

8lbs 7ozs and both mother and baby are doing well.

Wee Davie Merchant, from Murcar Links GC, recently got married to the love of his life, Stacey. Congratulations from the Section. It was a good do with lads from both Murcar and Royal Aberdeen attending so there was plenty of banter between both squads!

That's really all there is this month, short and sweet. If anyone does have any news or funny stories then drop me a line, I'll try and put it into words whatever it is. Cheers

Ben Brookes
Murcar Links
07813889374



Central

Congratulations to George Brown and the team for a great Open and everyone in the Central Section wishes both George all the best for his future and Euan Grant, his successor, the same. I'm sure we'll still see and hear of George for a few years yet despite him being put out to (green and stripey) grass!

The main focus of the report this month is the education events the Section is running for you, the members. We really need your support for these to be a success as we cannot afford to run them at a loss, therefore if we cannot get adequate names we will have to pull the plug on them. We appreciate times are tough on the economic front but we have secured subsidies from the BIGGA education fund and the cost of attending these events have been dramatically reduced from what people would normally have to pay. Training is often the first thing to be shelved when money is tight but the most successful companies don't take that view and realise the long term benefit providing good education to their staff brings.

We have training on how to conduct investigations and disciplinary meetings in October on the morning of the AGM, a two day environmental course in November and how to carry out staff appraisals in December.

Full details are on the website www.biggacentralsection.com <<http://www.biggacentralsection.com/> Please support us

and make the events a success by enrolling for these classes now.

Gordon Moir

Northern Region

North Wales

I'm sitting in front of this silly computer hoping that it doesn't freeze and I lose my article for the THIRD TIME! So far, so good.

This month is the height of our season with our courses facing a daily barrage of visiting parties, members' competitions and juniors trying to fit 12 months of fixtures into the school holidays.

The annual North Wales/North West match took place at Bolton Golf Club in June and on an excellent course North Wales reclaimed the trophy they lost last year (YES!). Congratulations to all the golfers who played so well, also a big thank you has to go to Bolton Golf Club for providing such a fantastic course, food and facilities.

Terry Adamson has asked me to let you know that he will be running another pest control course in the autumn, I went on the last one and very informative it is too! Anyone interested in signing up for the one day course please contact Terry.

In local news, Ian Farrall, Paul Gator and Carl Crocher of Caldry Golf Club entered a team for the Wirral Bikeathon and raised over £300 for Leukaemia Research. Carl's son, Max, replaced one of his staff who had to drop out at the last minute, with 28 miles covered.

Paul Gator's wife gave birth to their second daughter in June. Mother, Janet, and Isabel are doing fine.

Stuart Mason, Assistant Head Greenkeeper at Padeswood and Buckley Golf Club, got married in May in St Hilary's Church, Llanrhos, Llandudno followed by a reception at The Quay Hotel and Spa, Deganwy.

That's about it for this month, please keep putting your news in to me it's a real pleasure to know that you do read this stuff and don't just shove it straight in to the recycling bin.

ALL THE BEST UNTIL NEXT MONTH.

Pete Maybury
petemayb66@aol.com
07756001187

Johnny Evans
Johnny.evans@tesco.net



Sheffield

Hello again everyone, my apologies for the lack of news in last month's magazine, things caught up with me a little and I was a bit late sending them.

I shall and try and redeem myself in this month's edition. On the Section front everything is running as smooth as possible, things are a little quite at this time of the year as everyone is really busy. Over the next couple of months I will be organising speakers for our winter lectures and will be finalising some other dates for Section events. Everyone will be informed of these events later in the year.

The Section has held two golf events up to now this year, firstly I would like to thank our two sponsors so far this year, Pro Turf and Mansfield Sand. A massive thanks go to all our sponsors for their continued support of the Section. Secondly I would like to thank both sets of greenkeepers at Hallowes and Lees Hall for providing us with superb conditions to play in.

Results: Hallowes G.C 1. I. Whitehead, 36pts; 2. S. Dye, 36pts; 3. R. Jones, 35pts; Trade. M. Brear 29 pts.

Sponsor - Pro Turf

Lees Hall G.C. Gross. R. Jones, 68; Nett. S. Pickering, 88; 3. J. STEVENS 72- Well done Jim! Trade. I. Benn 66

Sponsor - Mansfield Sand

That is all from me this month. Once again if anyone one has any news for me please don't hesitate in contacting me. Hope you all have a good August, I certainly will if Wednesday pick up three points against Barnsley in the first game.

J. Stevens
jimmy_jams20@hotmail.com



Northern

As I am sitting down to write this month's report we are just getting to the end of the hottest heatwave we have had for years - a massive 32 degrees!! The Government has given us

warnings that we must stay out of the sun because of the heat but is it just me or does anybody else think that 32 is just a nice summers day? Some places in the world got up to 56 degrees on the same day. Now that is hot. So let's stop moaning about the weather we have and just get on with the job! Rant over.

July 1 was the date for this year's Presidents Day Tournament at Branshaw Golf Club. The turn out of just 20 players was a huge disappointment for what turned out to be a fantastic day in the sun.

The winners on the day were: Div 1. 1. R Harris; 2. S. Mason; D. Collins. Div 2. President's Trophy - A. Baxter. 1. A. Holroyde; S. Trowsdale; 3. R Smith. Div 3. 1. J Baxter; 2. P. Colley; D. Cockburn. Trade. 1. A. Martin; 2. I. Collet. Nearest the Pins. R. Harris and S. Mason

A huge thank you must go to Ed and his team and every body at Branshaw for the fantastic course and warm welcome we received. Thank you also to Bob Wild Grass Machinery for their continued support and sponsorship if the President's Tournament.

The next event on the calendar is Invitation Day which will be held at Howley Hall Golf Club on Tuesday, August 25 and is a 9.30 start. Can I please remind you all to get your names and payment in as soon as possible.

If you have any news you wish to share with the Section then please get in touch.

Adam Speight
07739 319060

Midland Region



Midland

What's this I hear? The quiet unassuming gentle Phil Nixon is off on a gambling spree to the capital of decadence, Las Vegas. By God the wages at Penn must have improved somewhat since Millsy took over, or has the club's budget suddenly gone up! Oh, the reason for the vacation is that Phil is getting married by Elvis to Rachael on the 28th. Congratulations to you both and good luck for the future my friend. "I'm all shook up".

Our summer event was held

at one of my old haunts, Harborne G.C. I must congratulate J. Gilchrist and his fine team on the wonderful condition of the course. It hasn't been that good since 1999! The other players and I all greatly enjoyed the whole day, and a huge thanks to Harborne G.C. and to the fine company of its elected dignitary, Mr.R.Waddington, (time has only slightly mellowed you sir). The results of the day were; Best Gross: M. Hughes. Nett; 1. M. Cutler. 2. J. Gilchrist. 3. M. Hughes. 4. Slim Kid/R. Beacham. 5. A. Brougham. 6. R. Thomas. Our thanks to British Seed House for their generous sponsorship of the main prize table. To give us mere mortals a fighting chance at a prize longest drive has now been replaced with all par-3's N.T.Pers which is sponsored by our old friends N.Tyler/Sherriff Amenity. The winners being; D.Unerhill, P.Mills, and H.Middlebrook(on the toughest par-3 I've ever come across). Well done to all and once again thanks Jim and team and of course my old friend Harborne G.C. Congratulations sexy bhoy Steve on your vernal new arrival, Ruby.

Now, I hear that the local greengrocers to Myerscough College are rather worried regarding their sales of apples, such being due to the fact that P. Woodham has now passed his Foundation Degree with distinctions and has also been awarded the "Barenburg Award" as the top teacher's pet/turfgrass student. Also our humble Chairman, Ed, has also graduated in the same course with distinctions, but missed out on teacher's pet. I know you tried, Ed, never mind. Congratulations to you both, it's about time you both became educated.

As many of you know we have a slight irritation regarding one of this year's calendar photos, but let us leave them where they lay. It is wonderfully refreshing that this month's sponsor's; North Staffs Irrigation Ltd. have embraced the photo of the extremes that we all have to deal with good humour, and such also depicts the value of both good irrigation and drainage services. Please consider them for your water needs; www.northstaffsirrigation.co.uk <http://www.northstaffsirrigation.co.uk/>.

And finally, the Section would

like to wish all the very best to Melissa Jones (Assist Ed GI) who is leaving HQ to have a little one. Good luck, lass.

Sean McDade



Mid-Anglia

Not much news for you this month I'm afraid, but golf calendar is as follows:- Mid-Herts GC host us in the Autumn on October 7th and we go to John O'Gaunt GC in December for the Turkey Trot.

If you, or your staff, are interested in participating in any courses or training programmes, please contact Gerald, at Berkhamsted GC, to enquire further. There is quite often funding available and if not already catered for, special training/courses can be arranged.

If anyone has an item of interest, news or information that they would like to put into this column please contact me as all contributions are welcome.

craig.spooner@imagrain.co.uk
Craig Spooner



BB&O

What a Gem! Oakland Park GC in all its green splendour was a fantastic venue for The Gem Summer Rose Bowl Tournament held on June 24. Oakland Park located in South Bucks is a privately owned family business with 18 holes set in pleasantly undulating parkland on the edge of the Chilterns, with a combination of outstanding beauty and designed by the highly acclaimed Jonathan Gaunt, provided an excellent golfing experience.

After a few olives and a pink gin, Clive Parnell, from Gem Professional, presented the prizes to the winners

The results were as follows. In 3rd place was Adam King with 36 points, in 2nd was Joe Drummond 37 points and in 1st place Ben the Bandit Griffins

with 42 points.

Nearest the Pin, Dave Searles and Stewart Clayton, Longest Drive, Paul Hedger and Clive Parnell and James Wilkinson pinching the Nearest the Pin in 2.

Thank you to Oakland Park GC for courtesy of the course and the excellent traditional home made menu served by the Oakland catering department. The course was in tip top condition and credit to Dominic Lewis and all the Oakland green staff for their efforts in preparing the course which was much appreciated by all.

Chris Slimm, from Harleyford GC, has just joined the first time dad club, his partner, Nicki, has just given birth to first child, Isla, Mother and daughter are doing very well.

On the Harleyford G.C. front, I was sent a photo of a Kangaroo roaming the golf course, Yes I say, roaming the golf course was a Kangaroo, and according to Simon Marsh this is no hoax, the wee little beastie is no bother at all but no one knows how or when he arrived, a likely story I hear you say, a likely story, I just keep saying that! But it's true! Likely story.

Simon Marsh has been hard at work and has organised two educational days out, first we have a day at DLF Trifolium who are the largest and fastest growing grass seed company in the UK, DLF have over 100 years experience in plant breeding and seed production and we have a chance to visit there manufacturing facilities by way of a guided tour. Cost for the day will be £ 5.00 and will include lunch and refreshments, details will be on the website soon, numbers will be limited; date for this will be on October 7.

On November 25, TH White has organised a day out to Ransomes Ipswich in Suffolk. Ransomes Jacobsen manufactures an extensive range of turf maintenance equipment and utility vehicles to meet the needs of today's grounds care professionals.

Ransomes have a state of the art manufacturing facility where we will be given a guided tour of the factory with a fascinating insight to the production of various machines.

The company also have a new 3 hole testing facility, Created over two hectares of heath land

and scrub, each green and teeing areas has been constructed with different profiles and grass types including fescue, fescue and bent and creeping bent - an example of what can be achieved on a small parcel of land.

Please book early for this as numbers will be limited; cost will be £5 and will include transport from T.H.White with lunch and refreshments.

Just a quick reminder, as you are reading this article, have you forgotten that on August 13 at Donnington Valley GC the Autumn Invitational Team Event is about to take place, so a last minute entry may be available, get in touch if you can make it.

If any member has any news or views they would like to share, or would like more information about the section and forthcoming events you only have to check out bbogreenkeepers.co.uk

Mark Day

mark.day@tacitgolf.co.uk



South East

East Anglia

Apologies for not having Notes in recently but there was a problem at HQ's end.

Nearly 60 souls played (I use the term loosely) Rookery Park Golf Club, in April. Unfortunately, I was not there, but I have it from a reliable source (if you can call someone with a star spangled belt reliable) that the course was in excellent condition thanks to Mall Henderson and his crew.

The scores are as follows:-

0 - 9 Handicap 1. Joe Simpson, 36 pts on countback; 2. G. Hurren, 36 pts; 3. Ben Wallis, 35 pts 10 - 18 Handicap 1. Jamie Gill, 36 pts; 2. Mark Clements, 32 pts; 3. Asa Barber, 31 pts. 19 - 28 Handicap 1. Richard Mitchell, 30 pts; 2. Andrew Baker, 29 pts; 3. Keith Titchell, 28 pts. G & T's (ice & a slice) 1. Sean Payne, 38 pts; 2. David Lord, 35 pts

There were several nearest the pins, as follows:- 4th Sponsored by Baileys of Norfolk - Mark Clements; 9th Sponsored by

Bartram Mowers – David Lord (sand wedge); 14th Sponsored by Spearhead – Norman Fenwick.

There were also several longest drives as follows:- 5th Sponsored by Baileys – Ben Wallis (2 iron for safety); 7th Sponsored by Bartrams – Matthew Gill (down wind); 18th Sponsored by Spearhead – Norman Fenwick.

Our thanks again to Rookery Park Captain, David Wright, and Secretary, Richard Jones. Our main sponsors for the day were Bartram Mowers. The cavalry, as always, were: Baileys of Norfolk, Aitkens, SISIS, Sherriff, Spearhead, Virtax, Ben Burgess, Ernest Doe's, Tacit and Rigby Taylor. Thank you all. If, however, I have missed someone out, please let me know.

PS. There was no mention of a loo seat, so I guess you all behaved yourselves! In the absence of a loo seat however, I did notice there were a lot of 'nil' returns but Rob Boyce had the courage to put his card in with 8 points on it, so I think he should get a medal for bravery and he should be an inspiration for all you chickens. Well done Rob for soldering on in the face of adversity.

A mere 70 souls descended upon Thetford Golf Club. A bit showery, (I'm talking about the weather) but a terrific day, on a lovely course. Well presented as ever by Paul Gould and his team.

Some people, as always, played just that bit better than me and collected the silverware as follows:-

0 – 9 Handicap:

1st Alan Elliott 35 points

2nd Alan Carter 34 points – Good to see him back.

3rd Michael Buck 34 points

10 – 18 Handicap:

1st Richard Plummer 31 points

2nd Glen Rayfield 30 points

3rd Mark Broughton 30 points

19 – 28 Handicap:

1st Ray Goodsall 31 points

2nd Andy Baker 29 points

3rd Steve Freestone 29 points

- Longest drive – 13th – Mark Keysell – Sponsored by Spearhead.

- Longest drive – 18th – Gavin Merrison – Sponsored by Baileys.

- Nearest the pin – 3rd – Roy Britton – Sponsored by Spearhead.

- Nearest the pin – 16th Guy Baker – Sponsored by Baileys.

The main sponsors for the day

were:- Ernest Doe & Son.

The support team as always were: Bartram Mowers, Aitkens, Tacit, Ben Burgess (Newmarket & Norwich), Tomlinson Groundcare, Baileys of Norfolk, Spearhead Turf, Rigby Taylor, Sherriff, Symbio, Collier Turf Care, Hayter, Force Limogran and Bury Turf Care.

After a brief discussion (20 seconds) the 'Loo Seat' was awarded to Ian for crashing his buggy. Apparently he got off it, played his shot and there it was – gone – hit nearest tree.

There was one other nominee put up by someone who shall remain nameless (but he is a lemon!) He suggested that Paul Gould (Head Honcho Thetford) should get the seat for putting the pins in the wrong place. How can you give the host a loo seat after presenting a course like that? I thought they were mates!

Thanks to Club Captain, Martin Engwell, for making the speech and Andy Turbin, of Ernest Doe, for presenting the prizes.

Thank you Thetford for a lovely day.

Mick Lathrope



Surrey

Monday, July 7. After months of reading, reviewing, price-checking, mind-changing and utter confusion, I have, you will be astonished to hear, chosen and booked the holiday for myself and she who must be obeyed. Only time will tell if my decision to go cruising on the Baltic is the right choice, for now there is no turning back, the deposit has been paid and therefore my fate to meet Fred Olsen Line's equivalent of Captain Pugwash, Master Bates and Seaman Staines is sealed. A paragraph in the November report, icebergs permitting.

Congratulations to Robert Summers for completing 40 years in Surrey Greenkeeping at Kingswood GC, RAC Golf and Country Club and Epsom GC. Robert admitted that he must

hold the record for care of equipment, for, similar to Trigger and his broom, in all those years he has only had one rake.

Eddy Oliver has broken a club record at Liphook GC, the details of which I do not know but I am sure that when you see him at the next golf day, he will be glad to fill you in, many, many times.

Baby of the month is Emily Heather Allpress 7lbs 6ozs, born on Friday July 3 at 6.05 am. Emily and her mother, Nicole, are both well and are looking forward to seeing Ashley, the proud husband and father, as soon as he stops emailing the news to everybody in the universe. His shouts of "we've only gone and done it" will echo around the course at West Surrey GC for months to come. Congratulations to you all from all Surrey members.

Brian Willmott



Sussex

The Sussex Section enjoyed a wonderful days golf for its Spring event at Pyecombe Golf Club. The rain held off until the last players were in but the top of the Sussex Downs on a windy day can provide really testing conditions for golf.

The day was sponsored by John Shaw (Machinery) Ltd and Steve Vogles was of course there to present the prizes. Pyecombe is situated in spectacular downlands and Course Manager, Simon Wells, had provided the Section with a golf course in wonderful condition in keeping with the surroundings. His efforts, I should add, were matched by the Catering Staff at the evening meal! Before the evening meal the Section remembered Derek Coomber, a stalwart of the Sussex Section and of BIGGA, who had recently passed away.

The winner of the best gross score was Laurie Tremlett with Glen Pollard and Duncan Hayes in second and third places. The best nett score was won by Rob Hudson with Eric Green and Darren Mitchell taking the minor places. The Longest Drive was won by Laurie Tremlett and

Nearest the Pin by Gary Ogilvie. Laurie and Rob, the two winners also won free entry in to the BIGGA National Championship, to be held at Burnham and Berrow Golf Club, in October.

The next event for the Sussex Section will be held at East Brighton Golf Club on August 6.

Derek Farrington



Kent

As the much needed rain comes down in flowing torrents in this part of the world restoring some colour to our green and pleasant courses, we can all breathe a collective sigh of relief as the recent hot and dry spell had certainly started to take its toll on our non-irrigated areas! At least the fine weather has brought the golfers flocking back to our courses though. A very welcome sight in these difficult times.

One course that has definitely not suffered is The London Club which I have had the pleasure of playing today. Indeed, the course was still in its tip-top condition following its recent staging of The European Open which was a hugely successful event producing a worthy champion yet again. The tees, rough, bunkers and greens were all perfectly presented and a joy to play on. The only comment I can make on the too narrow (for me!) fairways was that they looked great from a distance! Think I'll stick to yellow tees in future! A very praiseworthy effort from our esteemed National Chairman, Peter Todd and his trusty right-hand man Glenn Kirby. Incidentally, both these gentleman are the subject of further news. Firstly, many congratulations to Glenn and his other half on the birth of his daughter, Cerys. I know he was hoping to take some time to make the most of these precious early stages of baby's development but, unfortunately, Peter has managed to break his leg while vaulting a fence meaning poor old Glenn has double the workload and half the required sleep! Get well soon, Peter and well done and thanks to Glenn

for a great test of golf today.

Meanwhile, the Kent Section year continues and another great event under our belts at the superb Tenterden Golf Club. Set deep in the heartland of rural Kentish countryside this great course provided the perfect venue for our ardent travellers.

An early arrival for most was rewarded by Vic Maynard regaling us with tales of his birthday the previous week and what he had been bought by his colleagues as a present. This publication is far too up market for me to divulge the intimacy of said gift but suffice to say that it sounded like the perfect travelling companion for a sales rep on his lonely nights in a Travelodge! Vic was soon down at the first tee, however, to get us started with his usual array of suitable refreshments ensuring this well attended event was enjoyed by all.

Gary Branchett and his stalwart team had certainly saved some of the most challenging pin positions for us resulting in local knowledge being the deciding factor in the results table. 1. Gary Branchett, 41 pts; 2. Matt Gray, 34pts; 3. Wayne Syers 33 points Nearest Pin - Duncan Kelso

Somehow during the barrage of laughter that seemed to be had by all one of our founder members, John "Old Man" Fullager, managed to bag himself a hole-in-one at the 5th.

There was some disagreement about how many trees the ball struck before eventually finding the cup but it said "One" on the card and that's all that matters, eh mate! It honestly couldn't happen to a nicer bloke. Well done, mate.

My group were treated to Kev Morris's Heath Robinson-like ideas for the next series of Dragon's Den. Fuelled by Vic's plentiful scotch, Kev's inventive mind went into overdrive and expect to see a twin-sim phone, golf club carrying pushchairs and non-chafing, string golf shorts on a high street near you soon!

After our round, a hearty meal ensued to which we were very grateful to all at Tenterden Golf Club and, indeed, for all their hospitality throughout the day. Well done to Gary Branchett for the condition of the course and to his lovely daughter who joined us in the evening!

Many thanks also to several supporting trade companies for prizes on the day. They were, Headland Amenity, Tacit, T. Parker, Scotts and Ernest Doe's.

These days just keep getting better. Don't miss out on our next event in September at Redlubits. It's going to be a cracker!

Best of British
Rob Holland



South West

June 24th saw the first full Section event of the year with the Summer Tournament. This was played at Kingsdown Golf Club in perfect weather conditions, and on a perfect golf course. Mark Ford and his team did us proud on a tidy golf course with firm fast greens, generous fairways, (but rather punishing rough if you don't mind my saying so Mark - I like my rough well cut-back!) Thanks very much to Kingsdown Golf Club for their hospitality for the day and thanks to all competitors who made the day such a success.

Congratulations to all the prize winners, in particular Josh Loughrey, from Wrag Barn, who shot a gross 71 off scratch to qualify for the National Championship at Burnham & Berrow in October. Thanks also to the Patronage Partners who attended the Dinner and prizegiving.

1. Jon Jarvis, Lansdown, nett 71; 2. Roger Neale, Taunton & Pickeridge, 72. 3. Jordan Mein, Taunton & Pickeridge, 72. Qualifier Josh Loughrey, Wrag Barn, 71 gross.

Unfortunately neither Chris Sealey nor myself were able to stay for the presentation etc, so many thanks to Nobby (again...) for officiating so well. In the meantime, Chris and I were travelling "up north" to Hoylake for a Farmura-sponsored seminar covering the latest research on dry patch and fairy rings. The links at Hoylake (or Royal Liverpool to give its correct title) were in sublime condition with 30 yard wide fairways and a single

cut of semi-rough either side, and then jungle type rough. Bunkers were immaculately revetted pits with turf faces up to six feet in height. Awesome and scary at the same time.

The seminar was very interesting with a series of top speakers from both the UK and overseas. Dr Mike Findanza, Agronomist, and Dr Joe Kostka, from Aquatrols. Both highly regarded experts in their fields, and neither one to walk past a fairy ring without stopping to take a picture. Couple these with Steve Isaac, of the R&A, and Dr Ruth Mann, from the STRI, and you have wall-to-wall experts. Our thanks to Farmura for laying on such an interesting day at such a notable venue. If all goes according to plan - these gentlemen will be back in the UK for the Cannington Seminar in November.

I was pressed into service at National Board level at the beginning of June when the news came though that Peter Todd had unfortunately broken his leg. I chaired the Board Meeting, the EGM & Groundsman vote, and introduced the Neil Thomas Golf Day (where a lot of money was raised for Peter's nominated "Aspergers Syndrome" charity). I sat down on the Monday evening at about 6.30, with the intention of having a few quiet moments to skim through the minutes of the previous Board meeting, ahead of the 8.30am start on the Tuesday morning. I was still at it at 11.30pm before calling it a night.

As I think I said last time - if anyone thinks serving on the BIGGA Board is some kind of a "jolly" - forget it right now. I would just like to pass on my best wishes to Peter - he does such a lot of work for the Association behind the scenes, while all the time handling a big job at a big club.

Back in the Section - the training courses on Manual Handling, Safe use of tractor plus attachments, Excavator Safety Training are coming around fast. Full details will be circulated soon by email, and this will go into club offices also. The joint BIGGA GCMA seminar at the Kendleshire on September 30 is also fast approaching so watch for further details.

Finally, John Keenaghan is looking forward to playing host to the EGU English County

Finals September 25 - 27 at Chipping Sodbury. This is the only club in Gloucestershire ever to have staged this event so John is - in his own words - "really up for it". John would like to have the reassurance of a support team to help with the course - if anyone can spare a little time and is interested to see how a major Amateur event runs, please give John a call on 07779479869.

Any news from your areas would be gratefully received.

Paul Worster.

paulw@mgcnew.co.uk



Devon and Cornwall

Our summer meeting took place on June 18 at Woodbury Park Golf & Country Club where the second annual match between Devon & Cornwall was contested. Thanks to Symbio and Sports Metal represented by Neil Carter and Richard Japes for their sponsorship for the day.

The match took place on the championship course and was very keenly contested with Cornwall eventually winning five games to three. There was also an individual Stableford competition within the match which was won by Nick Olds, from West Cornwall, with 41pts, winning on countback from Simon Sanders, from Woodbury, with Brian Ridgeway, from Fingle Glen, third with 38pts. Nearest the Pin on the 3rd was won by Nick Olds, on the 18th won by Dan Townsend. Nearest the pin in two on the 13th was claimed by Matt Richards and the longest drive on the 14th won by Rob Cook, well done to all.

Thank you to Woodbury Park and its owner Robin Hawkins for their wonderful hospitality for the day, and to the catering staff for the splendid meal. Thanks also to Ian Chenery, Course Manager, Simon Sanders his assistant, and the rest of the team for the use of there wonderful course.

The presentation and prize giving took place after the meal with the Devon Captain, George Pitts, congratulating joint Corn-

wall Captains, Scott Gibson & Keith Kemp, on their success. Well done to Cornwall!
Jerry Cole



South Wales

Hi Everyone, Hope you are all well. First of all the Spring Tournament, which was held at Langland Bay GC. The weather once again threatened but after a few holes, the rain subsided, the sun came out and showed the course in all it's glory.

Results were: First: Darryl Jones (Glynneath GC) 36pts. Second: Ian Harwood (Langland Bay GC) 31 pts (21 on back nine!) Third: Darryl Bray (Morrison GC) 29pts. Nearest the pin: Wayne Benger (Glynhir GC.) Longest Drive: Peter Holstrom.

Trade/Guest Prize: Alan Phillips (Captain, Langland Bay.)

Thanks to Langland Bay GC for agreeing to hold the event and for the excellent evening meal. Also to Jim Jenkins, Course Manager, Ian Harwood and the rest of the Greenkeeping team for presenting the course superbly under difficult conditions. They had to have been without Ian for a while as he must have been practicing his golf! And I'm glad the day went well for Jim as it might just make up for his team getting relegated from the premiership last season!

Also a big Thank you to David Goldstone and Peter Lacey of Tower Chemicals for sponsoring the day. David was a bit unlucky in that his power caddy broke

down and he wasn't able to continue after the third hole. Rumour has it that that it didn't break down and it was just a case of David not wanting to play in the rain. I m sure that's not true! Anyway, thanks guys! Our golf days would be very difficult without sponsorship.

Back to the R.T Matchplay Tournament (The Road To Tenby) and the draw for the latest round was as follows: 1. Mark Wilshire/Mark Anderton V Tony Horne/Martyn David. . Steve Lloyd/Mark Wells V Paul Handy/Rhys Norville. 3. Rhys McDonagh/Gary Humphries V Merrion Griffiths/Glyn Jones. 4. Andy Roach/Gareth Knight V Darryl Bray/Leigh Davies or James White/Wayne Benger. Results will be printed in next months around the green.

On Thursday 13th of August, St Pierre Golf and Country Club once again plays host to the match between the South West Section and the South Wales Section(or Wurzels v The Taffs!) The South Wales

Section are keen to bring the cup back to Wales after losing last years match, although technically, it stayed in Steve Chappell's office as we didn't trust the South West to bring it back!

The match will be played on the revamped Mathen course and prizes will again be sponsored by my best mates Scotts UK Professional. The South Wales Team shirts will again be sponsored by James Rees of Inscapes.

I predict that the South Wales team will win and that the South West team will moan about paying the Severn Bridge toll! They dont mind paying for Magsners though! Joking aside, I m sure it's going to be a great day!

Ceri Richards



John Pemberton
Chief Executive

Having just returned from The Open at Turnberry it was pleasing to see George Brown and his team get the recognition that they deserve for the magnificent presentation of the course. What a superb way to finish a career and I wish George good luck in his semi-retirement. I say semi because as many of you will be aware, George will continue his connection with the facility in an ambassadorial role. Euan Grant is his very worthy successor and is, I am sure, looking forward to taking over the reins.

The newly formed British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association Limited commenced trading on July 1, taking over from its unincorporated predecessor. I wish to reinforce the message that this will in no way adversely affect members or the benefit of being a member and merely puts the Association on a proper business structure that will allow it to own assets and contracts in its own right rather than by proxy or through Trustees.

Contrary to belief by a small minority, who see this move as a panic measure for protection, the Association is not in dire financial trouble. Yes times are hard and yes we have had to make three jobs at Headquarters redundant, but we are managing the business and we are in control of the finances. BIGGA is no different to the vast majority of businesses today that are feeling the effect of the downturn in the world economy but the Board and Management are looking at developing new initiatives that will strengthen the business and that should present new opportunities.

One such initiative is the formation of an alliance with the PGA and the GCMA in order to develop and promote education and best practice in respect of golf club management. The three Associations will look at how they can also share resources and build on membership benefits through a unified approach to exhibitions, lifelong learning, suppliers, sponsors and funding agencies.

I am pleased to report that the annual golf day at Aldwark produced a surplus of £911 that has been donated to the Chairman's charity that is The National Autistic Society, with the particular reference towards aid with Asperger's Syndrome. I would like to once again thank Q Hotels for the courtesy of the course and a prize, Destination Harrogate for their prizes and the many sponsors of teas without whom the day would not have been viable.

As we move gradually into the second half of the year I wonder what has happened to the hot summer that the weather experts predicted earlier in the year!

John Pemberton
Chief Executive

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Membership

Tracey Maddison, Head of Membership, provides a departmental update

BIGGA is now a Limited Company

During the last few weeks the membership department have received telephone calls from some members who are concerned about the conversion to a limited company and were under the misunderstanding that BIGGA were in some sort of financial difficulty. I would like to take this opportunity to confirm that BIGGA is not in any financial difficulty, the decision to convert BIGGA to a company limited by guarantee was taken by the Board as it considered that such a structure would be advantageous to the Association. Some advantages of BIGGA Limited: -

- The Association will have its own legal identity, allowing BIGGA Limited to enter into contracts under the name of BIGGA Limited rather than under individual names.
- BIGGA Limited will be liable for fulfilling any contracts to which BIGGA Limited is a party rather than individual members of the Board.
- Members have limited personal liability (up to a maximum amount of £1) for any outstanding debts should BIGGA Limited cease to trade and a contribution is needed to enable its debts to be paid, rather than unlimited liability as previously.

If you have not yet returned your application to transfer to BIGGA Limited please return this as soon as possible, even though it is past the deadline stated on the letter we can still accept the forms.

If you want more information refer back to your June issue of Greenkeeper International and on page 9 is a full notice regarding conversion to a limited company.

BIGGA – A professional body for sports turf professionals

We are pleased to welcome applications for full membership from sports turf professionals, who are employed in the maintenance of sports turf at a sports facility, who work not only on golf courses,

but football, cricket, rugby, tennis, bowling greens, hockey and horse racing (to mention only a few of the other key turf related sports).

An application form and guidelines for membership can be downloaded from the BIGGA website, by entering www.bigga.org.uk into your search engine, click on 'Join' across the top bar, all the information you need to join, or renew your membership, can be found here.

BIGGA Membership Numbers on the increase

We are pleased to report that the slight downturn experienced in membership numbers has been halted and we are steadily back on the increase. We have received a lot of enquiries from past members who are wishing to re-join. Remember if you have been a member of BIGGA before, normally, there is no need to complete a new application form and go through the new application procedure, if your membership lapsed during the last 24 months, and you are still on our system, you can complete a renewal form and we can re-join you usually within a week of receiving your form.

BIGGA Membership Benefit of the Month

All Full members of BIGGA, and their partners, have access 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to a legal helpline, where any personal legal matter can be discussed with a trained professional legal advisor.

If you need to ring the freephone number (0800 0177 7891 – this can also be found on the reverse of your membership card), remember to say that you are a member of the BIGGA Legal Expenses Scheme and have your membership number to hand.

As your Association continues to move forward remember those immortal words of George Bernard Shaw.....

“Progress is impossible without change, and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything.”



Contact Details

Tracey Maddison
traceymaddison@bigga.co.uk

Brad Anderson
brad@bigga.co.uk

Tel: 01347 833800
(option 1 for Membership)

Regional Administrators



Peter Boyd Peter Larter



Clive Osgood Jane Jones

Peter Boyd
Scotland & Northern Ireland
Tel: 0141 616 3440
Mobile: 07776 242120
pj.boyd@btinternet.com

Peter Larter
Northern & Midland
Tel: 01476 550115
Mobile: 07866 366966
petelarler972@aol.com

Clive Osgood
South East
Tel: 01737 819343
Mobile: 07841 948410
cliveosgood@yahoo.co.uk

Jane Jones
South West & Wales
Tel: 01454 270850
Mobile: 07841 948110
janejones1@btconnect.com

OTHER USEFUL NUMBERS

(Full Members only)

Personal Accident Helpline
02075 603013
Greenkeepers Legal Assistance
0800 177 7891
Greenkeepers Support Services
0800 174 319
Debt Counselling Helpline
0800 174319

BIGGA welcomes the following new members

Scottish Region

Craig Cunningham, West
Scott Downie, Central
Elliot Gaughan, West
Richard Jenkinson, Central
Ryan Morrison, West
Calum Stewart, North
Steven Wood, North

Northern Region

Daniel Blenkinsop, Northern
Jack Bryson, Northern
Graham Green, Northern
Christopher Morris, North West
Gary Parr, Northern
Kevin Paterson, North West
James Rawsthorne, North West
Thomas Scott, North West
Tom Strong, Sheffield
Alan Underwood, North East
Tom Wood, Northern

Midland Region

Duncan Bagshaw, Midland
Stuart Bailey, Midland
Oliver Boys, Berks/Bucks & Oxon
Thomas Chester, Midland
Lee Cooper, East Midland
Nicholas Harding, Berks/Bucks & Oxon
Terence Martin, Midland
Lee Mitchell, East Midland
Liam Perry, Mid Anglia
Gary Simpson, Midland
Robert Stillie, Mid Anglia
Lee Wenlock, East Midland
Paul Williams, Midland

South East Region

Brian Allen, East Anglia
Jamie Finch, East Anglia
Timothy Goffin, Sussex
Louis Hulford, Surrey
Nick Lamb, East Anglia
Elliott May, Surrey
Darren Mitchell, Sussex
Jacob Morris, Surrey
Sam Nunn, East Anglia
Nicholas Plowright, Sussex
Greg Savidge, Sussex
Charlie Sparks, Essex
Peter Staples, East Anglia
Dave Turner, Essex
Kimberley Yeldham, Essex

South West/South Wales Region

Lewis Andrews, South West
Robert Gean, South Wales
Paul Hazell, South Coast
Carl Holmes, Devon & Cornwall
Christopher Rawlings, South West

Assistant Profile

Each month we take a light hearted look into the life of an assistant greenkeeper...

Self confessed Gooner, Matt Le Brun, works at Ely City Golf Club! He likes a night out with the lads, wants some better equipment for work, and to cap it all he claims he managed his third ever hole-in-one recently...



Name: Matt Le Brun

Age: 21

Club: Ely City Golf Club

Position: Assistant Greenkeeper

Nickname: Rodzilla

How long have you been greenkeeping?

Just over 3 years

What was it about the career that attracted you?

Being involved in golf and having the opportunity to travel within the job

If you weren't a greenkeeper what do you think you'd be?

Professional golfer (as I am always beating my brother who is an assistant pro at our club)

Which task do you most enjoy doing and why?

Hand cutting tees as I enjoy seeing the finished product and golfers always comment on them

Which task do you least enjoy doing and why?

Changing holes as I always end up doing it with the deputy head (ha ha!!)

What one thing - other than a pay rise - would improve the greenkeepers' lot?

Having the best equipment for the job

What are your favourite hobbies?

Golf, football and a night out with the lads

And your favourite band?

Haven't really got a favourite but currently listening to Eminem's new album

Which team do you support (football or otherwise)?

Arsenal, I was raised as a Gooner

What is your claim to fame?

Just got my third hole in one at the weekend

Jobs...Not just for Greenkeepers

A complete range of turf industry jobs are available on

www.bigga.org.uk

With over 14000 visitors to our job pages every month

You are sure to attract the quality of candidate required

Make sure that you get the right person for the job

- call Kirstin today on 01347 833832.

“ I wish to thank the team at BIGGA for their help and advice in placing our advert on the BIGGA website. The good response to the advert will allow us to employ someone who we feel is ideally suited for the job.”

Tony Hawes, Course Manager, Potters Bar Golf Club

Letters



Please email your notes to: scott@bigga.co.uk

Letters & Notes

Please email your notes to
scott@bigga.co.uk
before the 12th
of the month

PROVIDING SATISFACTION ON A BUDGET

Dear BIGGA

Chances are you have concerns about the current economic climate - but what's this got to do with maintaining your playing surface?

It is estimated that 40-60% of the overall cost of operating a typical golf course facility is related to turf maintenance. As a facility offering a natural playing surface, this may seem a reasonable balance and justifiable to you as Greenkeeper or Course Manager. You can't attract regular golfers without good quality greens, tees and fairways can you? In the current economic climate, that may not be your reaction if you're the owner trying to maintain revenue.

The ultimate natural playing surface is, however, the aim of every Greenkeeper. On an unlimited budget, life is certainly easier, but most Greenkeepers are working to a given budget and a surface requiring continual improvement. Recent weather conditions have stressed grass even more with heavy rainfall last summer, and rootzones stripped of vital nutrients in the autumn. Then the low winter temperatures and snow came to deplete grass carbohydrate reserves resulting in severe thinning of many fairways and greens.

Balancing the books, while maintaining a quality playing surface, has never been harder. It depends greatly on the Greenkeeper's relationship with club committees for them to understand what hurdles have to be overcome to deliver playability and visual appearance expectations. It also depends on the Greenkeepers' appreciation of budgetary restraints.

In the last 18 months just about every cost in managing a course has increased, whether they be machinery equipment and repairs, fungicides, fertilisers, seed, irrigation or increased environmental and health & safety issues that courses are required to operate under to meet regulatory compliance. Then add in the prospect of reduced cash flow down to more golfers operating on pay and play rather than the annual subscriptions and is it any wonder that turf management expenses costs are becoming an easy target for making immediate savings? On paper it looks like the sensible thing to do, but can you really afford to cut back on some of the essential inputs?

Greenkeepers and Course Managers are between a rock and a hard place trying to maintain member satisfaction in the playability of the course, whilst appeasing the secretaries by operating on a reduced budget. For sure, you'll have to make the budget go further, and look at ways to make savings. But it needn't be all doom and gloom. Somewhere there's a compromise, and some real opportunities exist for Greenkeepers and course owners to take a close look at their grounds management. So ask yourself the following questions:

"How can we become more efficient?"

"How can we produce a playing surface requiring fewer inputs, whilst maintaining quality?"

"How can we promote the environmental benefits to the local community and paying members?"

"How do we effectively communicate to members that changes in maintenance and playing surface are for the long term good of the club?"

We could start with playing the old 'sustainable' card, a buzz word in golf over the last couple of years, but does it actually mean anything? Your course is only sustainable if members don't vote with their feet. No members, no fees, no course-simple. So forget the sustainable trend. Instead you should assess your current grass regime consumables - Fungicides, Fertilisers and Seed.

Naturally as a seed company we are going to recommend regular overseeding programmes. It really is the way to introduce more efficient species and cultivars to your course. Without grass, you haven't got a course therefore the grass you maintain is the single most important material in your toolbox. Seed in real terms has not increased in price in the last 15 years so is not so much an issue. But it's the amount of the other constituents your mixture requires that consumes your budget and makes seed selection crucial. There are now cultivars that have improved wear tolerance, more disease resistance and reduced cutting frequency, all offering potential for saving money. Furthermore, those species requiring fewer nutrients lend themselves to meeting a club's environmental aims and removing the conditions that actually sustain predominantly annual meadow grass greens. Cutting frequency is also influenced greatly by the choice of cultivar. How often do we actually need to cut fairways? Daily cutting is not uncommon, but is it essential? Communication to members to reduce the expectation of close mown fairways is required however grass cultivars with high scores for slow re-growth can save up to 50% on mowing costs.

British Seed Houses have Grade 'A' mixtures especially formulated for Golf Course Greens, Fairways and Roughs - from A5, an all Perennial Ryegrass mixture, through to A27, an entirely All-Fescue one. However, Velvet bent grasses will produce the smoothest, truest, fastest putting surface a golfer will ever play. This is because velvet bent grass has the finest leaf texture and highest shoot density of all the fine turf grasses available to the UK Greenkeeper.

The plant requires very little nutrient input (as low as 25kg/ha N per annum is acceptable and anything over 100 is not necessary) which, combined with extremely high shoot density, also helps to limit *Poa annua* infestations. Velvets can also tolerate dry conditions and, on the flipside, there has also been a noticeable resilience to the wetter conditions recently experienced. Disease resistance is also an exceptional trait of the species, the highest of most commercial bents.

Most Greenkeepers work within a very tight window to complete renovation work and allow new seed to establish - they must get it right first time. Young seedlings are vulnerable and regular applications of soluble high salinity fertiliser can kill the emerging shoots, not only a waste of good seed, but costly too. In contrast, the use of a low salt BSH Floranid slow release fertiliser delivers a steady feed of the essential nutrients. Floranid can also provide a cost saving throughout the season by having to make fewer applications than soluble types. All in all they create healthy growth, less susceptible to disease, and therefore requiring less fungicide.

Simon Taylor
British Seed Houses

THANK YOU

Dear BIGGA

On Behalf of all at The London Club we would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone that was involved in the course preparations for the 2009 European Open. The pressure of a changing week was reduced a great deal by the help and quality of all the volunteers that travelled from all areas of the UK, giving up their own time to be part of what was again a very successful event. It was a pleasure working with you all, and hope that you all got as much out of the whole experience as we did. Once again a very big thank you, and look forward to seeing you all again soon.

Ben Adams and Mark Bell

FEEDBACK ON NEW FEATURE

Dear BIGGA

Your new feature 'Candid in Camera' gives Course Managers the opportunity to come clean with their darkest thoughts without fear of exposure. Not surprisingly, the first instalment unearthed a charming specimen who describes his biggest problem as his staff and who elected not to stick up for them because he had a mortgage to pay. Presumably he was unconcerned about the mortgage of the "really nice bloke" whom he casually fired of his own volition with no pressure to do so from the club. He described himself as a manager rather than a shop steward but surely the best course managers combine elements of both disciplines? In my experience, managers who regard their biggest problem as their staff would be well advised to start by taking a good look at themselves. This bloke has got the staff he deserves.

Mick Travis

THANK YOU

Dear BIGGA

I would like to thank the Learning and Development department at BIGGA, as well as David Withers and all at Ransomes Jacobsen Ltd, who have provided their time and funding for my Foundation Degree in Sports Turf Science and Management.

My Continuation of personal development and the step to higher education would not have been possible without Ransomes Jacobsen's kind generosity. I look forward to notifying you of my progress along the way.

Thank you once again for providing me with this opportunity.

**Greg Knight,
Assistant Greenkeeper, Abridge Golf Club**

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HARRY DIAMOND MEMORIAL QUAICH

Dear BIGGA

Looking out of my window, at 6am, to a dreadful miserable morning, my thoughts were of a wet days golf at Belleisle. I should have had more forethought. Ayr Belleisle is a good hour's drive from Henzie, and with the extremities of weather we get in Scotland, expecting the same weather 40 miles away, "and at the coast", is nearly asking for a miracle. Arriving at Belleisle, at 8.15am for the usual Shot Gun start at 9.00am, the weather had improved to the extent, that the golfers milling around before going to their respective tees, were more intent in covering their golf clubs than themselves. The Diamond Family were all in evidence, attending to the organisation of the usual Stableford Competition.

All the young Diamond Girls were assisting, to keep everyone on the move and in getting the Golfers to their allocated Teeing Ground, before the sounding of the starting horn. Another exceptional and pleasant days Golf, with golfers, young, medium and old, "some very old", remarking how much they looked forward to this day in particular.

The Après Golf took the same format as in past years, with free beer and a free raffle ticket given to all who played that day. I have to remark on the prizes presented at the raffle, not the usual bottle of wine, or a couple of golf balls - two nights at a hotel for two, bottles of Johnnie Walker Black Label whisky, an expensive wall clock and others, too numerous to mention. As usual, all Harry's family took part in the presentation, his daughters were to the fore, as were his Grandchildren, in the organisation of the whole event, Harry's two brothers, Hugh and Campbell, handled the prizes to the deserving winners. The Quaich was presented by Harry's wife, Jessie. Again exceptional scoring by the winners J. Dickson, B Ablatt, and M. Owens, who turned a remarkable 95 points. The Diamond Family, extend their thanks to all who participate in the Quaich, and a special debt of gratitude to the donors, or cash, cheques, and prizes, which is the backbone of any well organised Golf Competition. Another successful and enjoyable day to the Memory of and exceptional Greenkeeper and dear Friend, Harry Diamond.

Cecil George, Lenzie

BUYERS' GUIDE



PORTERS WOOD GOLF COURSE 9 HOLE – Pay and Play

Opening to the public – July 2009

Porters Wood Golf Course has been developed from existing farm land near Shevington Village, nr Wigan., ideally situated near M6 and M58 motorway links, the course is a 9 hole pay and play a suburb course measuring 1,424 yards and consists of seven par-3's and two par-4's. Every one of the 9 holes offers a unique challenge, golfers of every ability are sure to be tested.

The course is built using the finest materials. It offers all year round play on its USGA modified greens, sand/soil based tees and wide well drained fairways, all seeded with the highest specification grass seed.

Porters Wood Golf Course used local Contractors wherever possible to work on the course, including Duncan Ross Land Drainage Ltd.

As part of the original construction work a series of collector drains was installed pre-construction to provide outlets to ponds, bunkers and Fairways. This was a very cost effective method of installing the main collector drains, the fairway drainage was then added after the grass was established, this enabled the Contractor to strategically place the drainage where it was required also preventing the drainage being contaminated by cultivation work thus improving infiltration rates. The work was completed with no disruption to the playing surface as a result the course opened as planned in early July this year.

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