then vehicles associated with country parks and stately homes cannot tax vehicles as agricultural and I would question the bulk of the Forestry Commission’s fleet.

If maintaining hedges with a cutter attached to a vehicle is not agricultural then farmers are breaking the law, however if this is part of an agricultural spectrum of use then golf clubs surely qualify?

The official DVLA website states:
 “Vehicles used solely for the purpose of agriculture, horticulture and forestry are exempt from vehicle tax...”

So why do golf course vehicles not fall in to one of these categories?

Course work can fall into all three!

The DVLA site continues: Agricultural machines - The following vehicles can be taxed in the ‘agricultural machine’ tax class:

Agricultural tractor

A tractor used on the public roads only for purposes:

- relating to agriculture, horticulture, forestry
- activities falling within cutting verges bordering public roads
- cutting hedges or trees bordering public roads or bordering verges which border public roads

Off road tractor

A tractor which isn’t an agricultural tractor which is:

- designed and constructed mainly for use off road more than on roads
- is not capable due to its construction of going over a speed limit of 25 miles per hour on the level under its own power

Agricultural engine

A machine specially designed or permanently converted to perform an agricultural operation on the land (e.g. a combine harvester).

Light agricultural vehicle

A vehicle which:

- has a weight not exceeding 1,000kg
- is designed and constructed so as to seat only the driver
- is designed and constructed primarily for use other than on roads
- is used only for the purposes relating to agriculture, horticulture or forestry

Agricultural lift and loading vehicle

A vehicle which is:

- designed for off road use
- designed to lift and load
- and used only in agriculture, horticulture or forestry

There is no mention of golf courses being exempt from agricultural classification, infact it can be seen that virtually all golf clubs will own a machine which falls within it.

There is an odd point in the above regarding “Light Agricultural Machines” this stipulates “is designed and constructed so as to seat only the driver.” This is potentially a very unsafe situation given the nature of the activities undertaken by these machines. In an age when using a mobile phone while driving is considered unsafe are we really condoning the use of a hedge cutter at head height while driving a vehicle along a public highway or worse along the edge of a footpath?

Clearly this should not be the case and for safety reasons a second person should accompany the driver or was this overlooked? God forbid anyone should jump to the conclusion that the DVLA employee draughting the regulations did not know what he or she was talking about!

Golf has always been classed as a country pursuit and is closely linked to the maintenance of hedges, trees and scientific sites crucial to our indigenous wildlife. When these areas are on the periphery access has to be possible allowing machinery and operators to do their job. In the overall scheme of things this could be as infrequent as several times a year nevertheless there could be an impact on safety if work is not carried out in terms of highway visibility or fire risk.

There seems to be a lack of common sense on this issue, as the vehicles involved are all agricultural machines, doing agricultural duties and are on private land for 99.9% of the time.

If golf clubs are forced to re-tax their vehicles for the small amount of time they are on the road they will incur a big increase in their costs and I will predict they will not do it. Local councils will find they will need to contract out work which was formerly done by golf clubs on their boundaries.

We are supposed to be conserving fuel and working efficiently, when does the DVLA plan to start?

Information:

www.direct.gov.uk/en/Motoring/OwningAVehicle/TaxationClasses

Brian G Ramsden
Green Committee Chairman
Eaglescliffe Golf Club



In the Shed

ANSWERS

CROSSWORD

E	R	N	E	S	T	H	E	M	I	N	G	W	A	Y		
N		O		P	Y			O		E		I		A		
C	O	U	S	I	N	S		P	R	U	S	S	I	C		
H	V		R	T		E		T		H		H				
I	T	E	M	I	S	E	D		P	R	O	F	I	T		
L		L		T		R		G		I		U				
A	X	L	E		C	I	T	R	O	N	E	L	L	A		
D		E		G		C		A		O		T		V		
A	S	C	E	R	T	A	I	N	S		C	H	O	U		
		U		A		L		G		A		I		N		
F	R	I	E	N	D			H	E	L	L	E	N	I	C	
A		S		D		W		H		B		K		U		
C	H	I	M	E	R	A				I	N	I	T	I	A	L
E		N		U		I		L		N		N		A		
T	H	E	A	R	T	F	U	L	D	O	D	G	E	R		

ANSWERS:

1. Grand National
2. Chamonix (Pronounced Sham-On-Knee), France
3. Garrincha (Real name Manoel Dos Santos Francisco)
4. Magpie
5. Eddie Irvine
6. Paulo Di Canio
7. Badminton
8. Soccer
9. Italy

MONSTER SUDOKO

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

SQUIGGLY SUDOKO

E	C			B	6	3	8	5								
		7	4			1		A	F							
D		A		5		0	7	E	4							
0	F					D	4	2		1	8		B			
	2	0			3		F	A		D			C			
7	A			0	F	3		6		9			2			
1	3			9	B	C					E					
	D		7	4	E	2					6		A			
5	4				F	B	2		1			D				
	2				6	8	A			7		F				
6		C		B	7	9	0			5		8				
B		8	5	2		E				A	1					
C	D	B	6	7	A							9	3			
		4	5	C	8		B			E			6			
		9	2		D			F	7							
		2	B	1	4	0				F		D				



Whats your Number?

Name: Ian Howard
Company: Dennis
Position: Managing Director



How long have you been in the industry?
 "Since 1986."

How did you get into it?
 "I was invited to join the family engineering business by my father. He had acquired Dennis from the administrators in 1981 and had moved it all up to our engineering works at Derby."

What other jobs have you done?
 "I graduated in Mining Engineering in 1981 from Camborne School of Mines and then went out to South Africa for three years working at Western Deep Levels Gold Mine as a graduate trainee. Working 10,000 feet underground in 50 degree heat and 100% humidity was a great experience I wouldn't have missed for the world."

What do you like about your current job?
 "Challenges, seeing the products on TV, the results and the great group of people in the industry."

What changes have you seen during your time in the industry?
 "Lots of comings and goings. In 1986 we at Dennis were the new boys on the block. Since then so many manufacturing companies and dealers have been sold, taken over or closed down - the people remain in the groundscare business just in different seats. Engineering in the UK is a real challenge and the need to invest is huge. British Engineering is now on a much better footing and I am confident it has a strong future."

What do you like to do in your spare time?
 "Julia, my wife and I have a stock farm about five miles from work and keep around 400 sheep and meat goats. That keeps us pretty busy. I love dinghy sailing with my two kids, walking, cycling and the odd glass of good wine with good food. Holidays - we love exploring new places - our favourite is Namibia."

Where do you see yourself in 10 years time?
 "I hope retired to the farm taking things a bit easier and having more holidays."

Who do you consider to be your best friends in the industry?
 "This is a very friendly business. You get to meet all sorts in groundscare, customers, dealers and of course all of the other manufacturers. The Dennis workforce has a great team spirit. The shows such as BTME, Saltex and Scotsturf are great meeting places for everyone."

What do you consider to be your lucky number?
 "1."

Pick a number
 "Number 1."
Ian has picked Bernard Hedley from Rigby Taylor

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EXHIBITION

20 - 22 January 2009

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