

PERFECT 10

Barenbrug will be showcasing its 'Perfect 10' at Harrogate Week 2009 – 10 brand new cultivars that star in the specialist grass seed breeder's 2009 BAR range.

Highlights include four outstanding new fescues for fine and medium-fine turf – Viktorka and Bargreen II, both of which boast unrivalled shoot density and disease tolerance, as well as drought and salt tolerant Hardtop and rapid-establishing Barmalia.

Two mixtures also join the line-up – BAR Sprint for racecourses and, for turf producers, a fast-establishing *Poa annua*-beating mixture, BAR OC.

01359 272000
www.barenbrug.co.uk

DO YOU SUFFER FROM GOLFER'S ELBOW?

Ultralieve claims to be the first therapeutic ultrasound home use device and is the most effective way to combat golfer's elbow muscle spasms, aches and pains and any other inflammatory conditions.

This brand new hand held gadget is a breakthrough in personal injury treatment and pain management allowing Golfers to administer it themselves in the comfort of their own homes with the easy to use handheld device which is registered as a UK medical device.

The device gives you a high frequency massage that penetrates deep below the skins surface to assist in the healing process by increasing blood circulation and reducing inflammation.

www.ultralieve.com

GREEN FUN!

Better Energy Systems has introduced the Solio Hybrid 1000, an energy efficient device that has the power to charge most of your mobile devices without relying on conventional power sources. By combining a high efficiency solar panel with a large capacity integrated Lithium-Ion battery, the Solio Hybrid 1000 has the ability to keep any hand-held electronic device charged even when you are out on the green.

Housed in a rugged waterproof case conveniently geared with a built in carabiner, the Solio Hybrid 1000 can be attached to anything, including your golf bag, buggy or caddie.

www.store.solio.com



THINKING INSIDE THE BOX

JCB Service has strengthened its commitment to the environment with the launch of "Bag in Box" Lubricants – a revolutionary new packaging system for its own brand oils – which is 84% more environmentally friendly and delivers a series of cost and performance benefits to its customers.

Available globally for engine, hydraulic and transmission lubricants, the new system will be extremely attractive to those plant operators with strict environmental policies and stringent recycling targets to meet including large contractors, utilities firms, local authorities and those specialising in waste management.

www.jcb.com



NEW SERIES TRACTORS

Replacing the previous 5020 Series models, the new 5R and 5RN Series utility tractors from John Deere include 80hp 5080R, the 90hp 5090R and the 100hp 5100R. In addition to these standard models, narrow (RN) versions have a maximum overall width of 1.86m and are particularly designed for horticultural use, working in row widths greater than 2.50m.

01949 860491
www.johndeere.co.uk



GOLF: 50 GREAT TIPS

Golf has become one of the world's most popular sports with over two million regular golfers in the UK alone. Whether you're already a keen golfer enthusiast or a newcomer to the sport, Golf: 50 Great Tips is sure to help you improve your game.

With step-by-step instructions and how-to illustrations, this pocket-sized guide reveals the secrets of the world's top golf pros.

Golf: 50 Great Tips is available from all good shops.

SATELLITE ALERTING DEVICE

TRAAKIT is a revolutionary new satellite-alerting device that gives you peace of mind by keeping watch over almost anything you want and alerting you if it is moved.

www.traakit.co.uk

More New Products

... in the next issue of
Greenkeeper International

IS MY DIESEL SAFE?

By David Mears

We all store fuel, be it in tanks, barrels or jerry cans, but are we sure we have taken necessary steps to make our storage as secure as possible? It does not matter which fuel it is, even red diesel has become an attractive proposition for thieves lately. Many people have either experienced fuel theft or know someone who has suffered.

As HM Revenue & Customs are actively ensuring rebated fuel (red diesel) is not used illegally, storage of white diesel is growing along with the need for improved security. So what steps can be taken and what security measures are available?

Tanks outside buildings are the most vulnerable of course and the old single skin ones standing on blocks with a gravity hose (hopefully you still don't have one!) are the easiest to attack. One swipe with a heavy object usually breaks off the tank valve and allows the contents to flow out freely! This makes the thieves' job very easy but also causes pollution for which you will be liable!

Building a "bund wall" round such an installation often is ineffective as the pressure from a full tank would usually send the contents straight ahead and over such a wall with no valve in place! I personally know of two incidents at golf clubs where this has happened. Remember tanks should be top fill – top offtake and compliance with the Oil Storage Regulations is necessary.

A top offtake means the use of an electric pump, usually, and it is possible to have the controlling switch for this mounted inside a locked building.

A purpose designed bunded tank or better still, a fuel station are the preferred options. You may say that determined thieves will usually succeed but they prefer the easy pickings first!

Most popular at present are diesel fuel stations. These bunded plastic bodied tanks usually feature a compact design and the vertical models take up very little space. Depending on manufacturer, they can include many features such as electronic contents gauges, bund alarms, interior lights, fuel filters, flow meters etc. Most have lockable cabinet doors. Recently, one manufacturer, Harlequin, announced extra security features were to be



The latest Harlequin 2500 fuel station with enhanced locking

fitted as standard to all models; the provision of a 2" oil and corrosion resistant alloy lockable oil tank fill point assembly and a 4" lockable oil tank inspection cap in oil resistant polymer. These features in addition to the lockable access door make these models some of the most secure plastic refuelling tanks on the market. It is encouraging to see that Harlequin has also made these two items available as relatively inexpensive retro-fit kits for existing fuel station customers.

If theft and/or vandalism is really a major concern, then the only remaining answer is to go for the high security of bunded steel derv packs. These extremely robust double-skinned tanks are constructed to keep your fuel as safe as possible. The best models feature steel roller shutter covered access and two locking bolts with keys (placed either side of roller shutter). Often extra features can be included, so it's best to check specifications.

About the Author

David Mears is Joint Managing Director of Highspeed - Course Care, a national supplier of plastic and steel tanks. Servicing and maintenance is available from their OFTEC trained and registered engineers. See www.course-care.co.uk for more details and links to further information.



If your tank is like this one then you need to place it!



High security from a Highspeed Derv Pack with roller shutter door

What's your Number?

Name: Simon Taylor
Company: British Seed Houses
Position: Amenity Director



How long have you been in the industry?
 "22 years."

How did you get into it?

"I come from a farming background. I spent three years at Harper Adams Agricultural College, where I qualified with a HND. After a spell with a haulage company I wanted to get back into agriculture and saw a job advertised for a Cereal Grain Trader for British Seed Houses. I got turned down in the interview, but later was contacted saying a job had come up on the agricultural grass side. Within 12 months, I was selling on the amenity side. I became a Director in 1999."

What do you like about your current job?

"It's quite varied. It's very much a hands-on position. You can be dealing with clients from all ends of the spectrum, while looking

after the commercial end in terms of budget and finance. One area that interests me is marketing and PR – what I call, the sharp end of the market. At the other end, bringing new material to the market is also very interesting, although somewhat frustrating at times as it is such a long process."

What changes have you seen during your time in the industry?

"The biggest change has been in the number of major seed wholesalers. There used to be around 20 and now there's only four. Also the improvement in cultivar has been tremendous which has helped turf managers improve the quality of their playing surface, but equally skills of the turf industry have come on leaps and bounds. We all expect higher standards these days."

What do you like to do in your spare time?

"I am a keen road cyclist and race occasionally. I also do the odd marathon - I ran the Loch Ness Marathon in October in 3hrs 22mins, which I thought wasn't too bad for an old duffer like me. I also have two teenage boys who are pretty mad on sport so between

me and my wife, we spend a fair bit of time being a taxi service."

Where do you see yourself in 10 years time?

"Sitting in a nice climate with a good bottle of wine, but probably not in reality. I've been with British Seed Houses a long time and I want to see the company grow in strength and stature within the industry. I always like a challenge, I've had plenty and am sure will face many more over the next 10 years."

Who do you consider to be your best friends in the industry?

"They always say, never mix work and pleasure, and that's true with friends and business, but there are many friendly people in this industry. Everyone in the industry is a friend apart from the odd few who I wouldn't care to name."

Pick a number

"13."

Simon has picked Richard Earl from TurfTrax to take part in next month's feature.



WHAT'S YOUR NUMBER?

SITESAFE

For Golf...
 Garage - Workshop - Storage
 Housing - Welfare Units - Pavilion - Toilets
 Modular or Self-contained



Half Way House



Staff Welfare



Irrigation Pump Housing



Groundsman's Building



Club House



Chemicals & Flammables

For further information or to discuss your requirements please contact:
 IRVINE WESTON on Tel: 01427 752058 / Fax: 01427 754337 or

Cleveland Sitesafe Ltd. Riverside Works, Dockside Road, Middlesbrough,
 TS3 8AT. Tel: 01642 244663 / Fax: 01642 244664
 Email: sales@cleveland-sitesafe.ltd.uk Website: www.cleveland-sitesafe.ltd.uk

Q:

What do all these clubs have in common?

St Andrews
 Carnoustie
 Turnberry
 Troon
 Muirfield
 Royal Liverpool
 Royal Lytham St Annes
 Royal St Georges







Organised by BIGGA

To register, book education or find accommodation, visit www.harrogateweek.org.uk

Harrogate Week 2009

For the Turf Management and Groundscare Professional

Education Workshops and Seminars include:

- Benchmarking for the more Sustainable Future
- Turf Nutrition – Getting the Balance Right
- Next Steps in Budgeting and Finance
- Getting Started with Microsoft Excel
- Basic Budgeting and Financing
- Managing a Changing Climate

FREE Park & Ride

18-22 January 2009



Harrogate week



In the Shed

ANSWERS

CROSSWORD

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

ANSWERS:

1. Fairway
2. Cricket
3. Carl Lewis
4. Surfing

5. Gymnastics
6. Bjorn Borg
7. McClaren
8. Dressage
9. Volleyball

MONSTER SUDOKO

4	6	B	3	7	8	C	1	5	2	9	A
A	8	9	2	B	6	5	4	C	1	7	3
7	C	1	5	3	A	9	2	6	8	4	B
3	B	6	4	C	2	A	8	1	9	5	7
9	7	2	A	1	4	B	5	3	C	6	8
C	5	8	1	6	3	7	9	B	A	2	4
8	A	C	7	9	1	6	3	2	4	B	5
B	1	4	6	8	5	2	7	A	3	C	9
2	3	5	9	A	B	4	C	8	7	1	6
6	2	7	8	4	C	3	B	9	5	A	1
1	9	A	C	5	7	8	6	4	B	3	2
5	4	3	B	2	9	1	A	7	6	8	C

SQUIGGLY SUDOKO

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

HUMAN RESOURCES

BIGGA's Management Support series produced by Xact
www.xact.uk.com



REDUNDANCY – WHAT YOUR EMPLOYER SHOULD DO

As the recession continues to bite, it's clear a number of organisations are cutting back on their workforces. It stands to reason that your Golf Club may need to cut costs (and that usually means staff) in order to balance the books. If that's the case there are certain procedures they must follow for any dismissals to be fair.

The first option is for them to seek volunteers. Many businesses are afraid to use this method in case the volunteers are not suitable. There is no obligation on an employer to accept those that come forward. An employer is entitled to state that they reserve the right to refuse volunteers, particularly where it will leave the club with an unbalanced workforce.

Assuming they are making compulsory redundancies, the first thing they require to look at is the pool for selection. From this they require to identify positions for potential redundancy. Thereafter, they need to identify the grounds upon which they will select for redundancy.

Most employers look to carry out a selection matrix with a number of criteria in it, i.e. flexibility, length of service, absence, sickness, performance, transferable skills and disciplinary record. Wherever possible, these criteria must be objective and measurable. For example with flexibility, in order to make it objective, you need to determine how points will be scored. If someone can carry out four tasks, they may score, for example, five points. This can then be reduced where employees score lower if they can only carry out one task.

With length of service, if an employee has one year's service he scores one point, two year's service two points etc. Since age discrimination legislation was introduced, last in first out cannot be used as a sole

selection criteria without risk of it being held as discriminatory.

With sickness absence again, if you have no absences you can score five points, up to three absences four points. Again this can be done on a sliding scale as you consider appropriate. Absences for the care of dependants or other absences protected by law should be excluded. The same can be applied to conduct/disciplinary record.

Finally, in respect of transferable skills, you again need to identify where those skills will be transferred to within the business and therefore how an employee comes to score each of their respective marks.

Having done this, your employer needs to embark on individual consultation with affected employees. This should last for at least one week (preferably longer) during which time the employee can either work or be invited to remain away from the workplace in order to consider their options and take appropriate advice.

During the initial consultation, it should be pointed out to the employee why the redundancies are necessary. Employers should explain why the employee is being proposed for redundancy based on their score. An explanation should be provided as to how their score was arrived at. It is not necessary to share everybody's score with affected employees.

Employees should then be given one week to take advice and to consider their position, make representations or suggest alternatives.

Once the week has been completed, the employee should be brought back in for a second consultation meeting at which the employee must be invited to make any representations they wish. If the employee makes representations these must be considered by the employer.

The final point to bear in mind is that an appeal process must also be followed in the case of redundancy dismissal.



FEATURE

The Articulator®
The ONLY High-Definition Mowers on the Market

33hp Kubota Diesel
Folds to 1.9 metres for transport
Cutting Height 3 cms to 11 cms
Cutting Width 2.5 metres

Model 3300

LASTEK (UK) LTD

Tel: 01622 812 103 Fax: 01622 815 534
www.lastec.co.uk

A ● all these Open
● Championship Clubs
choose to relief
grind with a Hunter
precision grinder

HG HUNTER GRINDERS
the choice of Champions

Tel: +44 (0)1207 270316 www.huntergrinders.com



News from the Chief Executive

It hardly seems five minutes since 31st December, 1999, when we were all anticipating the arrival of the new millennium and the prospect of computers everywhere suffering millennium bug problems on the final stroke of midnight. What happened - nothing, and we all breathed a sigh of relief and looked forward to life in the 21st Century.

Who would have thought though that nine years later the world would be in such a state of economic crisis. Share values around the world have been decimated, financial institutions are going into receivership and retailers are resorting to desperate measures to tempt us to part with what few savings we may have. However for all of us the collapse of the Stock Market is devastating, whether a shareholder or not somewhere in our lifestyle we will all be affected. It all sounds rather gloomy, and I suppose it is, but no matter how badly off you are there will always be someone who would swap places with you. Those of us that enjoy good health, the support of a close family and have good friends should recognise how comparatively well off we are.

I do not however wish to underestimate the consequences of stress at home or at work due to financial or other pressures. As from this month members of the Association will have access to a new benefit in the form of a stress advice and counselling helpline, available all day every day, something that has been recognised as being a vital addition to the existing range of member support services.

The knock-on consequences for golf are only just starting to have an effect and I fear that 2009 will be a year when we really start to feel the recession bite. What, therefore, can members do? I suggest that we all look at how we contribute towards the success of our employer and what we could do to improve our own performance, the performance of the business and perhaps gain that competitive edge. There will inevitably be winners and losers but to some extent we can all influence our own destiny. We can sit back and watch and wait or we can look for new opportunities to do what we do better, taking advantage of training and education along the way.

As Chief Executive of BIGGA one of my roles is to try to help the Board move the Association forward on a secure foundation. An increasingly difficult challenge! The full inclusion of groundsmen as members would help with the building of this base and may present new opportunities, but it is not vital to the ongoing survival of the business. Survive we will but develop we may not, unless we are all prepared to accept change in one form or another.

During 2009, I and key members of the team here at BIGGA HOUSE will be making more effort to attend Region and Section events in order to improve the link between the membership and its Headquarters. Better use will be made of Greenkeeper International and the BIGGA Website as communication tools and a series of surveys and focus group meetings are planned with the ultimate intention of increasing the value of being a member. The services and contacts at Headquarters are not fully appreciated by the membership and I would hope that Members come to identify the Staff as being their first point of contact when they need help, advice or information. It is your Association, so please use it!

I encourage as many of you as possible to get to the Association's event in Harrogate later this month which presents not only the opportunity for education (much of it at no cost to you or your club) but also the chance to catch up with news on products and suppliers as well as providing a rewarding once a year networking opportunity.

I wish all members a healthy and successful 2009 however don't forget that you are part of a professional organisation that wants to help you and the industry go from strength to strength. Be a part of it and not apart from it!



SCOTTISH REGION - AYRSHIRE

Hope you've all had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, just a few lines and dates for the diary!

The Section AGM was held at Bogside at the end of October where Derek Wilson agreed to stay on as Secretary, much to everyone's delight! Yours truly has taken up the reins as Chairman from Stephen Higgins, with George Morrison in as Vice-Chairman and Duncan Gray is back on committee!

Tracey Maddison, from HQ, also attended the meeting which added a bit of freshness while subtracting the usual language!

The Patrons' Award Lunch took place at the Terraces Hotel, in Stirling, on December 4, where this year's recipients, Martin Lothian, Turnberry GC, and Marshall Sloss, Beith GC, partook of fine food and drink while also enjoying an excellent speaker, or two, if you include Mr Cruickshanks who was at our table - apart from that the day was great!

Cathkin Braes will host the Scottish National Tournament, on June 11, and the National Championship is to be played at Burnham and Berrow, in Somerset, on October 5 and 6.

George Brown is to receive the Lifetime Achievement Award at Harrogate this month so if any of you can make it down to help him celebrate this special accolade, not many possess, I'm sure you'll have an enjoyable time.

We're looking to get a footie match with the West in March sometime so if anyone is interested in avenging our unlucky defeat a few years ago then give me a bell on: 07939104701 or email me at; denis.t@hotmail.co.uk more news next month, I know, you can hardly wait! Auf Wiedersehen!

Denis Tweddell



NORTH

I am sure you have heard it a hundred times over the past week or so but let me, on behalf of the committee, wish you all a very Happy New Year. How many of you woke up on the 1st with a cloudy head? Who had to go into work on the Thursday morning? Nae Luck!

The AGM finally went ahead in November, at Meldrum House. There were 23 members attending in total, which I don't think was too bad considering it was word of mouth. On the day the golf was of a Stableford format with local bandit, David Stephen, coming in 3rd place with 34 points, 2nd was Alex Cruickshank on 34 points, but with a better inward half and coming in, in 1st place was Paul Marshall, from Cruden Bay, with 36 points. Well done Paul! Thanks go to Kenny Harper and his squad of lads for getting the course in great nick despite the weather. A big thank you from the committee for all those that attended, it really is appreciated.

The final 200 club was drawn at the AGM too. My work colleague, Mikey Fullerton, finally won £30. He came running through into the bothy with his cheque. His eyes nearly popped out of his head. He was so pleased he said, "About time I won something on the 200 Club." He only bought the ticket in March. Some people haven't won in 10 years. Ross Macrae, of Huntly Golf Club, won £30, as did George Patterson, from Lossie Golf Club. The big prize of £100 went to Ian MacLeod, of Tain Golf Club.

It has been decided that next year's outings will be at Portlethen and



Alyth. I am sure there will be a good attendance at these outings and I'm also sure that Neil and Brian will put on a good show for us all. The dates have yet to be confirmed but they will be posted at a later date.

The Patrons' Award Dinner took place on December 4, in Stirling. Our Patrons this year are Dale Robertson and Jim McCormack. Well done guys. They have a trip to Harrogate to look forward to now. To win the Patrons' Award you have to turn up at outings and seminars which are scored as a points system and you've guessed it, the two with the most points win the Patrons' Award.

We also have in our Section, The Scottish Chairman. He is, of course, John Geddes, from McDonald Golf course, in Ellon. Well done John and we hope that everything runs smoothly over the course of your stint as Chairman.

Two of my old mates have become dads again! Firstly, Stephen Brown, Deputy Head of Hawkshill, and his wife, Terri, had another boy, Thomas. Well Done. Is that it now or will you be going for the girl? Also Head Greenkeeper, at Huntly, Ross Macrae and his wife, Nicola, had another boy too; baby, Jonathan, only this was their 7th! Congratulations to both of you and your families!

Kevin Strachan, of Strachan Plant Hire, has asked me to put out the feelers regarding a demonstration of his recycling equipment over three days in March. The 3rd, 4th and 5th to be precise. This will hopefully be taking place at his depot in Echt in Aberdeenshire. I will have more definite details in next month's edition but in the meantime you can contact him on 07801297070 if you need to find out more.

That's it for this month. It does tend to die down over the winter months so any news is much appreciated.

Ben Brookes
07813889374



CENTRAL

Hopefully everyone had a good Christmas and New Year and many of you are now looking forward to Harrogate.

The Section had a committee meeting at Elmwood, on December 3, where a number of items were discussed with regards to staging both educational and social events for members. The committee is willing to try and put on anything the members would like but do require a commitment from people to attend because most things have a cost implication and we cannot afford to run anything at a loss. All we want to do is break even on each event. Many of the courses we are considering are pitched at different levels, from the practical ones such as chainsaw certification, vermin control, A1 assessors qualifications, irrigation repairs and manual handling to more managerial ones for Deputies and Head Greenkeepers/Course Managers such as disciplinary training, writing risk assessments, team building or an environmental workshop, etc.

Some members would just like a social event so we are willing arrange a ten pin bowling evening or a curry night with a guest speaker, whatever is suggested - just contact your committee. For all the latest developments, please visit the website: www.biggacentralsection.org.uk Something we have re-introduced are the two competitions last held a couple of years ago, a photo competition and a funny story competition. There will be a £25 prize in each category to be decided in April and again in October, full details of both, the rules and how to enter are on the website. Many of the trophy winners from last year's golf outings will be contacted by members of the committee and asked to return the trophies to Andy Mellon, at Elmwood, as

soon as possible. This is because many haven't been engraved for a number of years and we would like to get them up to date as they are an important part of the Section's history.

Finally, we intend sending a newsletter out around the end of March, along with the entry form for the spring outing which will be at Scotsraig GC, on April 30. Hopefully, by then we will have a list of events with dates and costs for next autumn and winter.

Gordon Moir



NORTHERN REGION - NORTH WEST

First things first the North West committee would like to wish everyone a very happy new 2009. We hope the weather is a little kinder this year.

In December we were to hold the AGM and Bert Cross Memorial Golf Day but unfortunately the weather beat us and with Wilmslow Golf Club closed the golf was cancelled. The AGM went on and 13 brave souls had a very informative meeting. We came up with a few ideas for 2009 and we are busy working on these plans now. We have also got a few new faces on board and here they are: North West Section committee 2009, Secretary, Chris Sheehan, Chairman, Alan Donlevy, Treasurer, Billy Merritt, Clive Poole, Colin Denny, Adie Holt, Peter McVicar, Nick Gray, Phil Dewhurst, Dave MacAvoy.

I hope that everyone can visit Harrogate Week. There is plenty for everyone this year and the education side is fantastic so please make an effort to attend if you can. I am still finalising the fixtures for this year and as soon as I have them all I will send them out to everyone. You can access any forthcoming fixtures in the member's Section on the BIGGA website: www.bigga.org.uk - under Your Pages.

Chris Sheehan



NORTHERN

Just a quick note to wish you all a very Happy New Year, I hope you had an enjoyable Christmas and that Santa brought you everything you asked for!

With the Christmas Golf and AGM on December 11 having to be cancelled due to the weather, the AGM has been rescheduled for Tuesday, January 13 at Cookridge Hall Golf Club, with a 7pm start. Anybody wishing to attend please get in touch as soon as possible.

You will all hopefully by now have received a full fixture list for events and the annual seminar in 2009. If you haven't received yours by the end of January please let me know and I will arrange to send one out.

I hope to see a few of you at Harrogate this month and again, a very happy new year to all.

Adam Speight

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



Around the Green



SHEFFIELD

Welcome everyone. Hopefully you all had a fantastic Christmas and the New Year has started well. I have quite a bit of news this month which is very welcome. So here goes.

Firstly I would like to thank everyone who attended our Christmas golf, I am sure you will all agree that it was a fantastic day. I would like to pass everyone's thanks on to Tim and his staff at Worksop, for once again presenting a wonderful course for us all. Once again there were some quite amazing scores from our members. The results are as follows: 1. Steve Pickering, 40pts; 2. Darren Coup 38pts; Trade, Dave Smith.

Congratulations also to everyone who won a prize. Once again a big thank you goes to Mike Brear and Mark Robinson from Rigby Taylor for sponsoring the day and all the other trade members for supporting the Section so well.

The AGM was once again well attended and things ran very smoothly, unfortunately this year we have had two committee members leave. On behalf of the Section I would like to say a big thank you to John Lax and Chris Astle for their commitment to the Section. All other committee members will be carrying on in their roles. Ian Whitehead agreed to fill one of the vacant positions on the committee and I would like to welcome him to his new role and we on the committee look forward to all his fresh new ideas. As a committee we will once again work to ensure that we have a successful year and move the Section forward once again.

Finally, I have a big congratulations and a get well soon. I would like to offer big congratulations to Mick Gillet, from Hallamshire Golf Club, on the birth of his first child. Good luck Mick to you and your family.

A big get well soon goes to Dave Chappell, from Rotherham Golf Club, who has recently had a hip operation. Get well soon Dave, I know your staff at Rotherham are missing you loads.

That is all from me this month, I will speak to you all again in February and hopefully have a lot more news to give to you.

James Stevens Section Secretary



NORTH WALES

Happy New Year! 2009 beckons us in with open arms and with the current financial situation I'm sure it will bring loads of challenges too, although I'm also sure that as resilient as we greenkeepers are, we will ride the coming storm with flying colours.

The Christmas tournament took place at Prestatyn Golf Club and on a suitably seasonal frosty day we played a course that was set out as expected, beautifully, the sun came out and made the day even more exceptional. We need to thank Dave Parry and his team for the amazing course, the catering for the mouth-watering food (some found the turkey so succulent they had a whole leg on their plate!) and we must also thank the other staff at the club and their members for making us feel so welcome.

The results were: 1. Leasowe team, 88pts; 2. Abergele Wanderers, 85pts; 3. Stuart McCall's team, 84pts.

The bus to Harrogate will be running as normal the only difference is we

will be going on Wednesday 21st instead of the normal Tuesday, as always the coach is free for members with a nominal fee for non-members, if you have any inquiries or want to book seats please contact Jeremy Hughes who I'm sure will do his best to sort you out.

We seem a little short of local news again this month so please feel free to contact Either myself or Johnny Evans if you have any local news.

Here's to a happy and prosperous new year to all. All the best until next month.

Pete Maybury
07756001187
or petemayb66@aol.com

Johnny Evans
Johnny.Evans@tesco.net



MIDLAND REGION - MIDLAND

Well what's your New Year's resolution then? Give up the dreaded weed, the demon brew, spend more time with the lovable brats/wife or husband (in most cases). Mine being, after coercion and advise, to compile our notes/newsletter with the same enthusiastic and literal obscurity that (by my own omission) has dwindled with the familiarity of the passing of time. To those who feel my obscurity is foul I suggest a dictionary, to understanding souls. Unfortunately, no room for such this month. Normal service shall be resumed next month. May your god help you?

Our Christmas event was held at the lovely South Staff's Golf Club. I'm sure all were looking forward to playing such a prestigious course in its fullness. Unfortunately due to frost and snow, temps were rightly enforced, it was a miracle that the course was open at all. However it was evident that the course was in superb condition as presented by Course Manager, Mr R.Thomas and his fine team - Our thanks to you gentlemen. The results of the day were: 1. G. Turner & P. McCrainor. 2. R. Hayhurst & M. Chamberlain. 3. P. Mills & J. Parmler. 4. A. Folds & M. Gilgreast. 5. M. Hughes & M. Gash. 6. H. Middlebrook & S. Harvey. Our thanks to M. Chamberlain, of Tacit, for sponsorship of the main prize table. Nearest the Pin in 2 went to G.Turner and N.L. to D.Fellows - thanks to Sherriff Amenity. Also our thanks to Turners, John and Kev for the halfway house tea, coffee, and sloe gin.

Our greatest of thanks to South Staffs Golf Club for affording us their very gracious hospitality, and also thanks to Peter Baker for his very honest, informative, humorous and personal accounts of his experiences of Ryder Cup and Pro Tour golf.

Our very successful Scotts Doubles tournament was played between S.Harvey/N.Smith and P.Nixon/T.Cheese at the magnificent venue of Wentworth and the former were crowned winners. Well done gentlemen, but surely all are winners. Our thanks to Scotts for sponsoring this fine event. For next year's final we have been fortunate enough, via Scotts, to play the final at the lovely venue of the Oxfordshire Golf Club, our thanks to Scotts for their continued support of this great competition. Don't forget to get your entry in before the spring competition. I shall give you more details of this year's events next month.

Our annual match against the East Midland Section was played at Kedlestone Park Golf Club and the course was in great condition as presented by Course Manager, Dave Leatherland, and his fine team. Yet again the East



Midland Section were the winners, congratulations to them. Our thanks to Tony Cheese/Rigby Taylor for their continued sponsorship of this match.

May I wish all a very Happy New Year, and let's hope for a dryer season this year.

Sean McDade



EAST OF ENGLAND

Happy New Year everybody. Hopefully Santa brought you everything you wanted this year, in greenkeeping terms that would be a cold, dry, windy Christmas period so there are no worries about disease kicking off during this traditional down time.

So as 2009 dawns we can look back on 2008 and firstly say, "Where did it go!". It doesn't feel like a year since I wrote my first scribbles for these pages.

So what have we learnt from 2008, well we have been hit by the "credit crunch". This means many things to many people however as far as we are all concerned it means golfers becoming more careful with their money, which in some cases can lead to falls in membership numbers and golf club revenue. Societies are lessening in both amounts that are out there and the numbers that play in them, again leading to a fall in golf clubs income. So where does this leave us humble Course Managers trying to maintain our precious golf courses in these turbulent times? Well for all but the very lucky few of us I guess it means a tightening of the belts and finding cheaper more cost effective ways of producing high standard golf courses.

2008 was a good year for growing grass, there was never an excessively hot spell, and warm dry spells were always followed by periods of rain. Never good working conditions, but always a relief when the greens begin to dry out and the hose pipes are dug out the back of the sheds. Winter this year has brought frost in October and three snowfalls before mid December, none of which have been experienced in the last few years. Whatever does Mother Nature have in store for us next?

2008 was a good year for the East of England Section. All golf days were well supported and the Section continues to be a fun and friendly place to be. The fixtures are being finalised at the moment, but any golfers out there that have not joined us before please feel free to do so.

Our final golf day of the year took place on Monday, December 8, at Holme Hall Golf Club, in Scunthorpe. A good turnout enjoyed a golf course well prepared by Jim and his staff, the frost that morning and the rain that joined us on the back nine did nothing to dampen peoples spirits. After everybody had dried off, the catering staff served the first Christmas dinner of the season up to us. After the meal was our traditional Christmas bring and win prize draw. Once again there was the usual selection of wacky, rude, useful and edible gifts in store for the unsuspecting person unwrapping them. Once again, many thanks to Holme Hall Golf Club and to LMS for sponsoring the day.

The results of the golf were as follows: 1. Gary Salisbury, Adi Kitchenson, Russ Latham; 2. Steve Beverly, Graeme MacDonald; 3. Tito Arena, Rob Bemment.

Nearest the pin - Allan Walker (although there is a school of thought that he may have took "placing" a bit too literally and placed his ball nearest the pin and not 30 foot away where it landed!) Longest drive - Dave Coupland.

May I also pass on congratulations and best wishes of all in the Section to Dave Coupland with his golfing career. Everybody knows he made a very

respectable appearance at The Open at Carrnoustie, last year and hopes to follow this with amateur success next year, followed by a trip to the European Tour Qualifying School at the end of next year. All the best, and if you are available for the match vs the trade next year then let Allan know asap.

A quick date for the diary of 2009 is Wednesday, February 18, at Newark Golf Club where our winter seminar will be held. Details are yet to be finalised, however part of the day will include presentations from Barenbrug's Neil Pettican and Jane Leyland on the subject of how grass seed gets from plant form into bags, the processes involved, and methods of breeding different cultivars. Full details will follow.

I will finish with a quick mention of a change at committee level. After 20 years of serving on the Midland Region board, Graeme MacDonald is standing down. On behalf of the committee, many thanks for all the hard work and time you have put in to representing us over the years. Rob Welford has stepped in to join Allan Walker as our voices at regional level.

Looking forward to seeing everybody at Harrogate.
Steve Beverly



BERKS/BUCKS AND OXON

Happy New Year! Another year bites the dust, Christmas is over, new resolutions begun, the credit crunch has emptied our pockets and we are all ready to rock and roll for 2009.

I am trying to reflect on the past year and realise that not all have had it given to them on a plate - indeed the crystal ball seems to cast doom and gloom. The economy is always making the headlines and then more rain for those who have already had enough to bring them to breaking point with the possibility of yet more flooding. So I hear you all say - what's the future for us in the Chinese Year of the Ox.

This year is one in which success will escape without a sustained mindful effort. The sort of problems that are encountered in the year of the Ox tend to be home front problems that seem to be never ending. The Ox year needs discipline and it is not the time for unruly behaviour or taking short cuts. In this year success is achieved solely through hard work.

"So, is this going to be a tough year?" I hear you all ask. With the credit crunch always making the news, only the Ox seems to know, but judging by the words of Chinese wisdom I feel we need to tread slowly and see that our courses prosper in an ever changing climate that will be testing enough for us and difficult to navigate in the year ahead. On arriving at Frilford Heath Golf Club for this year's Annual Turkey Trot, any doom and gloom soon disappeared.

Frilford Heath Golf Club is situated near the "dreaming spires" of Oxford and in the heart of the Cotswolds.

The courses are designed in classic golfing country and provide 54 holes of championship golf with heathland characteristics that will test the most accomplished golfer to his limit and frustrate those who can only wish that they were immortal.

As part of Frilford Heath's centenary events, the England v France International Golf Match returned back to the club in May last year. Consequently, victory was assured, France defeated and sent back across the channel without the trophy that has been strongly contested by the two nations biennially.

The delightful old clubhouse provided excellent facilities and a first class restaurant which was managed by Steward and Mandy Wood, who ensured



Around the Green

gastronomic delights were enjoyed by all who attended the day.

Thank you to Frilford Heath Golf Club who in their centenary year provided us with the courtesy of the course and Steve Styles, Executive Director, ensured we all had a great day at the club. Our thanks go to Sid Arrowsmith and all his staff for providing first class playing conditions on the Blue course which challenged the winning teams all the way to the finish line. It is no wonder that at this event we had a record turnout just short of 100 greenkeepers who competed with good spirit to make the day a good one.

Our thanks to the main sponsor of the day – Avoncrop Amenity, and to Barry McCloskey and Darren Homer who presented the prizes to the following winners: 2. Team Two Hopes: Chris Lomas, Philip Ryder, Mark Hancock, Richard Davies. 3. Team The New Crooks: Alec McIndoe, Eric Kinlon, Andy Thrift, Graham Glen. Sean Haymer and Joe Newman won the Turner groundcare putting competition. Various others, too good to mention, won the 9 long drive and near pin prizes that were in abundance on every other hole.

Thank you to all our sponsors throughout 2008. We have had great support from all the trade which has included Sheriff, Avoncrop, Tacit, Vitax, Rigby Taylor, Turner Groundcare, Golf & Turf, Browns, Gem Professional, Headland, Greentech and Banks Amenity. A special mention to Jon Beck and Ian Richardson who served us well at the halfway house with their usual flair and wished us Bon Appetit.

The AGM commenced and the following officers were elected: Sid Arrowsmith, as Chairman for the Section; Adam King, Secretary; Frank Booth, Treasurer; Alec MacIndoe, Education; Jake Japie Snyman, Website. Simon Marsh, Matt Smith and Eric Kinlon were elected as committee members with yours truly as the scribe for another year.

A special thanks to Alistair Higgs, the new Head Greenkeeper for Donnington Valley Golf Club, who throughout 2008 co-ordinated the golf days as Match Secretary. Alistair, as well as Dan Lightfoot, will be standing down this year due to work commitments and the challenges that await. Dan and his wife recently gave birth to their second child. Congratulations and thank you both for your support.

If any member has any news or views they would like to share, or would like more information about the Section and forthcoming events in 2009 you only have to log your cyberspace details and e-mail address with the new Secretary, Adam King, Radley College, who will only be pleased to keep you informed and up to date. Adam can be contacted at ajk@radley.org.uk

See you all at Harrogate Week in a few weeks time and wishing you all a great New Year and hope the Ox keeps any greenkeeping gremlins at bay.

Mark Day
mark.day@tacitgolf.co.uk



MID-ANGLIA

Happy New Year one and all. Hopefully, you have had a peaceful Christmas with no real problems during the busy holiday period. Not much news this month, I'm afraid, so I'll keep it brief.

Golf Meetings 2009 are as follows: Spring – in discussion, Summer – tba, Autumn – October 7 at Mid-Herts Golf Club, Winter – December 7 at John O'Gaunt Golf Club. Thanks to Simon Banks, from Banks Amenity, for sponsoring Golfer of the Year this year. The spring tournament will again be the qualifier for the National Championship. Entry forms must be in at

least one week before the competition is due to be held to allow Richard Saunders to organise the events properly and there will be no exceptions, thank you!

Please also visit the "Your Pages" Section of the BIGGA website as you can find out all the latest information for the Mid-Anglia Section. As venues for golf and training courses etc are arranged, they will be posted on these pages first.

The Section has recently organised several successful training programmes which have been fully subscribed. If you are interested in attending any of the training days please see the BIGGA website ("Your Pages" link) to see what courses are on offer or contact Gerald Bruce by emailing gerald@berkhamstedgc.co.uk.

Congratulations to Dunstable Downs Golf Club's Luke Burman and wife, Becky, on the birth of their first child, Oliver David Burman, on November 25. Both mum and son are doing well.

The Winter Texas Scramble was also held at Dunstable Downs Golf Club and Frank Scullion and his staff had produced the course to an excellent standard. Snow had been forecast and despite it freezing hard in the early part of the night and then heavy rain first thing in the morning, the sky lightened at tee off time and underfoot conditions were very good. Thanks Frank, Gary and the rest of the lads. Also, sincere thanks to Dunstable Downs Golf Club for kindly hosting our event. The food was also excellent and a big thank you to the caterers too.

Barry McCloskey, from Avoncrop, was the generous sponsor of the day and provided an excellent prize table. Winners this year were Nigel Broadwith, Kevin Armstrong, B. Gaynor and M. Stakeman, John O'Gaunt Golf Club, 56.1pts; 2. Trevor Dealey, Dale Housden, K. Housden and A..Henderson, Caddington GC, 56.2 pts. 3. Simon Banks, Mark Ely, Rob Catlin and Phil Gibson from "Trade Bandits & Phil" 56.5pts. Longest drive winner was Dale Housden, again, (somebody check his balls) and Nearest the Pin was Rob "get inside that" Catlin. Golfer of the Year was Myles Wood, from Berkhamsted Golf Club, which was kindly sponsored by Simon Banks, of Banks Amenity. Thanks to everybody for organising, sponsoring and supporting the event, it was most enjoyable yet again.

Finally, the committee are looking into the possibility of having a Section Golf Tee Shirt with our logo embroidered onto it. If there is enough interest then it can be taken to the next stage, please let me or anyone else on the committee know if you would be interested in this idea.

Any news or items of interest are always welcome. Hosts for Golf Meetings would be very much appreciated as well. Look forward to seeing you at Harrogate Week.

Craig Spooner
craig.spooner@limagrain.co.uk



SOUTH EAST REGION - KENT

Happy New Year! Firstly a quick report on our annual Turkey Trot at Birchwood Park.

Thorough preparations prior to the event ensured that the day ran like a well-oiled machine. Some of the attendees, presumably in some form of homage, were equally well oiled later on in the day but nothing could detract from this great occasion and I certainly won't be naming names in this column!

After meeting early to discuss the day's format with the assembled we