

keepers a chance to see what a fantastic industry we work in and if you put your heart and soul into it you can get so much in return.

A highlight for me was the 2mm Debate, it just goes to show the passion that can be created among men. My family and friends thought I was nuts when I said I was looking forward to sitting in a debate about the height at which you mow grass! Respect must go to all who sat on the Debate panel, being prepared to put themselves into such a public forum to talk about a topic that has caused the biggest debate within greenkeeping for many years.

All members of the Section should have by now received their fixture card for 2010. There is one small change to the printed details, the spring and summer tournaments are now both Stableford competitions rather than Medals! We look forward to seeing plenty of new faces as well as the older ones at the events this year. Hopefully by the time you read this you should have received the entry form for the pairs competition this year. I would encourage as many of you as possible to enter this, it is a great way to play some different courses and meet new people. If anybody wants to play but is struggling to find a partner then please get in touch as I'm sure we can sort something out.

At the latest East Midlands committee meeting, some great ideas for education days and social nights were discussed so keep your ear to the ground for them. Everyone on the committee would like to make sure that it is doing everything possible for its members, we can only provide a successful section if you, the members get involved. Please get in touch with either Andy de Wet or myself with ideas of what you would like to see in happen in your Section. It can be anything and all ideas welcome.

biggaeastmidlands@hotmail.com

Matt Wormald

Section Notes

Please email your notes to scott@bigga.co.uk by the 5th of the month



South West and South Wales

South Coast

Hello and welcome to all the South Coast members. This is new to me, writing my first around the green report, as the committee are now taking it in turns to put pen to paper. So here goes!

No-one has passed on any news to me from my fellow greenkeepers or trade in our Section so that's a good start. I will just try and bore you myself.

Here at the Army Golf Club we are near completion of a new irrigation system to greens, tees and approaches complete with new tanks, pump house and control system. This project was long overdue and I'm looking forward to having a reliable management tool in place for the spring/summer, at a approx cost of £270,000.

Also under construction is a new greens complex on our 10th hole with an additional five new bunkers, making the hole more challenging, however with the course just thawing out from 8" snow cover at time of writing I wonder if it will ever be finished.

We are also undertaking a woodland management programme with selective removal of trees and scrub around greens and tees. It's surprising how quickly the woodland invades areas, blocking out much needed light and air movement.

Just returned from good old Harrogate where, under the current financial climate, I thought the exhibition passed off well. It was good to meet up with distant friends again.

I attended the big "2mm Debate" on the Wednesday morning with excitement expecting a good debate and discussion session but, my oh my, what a waste of time it turned out to be because it's all down to "Site Specific" as we were told on many occasions. Do we really care what someone else's greens run at on the Stimp, or what Height of Cut they use. No we manage our course to the needs of the business and to our own

"Site Specific". Enough said.

Now moving on to Wetherspoons, where do I begin.....

As you read this March is upon us thank goodness, and now we wait for temperatures to slowly rise so we can begin to think about our maintenance regime for this time of year hoping that the easterly winds we sometimes suffer do not appear and put things back. At the end of the day Mother Nature dictates to us what we can do.

If anyone has any news or interesting stories, or if your moving on then please contact your committee so that it can be included in the monthly round-up sometimes news doesn't travel as fast as you think.

Fred, from Alton GC, is next month's guest journalist so give him a call, all the best for the forthcoming year,

Phil Wentworth.



Devon and Cornwall

Unfortunately I am starting with some sad news. The following is a quote from Ron Skinner, Duchy College. "It is with a great degree of sadness that I have to report to Devon and Cornwall Section members that John Baker, Duchy College, died on January 27 after a long illness. John was well known to many greenkeepers as the "pesticide man" who carried out many NPTC Pesticides Assessments. In many private conversations with John, an extremely pragmatic and practical man, he reported to me, which clubs had good facilities and equipment, and which had less good and the associated "horror and comedy stories". We know who and where you are! Before John's sudden and early retirement due to his illness he worked closely with the greenkeeper industry in Devon and Cornwall and the Duchy greenkeeper team to ensure GTC Centre Approval and local training opportunities for greenkeepers in the area. Our thoughts are with his family. Ron Skinner, Steve Evans, Brian Summers, Terry Farkins and Duchy College.

Duchy College were host to two workshops run by Bernhard's a leading supplier of cylinder grinders, and supported by Toro.

On January 27 the Workshop, led by Ben Taylor, Training Manager at Bernhard's, provided technical information to the Level 2 groups on the importance of correct sharpening of mowing equipment to benefit sward quality, appearance, disease resistance, reduced fertiliser requirements and fuel efficiencies, and reduced machinery repair costs. Ben followed his presentation with a demonstration of the specialist grinding equipment and the set up of the cylinder mower to ensure quality of cut.

The Advanced Workshop, on January 28, to the Level 3 Greenkeeper group and an audience of BIGGA members, reviewed the above points. It carried out trials to demonstrate these issues using a mower incorrectly set up and the same mower correctly set up. The trials took place on the playing fields, removing and weighing the cuttings, measuring fuel efficiency and assessing quality of cut. The Level 3 Greenkeeper group have recorded the results and have been offered the opportunity to publish these in trade magazines with the successful candidate being provided with a prize by Bernhard's.

Ben commented that the STRI had provided research to support his company's claims regarding the improvements in the quality of turf appearance and that sports turf managers were required to meet ever rising standards of turf presentation.

Ron Skinner, Duchy College, considered that the workshops had provided specialist and up to date technical information to support the main syllabus. He was especially grateful to the support from the greenkeeper attendee's, Bernhard's, Toro and the many Duchy staff who supported the event.

Congratulations to Jeff Mills and Justin Austin on achieving their CPD Accreditation certificates. The Certificates are awarded to those who collect 10 CPD points or more per year for five consecutive years. Both Jeff and Justin were present at the Harrogate Awards Ceremony to receive their certificates.

Due to poor weather, our

meeting at Newquay, scheduled for January 10, had to be cancelled. We are hoping to schedule this meeting again for next year. Although Andrew Dunstan, Course Manager, Newquay was very disappointed, I know he had enough on his plate with the arrival of his newly born daughter "Neeve", born on Christmas day! Congratulations Andrew from all the section.

The next meeting will be at Mullion Golf Club, Cornwall. The usual format of Golf or a Course walk, followed by an educational presentation by "Brian Robinson, Director of Seed Research at Rigby Taylor. Gordon Tamblin, Course Manager, Mullion, has been a regular attendee at BIGGA meetings and it would be great to see good numbers at this meeting in order to support him and the Section. Please contact me if you are interested in attending the meeting or if you have any enquiries or information you would like me to include in these notes.

George Pitts
Devon & Cornwall Section
Secretary
07929 754401
gpitts.yelverton@gmail.com



South Wales

Hi Everyone
Firstly an apology. In February's edition of "Around the Green" I commented about the talk given by Swalec Stadium Head Groundsman Keith Exton, at Taff's Well Rugby Club, organised by the IOG and congratulated Keith on a fine talk. As you know, the talk was cancelled due to the snow and the only explanation I can give as to my glowing report is that I must have dreamed the whole thing!

I know it's sad that, where as I used to dream about exciting things - the one where Katherine Jenkins and Charlotte Church heard me singing in the bath and decided I needed singing lessons and insisted on joining me in the tub was one of my faves. I now dream about attending IOG evening lectures! It only goes to show, you should never take our weather for granted!

Anyway, back to the Section. On the education front there are a few events that I would like to bring to your attention.

Firstly, on Wednesday March 10, Complete Weed Control has organised an education seminar at Burghill Golf Club, Herefordshire. The theme of the day is Fertiliser and Pesticide Application. If you would like to attend then please give Alan Abel a ring. It should be a good day. Oh, by the way Alan, thank you on behalf of the Section for sponsoring the fixtures cards this year. We are truly grateful.

Next, on March 17, we have the evening meeting at Ffos Las Racecourse with a talk and tour given by Mr Tim Long, Clerk Of The Course. Meeting starts at 5.30, I believe, so if you would like to attend then please give Steve Chappell a ring.

Next month's details will be given about the Section's Spring Seminar which is to be held at Royal Porthcawl GC.

A get well soon message now to my dear friend, Julian Bartlett Jones, Course Manager at Dinas Powys GC who recently broke his arm after slipping in the snow while negotiating the treacherous walk from the clubhouse to his maintenance units (sheds). Now I know what your thinking! But Julian swears he hadn't been in the bar and that the only reason he smelled of drink was because while lying in the snow, he was rescued by a trained St Bernard with one of those little barrels around his neck. I thought it had brandy in it and not Strongbow, but there you go! Anyway, he ended up getting plastered at the local hospital. Seriously, I hope you have a speedy recovery.

Another date for your diary is the annual IOG Dinner at Taffs Well RFC on Friday, April 23. Rumour has it that a certain Graham Cox, a very good singer and who has probably worked at more golf clubs than Henry Stead even, will be providing the entertainment! It's always a very good occasion. Please ring for details.

And finally, congratulations to Peter Lacey for winning the Mumbles Tidiest Garden Competition. Peter has spent a lot of time there recently and the prize is just reward for his efforts. The centrepiece of the garden is a 4ft 10" gnome that he sculpted himself. Asked where he got his

inspiration, Peter said, "I just asked Gerald Orme to stand there holding a fishing rod for a few hours!"

Or did I just dream that last bit?

Don't forget, any news will be gratefully received.

Ceri Richards
07831 168645



South West

I hope you all had an enjoyable week in Harrogate, I know the guys from Minch did! During Harrogate Week Matthew Worster, from Minchinhampton, was invited to the awards dinner. Matt had won an award for golf course environment 2009 with STRI.

The other Wednesday while the guys were at Harrogate, I remember waking up in the morning to some pretty large snowflakes falling. I live in Stroud which is at the bottom of the hill, we didn't have any settled on the floor yet. On the way to work, I normally pick Will Harris up (our mechanic). Will lives half way up the hill. I had spoken to Will just before I left, he said it wasn't too bad just yet. At the time he was right. I got to Will safely and we set on our way, only about 50 yards up the road and climbing a couple of hundred feet the snow become heavier MUCH heavier! The car started to slide and we looked at each other and said "What the hell are we doing this for". While going up the hill I remember passing a car that had crashed into a brand new Saab, gutted! When at the top, we had to pull over, we just weren't getting anywhere and if we were it wasn't safely. During this time the traffic started to pick up. Will and I decided to watch some of the traffic before setting off again. People are crazy in the snow.....You should have seen this coach trying to get up the hill. It got itself stuck just on the bend taking up both sides of the road. A couple of landys tried to pull it up but had no luck. The driver of the coach gave it another go, a couple of minutes with full throttle and plenty of sliding he managed to free him-

self, I really have never seen a coach go up a hill sideways, with just its back end dragging along the grass bank. Watching the rest of the traffic go up and down the hill was just as entertaining, it later took me an hour to get home, and normally all it takes me about 10 minutes. When I got there I went back to bed, I thought I'll start this day again a little later!

Now that Harrogate Week is behind us, I hope that the bad weather has finished showing its face. What a truly awful winter we have had. Not only has it prevented us from golf course projects, it's prevented me from having any football (me without football on a Saturday = unhappy bunny!). I went through a period during December and January of only having two games in eight weeks, this now means I'm a busy man in February and March with rearrangements, nine fixtures in February in fact.

You'll remember our raffle we had at our Christmas Golfing day, a donation was made to "Help for Heroes" for £421, and this was the money collected from the raffle at Taunton & Pickering. Nice work Nobby!

People, our fixtures for 2010 will be with you shortly, we have some fantastic venues in place this year, and the greenkeeper amateur is also back. Im sure your make every effort to attend as many as possible, I look forward to seeing you all this year.

Remember, that you could forward any information/stories that you would like to be feeding into our Section's column. Please feel free to drop me an e-mail or even a phone call. I look forward to hearing from anyone.

adam.l.matthews@hotmail.co.uk

Adam Matthews

South East Region



Kent

As I write this report in early February we are being hit being another bout of heavy snow compounding all the recent problems of travel, closed

courses and further loss of much needed revenue. Unfortunately, it was for those very reasons, which prevented my trip to Harrogate this year. I hope those of you who were able to justify making the journey found the show as useful and educational as it normally is.

The weather has played havoc with my preparations for the first outing of the year for our contingent of stalwarts to Prince's Golf Club on March 10. Personally, I haven't hit a ball since November last year so playing Prince's, which I hear is a course that demands accuracy, could be a tad tricky! Looking forward immensely to the day anyway and hopefully by then the conditions will have abated enough for another memorable day.

One piece of good news this month is the announcement of the birth of baby, Charlie. Congratulations to his very proud parents, Dan and Helen Jones.

Many thanks to all of the companies too who are still supporting us with sponsorship despite the lean times. A full list of all these noteworthy firms is displayed on our website. www.kentgreenkeepers.com

Don't forget you can contact me with any news, views, events or anything else you would like to see on these pages or on the website.

Sorry it's a short one this month. Must be the weather! (That's what I tell the wife anyway!)

Best of British
Rob Holland
07843 410755



London

Hello everyone,

Well another month has past. I am writing this having just got back from Harrogate. What a great week we had. It was great to see how many London Section members attended. The show like normal was very good with some interesting products on show. The educational seminars and workshops I attended were fantastic. BIGGA should be very proud of the standard of workshops they put on. I came

back feeling very motivated by the whole week. My staff that attended the week said they really enjoyed the experience and we are booked in for next year already.

We held an education day at Oaklands College on Feb 18 with over 137 attendees! That's got to be a record. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Andy Wight for organising a great day for us. I think everyone enjoyed it.

Let us know your feedback! We, the committee, and Andy Wight are thinking this should be an annual event. Is the time of year good for you? What about the Cost? Any speakers you would like to hear or what topics you would like covered?

Here is a reminder of fixtures coming up in the Section- The spring tournament, May 20, at Ealing Golf Club! Greg Evans is the greenkeepers' answer to Marmite, but this is your chance to play on the greens and experience what many golfers in the area are doing for just £20 including meals! This tournament is getting full already with a second list of entries for other section members. Remember to get your names in now so you don't miss out.

Remember this is also the National qualifier. The first and second place winners will get their expenses paid trip to the National Championship at The Berkshire.

The Summer Tournament will be held on July 21, at Muswell Hill Golf Club. We will have a BBQ after the golf with golf dress welcome all day, so no need for your shirt and tie!

The Turkey Trot will be held at Wyke Green Golf Club on December 2. This will be another great day and a chance to play in a team event!

Please if you have any questions or suggestions on the Section please contact us.

You can call or use the web site www.biggalondonsection.co.uk.

Matt Plested
07818410333

Section Notes

Please email your notes to scott@bigga.co.uk by the 5th of the month



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Surrey

Sorry for the non-appearance on Notes in the February magazine but there was a problem at HQ which I've spoken to Scott about.

January 4 2010. Minus 6 degrees centigrade, so brass monkeys beware for the ice-age cometh, although I still have reports that the ancient order of mad golfers is still playing in frost, snow and freezing conditions. With stimpmeter readings from 0 to 20 feet in length and 20 to 30 feet in height, these curious near-members of the human race continue to wander from temporary hole to temporary hole, hoping beyond hope that the green keepers have cleared the snow from the back 9 greens.

I wonder what the weather is like now that you are reading this in February 2010? Is it still freezing, as predicted, by our knowledgeable experts in the forecasting world, or has global warming returned. I hope so, for my heating bills have gone through the roof and I need you all this month to spend, spend, spend and forget about the so-called credit crunch.

Thank you Ashford Manor GC for your tremendous welcome and hospitality on December 9 and for allowing 60+ greenkeepers courtesy of your course. We had a fabulous day that included hot and delicious soup half way round and a turkey dinner that was exceptional. The back tees and long par fours were not a problem for me but for many players of shorter length it must have been difficult. But it was not that difficult for the winning team of Ron Christie, Jason Hunt, Jim Russell and Roger Tydeman. Runners up from Rotherhampton GC were Andy Foulds, Andy Hall, Andy Doulton and Jamie Cushing. Nearest the Pin, Gregory Richardson - Longest Drive, Ron Christie.

Look forward to seeing you all at the next golf day which will be the Gentlemen's Dinner at Walton Heath GC in March.

Sunday, February 7. I think it is time for me to re-enter the political arena but I have decided

that my party's name, on this occasion, should reflect what we all feel about our present MPs. 'BALLS' or Brian Against Lawful Larceny and Skulduggery. My party, if we can raise the necessary funding, will bring the politicians' expenses rules into general use so that we can all participate in helping ourselves to the UK's seemingly bottomless expenses pot. Of course, the rules and regulations that have proved so generous to the current lot must be changed so that only the most deserving of me, sorry I mean us, can collect the rewards which honesty, hard work and greed can justify. Hopefully, when I am elected, these new watertight rules will not yet have been resolved and my claim for my second home on the Isle of Wight will be passed without a second glance. All donations to 'BALLS' should be sent to my Political Manager Mr Douglas Iolanthe Fernie, care of the Fat Ox public house in Upminster.

But now, until fame and fortune are bestowed upon me it's DADDIES and MUMMIES of the Month. Congratulations to Alan Johnston, Epsom GC, and his partner, Nina, who said hello to their son Seth, 7lb 11ozs, on December 18. And congratulations to Charlotte and Mark Pennels, Drift GC, whose daughter, Isabella Georgina, 8lbs 14ozs was delivered in the early hours of February 2.

Surrey Section's golfing programme for 2010 is as follows and I am sure that you will join with me in thanking our secretary Mr William Ronald Christie for arranging such an interesting list of new and in one case stultifying venues. March 5, Gentleman's Dinner at Walton Heath GC; April 27, Spring team event at Laleham National GC; May 5; National qualifier at Burhill GC, winner of the Southern England Environmental Award; June 15, Summer tournament at Hoebridge GC; August 16, The McMillan Tankard, at Sunningdale GC; October 14; Surrey v Sussex v Essex, at Three Rivers GC Essex; November 2, England v Scotland, at Hankley Common GC, and December 7; Turkey Trot, at Guildford GC.

The Surrey Bowl knock out competition will be organised again this year by Roger Tydeman, Croham Hurst GC, and entry forms will be posted or

emailed soon.

Your committee met at Desert Springs GC, in Spain, on January 27. As an all expenses paid break the committee would like to thank you all for your generous if unknown benevolence. Just a joke, it was held as usual at Epsom GC for which we thank them for allowing us to meet there. We have a target to arrange three educational courses this year so please take a regular look at the website for updates. To encourage new young members under the age of 20 the Section will pay for their BIGGA membership in the first year. To see if you qualify refer to the Surrey Section website. The venue for our next meeting, on February 25 is a secret but flight tickets have been booked. Many thanks from your committee.

Sadly I report the sudden death of John Beaumont. John, deputy at Tyrrells Wood GC, also worked as course manager at Pырford and Hampton Court Palace GCs. We send our condolences to his family and friends.

Brian Willmott



Essex

I have plenty to report this month with our first committee meeting, a new website, plus a new arrival.

Firstly the new arrival. Congratulations go to our Chairman, Mark Stopps, and his wife, Katie, on the arrival on January 13, of Evie. She weighed in at 9lbs.3ozs, mother and baby doing well and Mark's not doing to bad either.

So due to Mark's good news, our first committee meeting was held back until January 26. I must say it was one of the best I have ever attended. It was very productive and we have some good ideas for the coming year. Watch this space.

Version 3 of our website is up and running. Though, only in a beta state, at the moment (that is, as I write this), things could well change over the next few weeks. There should be more to come about the site over the next few months. I would like to have your participation on this one though, with some mem-

bers tips and such like, I'm also looking into the possibility of a member's only section, which will require a login, this could contain a members forum and other information for members of our section only? I have to check things out with our Software Company and Internet Service Provider to see if this is possible, so I will hold this one until next month.

Golf dates at last for this season are as follows:-

South Essex. Tuesday, April 27. Smart Casual Dress. 12.30pm start time, One tee Start; Channels. Tuesday, June 22 Smart Casual Dress. 12noon start time, Two tee Start; Boyce Hill. Thursday, August 12. Jacket & Tie, Please. 12noon start time, Two tee Start. Benton Hall. Wednesday, September 29. Smart Casual Dress. 11.30am start time, Two tee Start.

Triangular Match. Thursday, October 14. Smart Casual Dress. TBA

The Essex, AGM. Team event. Wednesday December 2. Jacket & Tie, Please. 10am, Shotgun Start.

The Triangular event in October is picked from players who play consistently in our golf days throughout the season and who are available to play on the day. We are the hosts this year.

The annual Knockout competition is about to get underway, if you are interested in playing, choose your partner and sign up. The winners go to the National Championships in 2011. We have decided that whoever wins, qualifies to go to the Nationals. So if in future it's a member-trade team mix both the winners go from now on. The only stipulation we have is that there has to be at least one greenkeeper member in the team, we do not allow two trade members to play as a team. The rules will be amended and placed on our website.

The entry forms will be on their way to you all very soon, as will this year's calendar, Tom is working on it as I write this and hopefully it will be completed shortly and dispatched.

Plans are to hold an Education day out, somewhere! Paul O'Kane is working on a venue and he will be getting touch with you as soon as he has finalised the arrangements and venue. It is then planned to hold an Essex

Seminar later in the year; this is later than we first planned, as we did not want to clash with the seminar being held by the London Section in February.

If you have any news for this magazine or the website please contact me by email: essex-bigga@talktalk.net

Arnold Phipps-Jones
Press Officer.



East Anglia

Thorpeness Golf Club – 10 December 2009

Another 10 years and a bit gone then. Doesn't time fly, then again, maybe not! Hope you all had a good Christmas and New Year – if you can remember it, you didn't.

The Annual CMW sponsored Turkey Trot took place way back in December and what a cracker (excuse the pun) it was. A full field of 120 players took part on a fantastic course on a fantastic day.

The AGM took place before the meal started – this was to prevent any 'escapees'. It nearly worked; it just meant that some stayed upstairs instead of attending the meeting downstairs. May I humbly suggest the meeting is held near the bar next time!

As usual the Chairman's report was informative, the Treasurer's report added up and the Secretary's report was short and to the point (like me). The Committee was voted in on bloc, the meeting nearly lasted 10 minutes and that included the queen's – sorry Captain's speech given by Steve Lucock, and a round of applause.

We all raced back up the stairs in two seconds flat to re-claim our beer and seats ready for our well earned and beautifully prepared Christmas dinner.

After the silly hats and whistles came the prize giving. They were many and varied so don't go to sleep just yet! The Purdis 'A' Team came first with 54.3 – second was Lemon Squeeze (sounds like a pop group) with 55.1 – third was Roy Brittain's team with 56.1 and fourth were the Thorpeness 'A' team with 56.4.

Now comes the nearest and

longest and closest:-

Nearest the Pin on: 2nd Sponsored by Aitkens, Alan Elliot; 7th Sponsored by Bartram Mowers, David Hart; 10th Sponsored by Ernest Doe, Keith Titchell; 16th Sponsored by Tomlinson Groundcare, David Chiles.

Nearest the Pin in two: 6th Sponsored by Spearhead, Peter Howard; 11th Sponsored by Spearhead – Stuart Edge

Nearest the White line: 5th Sponsored by Baileys, James Burton

Longest drive: 14th Trade – Sponsored by BIGGAE/A – Mark Keysell; 13th Guest – Sponsored by BIGGA E/A – Alan Belton

Longest drive – Greenkeepers: 0-14 H/cap Sponsored by Lely UK, Robert Whiting; 15-21 H/cap Sponsored by Lely UK, Mark Broughton; 22-28 H/cap Sponsored by Lely UK, Mark Barber

The President presented Peter Howard with Ernie Hart's port for services to Greenkeeping on Peter's retirement. Well done mate. Who was it that put holly leaves in the raffle tickets (made Ian jump anyway).

Colin, our President, read out a letter from the BBC (Big Bobby Chesham), our Vice President, which was quite emotional and we wish Bob a speedy recovery from his pruning exploits and look forward to seeing him in the New Year.

The Loo Seat was presented to Ian Willett, for winning it the most times over the years, by Brian Lindors A colourful speech followed as is fitting with a Loo Seat.

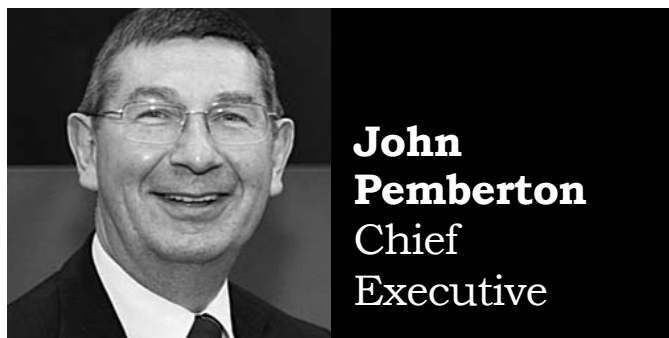
Meanwhile, back on the course, two buggies were spotted being driven by two young Greenkeepers about half an inch from a green! Please have the culprits shot before they breed.

Our thanks to the main sponsors of the day who were CMW and also to all our very loyal and generous trade members who are as follows:- Bartram Mowers, Aitkens, Ben Burgess, Tacit, Textron, John Deere, Hayter, Rigby Taylor, SISIS, Toro, Collier Turfcare, Leyley, Baileys, Sheriff and Earnest Doe.

We look forward to 2010 when we shall be at Saffron Walden, Purdis Heath, Eaton, Diss and Thorpeness.

Thanks again Thorpeness for a truly great day.

Mick Lathrope



John Pemberton
Chief Executive

Golf is a game steeped in tradition with a culture that is slow to change, but change it must if it is to succeed in the coming decades. We are all too well aware that gone are the days of lengthy waiting lists and golf clubs today are waking up to the fact that they need to become more commercially minded, more family orientated and more relaxed in their attitude towards dress code in the club house. Time, the state of the economy and changing lifestyles are all having an impact on the finances of clubs as more and more golfers move from club membership, adopting in many cases a policy of 'Pay and Play'.

Historically centred around greenkeeping, BIGGA is heavily reliant upon commercial revenue and now finds itself a victim of the changes in maintenance spending patterns as a consequence of diminished club budgets. 2009 was a challenge to us all, for some clubs it proved to be a better year than originally anticipated but nevertheless a year that I, for one, am glad is behind us.

What of 2010? Looking specifically at golf then I see another year of uncertainty and dwindling club memberships, another year of struggling to balance the books, another year of working harder and smarter to stand still. One of the Association's dilemmas is "How do we get all golfers to contribute towards the development and delivery of greenkeeper education in order to retain and recruit players through improved, environmentally and ecologically responsible, sports turf maintenance practices?"

Having said all of that I am delighted with the outcome of this year's Harrogate Week. We continue to get positive feedback from both exhibitors and visitors and the significant number of stands that have already been re-booked, some with increased space, is an indication of its success. The Staff Team at BIGGA HOUSE now have the job of putting together plans for January 2011 and part of the development of the Learning and Development programme will be the introduction of a one day 'High Level' conference. The absence of the major manufacturers next year will be a big blow to the financial success of the event however the Sales Team are looking at alternatives and are tasked with attracting new exhibitors that are relevant to the show. Let's also not forget that the BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition (BTME) is not just about a handful of key players, it's also essential that the many dozens of small to medium sized companies, many of whom have attended year after year, are equally, if not a more essential part of the success story.

We will continue to strive to give every exhibitor, regardless of size, good value for money and I encourage you, the Members, to support those that support your Association whether at Harrogate or elsewhere throughout the year.

Finally, how are those New Year resolutions going? I am already behind with mine, the poor weather and too much time at work have put paid to the golf practise and the diet's not looking too good either. Oh well, there is still time to make amends!

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Microsoft Office 2007 training is also available on request.





Diary of Events

Details of your section's forthcoming events in 2010 can now be found here...

March

Wednesday, March 10.

The Kent Section has arranged a golf event to be held at Princes Golf Club.

Contact Rob Holland at:
grassyars@hotmail.com

Wednesday, March 10.

In conjunction with Complete Weed Control the South Wales Section have organised a Fertiliser and Herbicide Open Day. To be held at Burghill Valley Golf Club from 9.30am until approximately 2.30pm.

Please contact Alan Abel on 07836286001 to register for this interesting day.

Thursday, March 11.

The Sheffield Section has organised an afternoon with Eddie Seaward from the All England Law Tennis Association, at Rotherham Golf Club starting at 1pm. Anyone requiring further Details contact James Stevens

Jimmy_jams20@hotmail.com
or telephone 07738 719614.

Wednesday, March 17.

The Devon and Cornwall Section has arranged a golf event to be held at Mullion Golf Club. Contact George Pitts at:
gpitts.yelverton@googlemail.com

Wednesday, March 17.

Site visit to Ffos Las Racecourse, Carmarthenshire. A chance to have a look around only the 3rd racecourse to be built in the UK in 80 years in the company of Clerk of the Course Mr. Tim Long and managing director David Thursfield. Ffos Las is located near Kidwelly and the visit starts at 5:30pm.

Arranged by the South Wales Section in conjunction with the IOG South Wales Branch and is sponsored by Countrywide Turf & Amenity.

Contact Steve Chappell at
chappell124@hotmail.co.uk

Tuesday, March 23.

The Cleveland Section's Spring Tournament will be held at Seaton Carew Golf Club from 10am.

Contact Ian Pemberton (Pembo) on 07791 695768.

Thursday, March 25.

Midland Region Seminar, to be held at Shirley Golf Club, Solihull, Birmingham. The subject for the day is "The Next Decade".

Contact Peter Larter at
Petelarter972@aol.com
or telephone 07866 366966.

April

Thursday, April 8

Northern Region Seminar to be held at Penrith Golf Club, Penrith, Cumbria. The subject for the day is "The Next Decade".

Contact Peter Larter at
Petelarter972@aol.com
or telephone 07866 366966.

Tuesday, April 13.

The East Section of Scotland's Golf Spring Meeting hosted by Kilspeindie Golf Club.

Contact Stuart Ferguson
at stuferg@btinternet.com
or 07961 630553.

Wednesday, April 14.

Site visit to 2010 Ryder Cup Course at the Celtic Manor Resort. Director of Golf Courses & Estates Management Jim McKenzie will be showing us around the first golf course to be purpose built to host the Ryder Cup. Following the tour there will be a presentation, when Jim will be joined by Chris Sealy to discuss the Ryder Cup at Valhalla in 2008.

Arranged by the South Wales Section, in conjunction with the IOG South Wales Branch, and is sponsored by Countrywide Turf & Amenity. Contact Steve Chappell at
chappell124@hotmail.co.uk.

Wednesday, April 14.

The East Midlands Section has arranged a golf event to be held at Erewash Valley Golf Club.

Contact Andy de Wet at
biggaeastmidlands@hotmail.com

Wednesday, April 21.

The Cleveland Section has arranged an evening event on Correct Blade Setting and Maintenance of your machines.

Contact Ian Pemberton (Pembo)
on 07791 695768.

Wednesday, April 21.

The North East Section Spring Competition is to be played at the City of Newcastle Golf Club.

Contact Jimmy Richardson
jamesrichardson217@btinternet.com

Wednesday, April 28.

The North Wales Sections Spring Tournament is to be held at Caernarfon Golf Club. Contact Jeremy Hughes at:
jezpro69@aol.com.

Date to be advised.

The Sheffield Section has organised a Machine Maintenance - Workshop Management day, in association with Golf and Turf Machinery, at the Hallamshire Golf Club. Time and date to be confirmed but anyone requiring further Details contact:

James Stevens
Jimmy_jams20@hotmail.com
or telephone 07738 719614.

**More dates
for your diary
next month**



Membership

Tracey Maddison provides a membership benefits update on some core benefits and services BIGGA provides its members

BIGGA Membership Benefits Update

Education, Learning and Development

Greenkeeper International (GI) is BIGGA's official magazine, representing views and presenting articles from top greenkeepers and groundsman throughout the country. As part of membership a copy is sent to all members directly to their door on a monthly basis.

Learning and Development is available to BIGGA members through the twenty-six sections located around the UK. Although each section operates independently if a member wishes to attend a seminar or course in another section just contact the local section secretary. A full list of events is now available in GI each month and a contact list is available on the BIGGA website. These events are also an excellent way to consult, exchange and compare work related issues with colleagues in your own industry.

Legal Assistance Helpline

During 2009 an average of 70 members per month contacted the legal assistance helpline for advice on various legal matters. The average call duration was almost 10 minutes per call and employment matters were the most common topic discussed.

Full Members of the Association can take advantage of legal advice 24 hours a day, seven days a week, arranged by Arc Legal Assistance. The protection is not just limited to supporting you, as Arc is on hand to make sure you and your family gets the best and most relevant protection you all need.

Not only can the legal assistance helpline offer advice on employment issues, consumer problems and personal injury cases but they can also give guidance on any personal legal matter, including will writing, moving home, matrimonial issues or discuss any motor offence cases.

Access to unlimited telephone legal advice is included as part of the service and the BIGGA scheme

also offers a reassuring benefit of covering the costs of arranging representation in Employment Tribunals and possibly internal disciplinary hearings with your employer. In addition, cover can extend to include legal costs incurred to deal with a consumer dispute and to pursue a personal injury claim.

There are many advantages of the BIGGA scheme over other telephone legal helplines, for example, the BIGGA scheme is available 24/7 on a freephone telephone number (within the UK) and there is somebody on the other end of the telephone to help immediately, no messages and call backs necessary.

Personal Accident Insurance Scheme

During 2009 over £13,000 was paid out by BIGGA insurers to BIGGA members who were unfortunate enough to have had an accident which caused them to be off work, but were fortunate enough to be aware of the Personal Accident Insurance Scheme and were able to claim payments while they were off work.

Stress and Debt Assistance Helpline

Both these helplines were introduced in 2009. Both available 24/7 these helplines offer a confidential, professional telephone counselling service which can help proactively manage stress at work or at home by providing immediate emotional support, advice and practical information and advice on a debt issue.

During 2009 over 20 members contacted these helplines to seek advice and guidance on a stress or debt related issue.

For a full list of benefits and services offered to BIGGA members visit the BIGGA website www.bigga.org.uk, or if you have any suggestions for membership benefits contact the membership department.

Being a member of BIGGA provides access to a whole host of useful, interesting and important information to help you in your role in sports turf management.



Contact Details

Tracey Maddison
traceymaddison@bigga.co.uk

Brad Anderson
brad@bigga.co.uk

Tel: 01347 833800
(option 1 for Membership)

Regional Offices

Scotland & Northern Ireland

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

Northern & Midland

Peter Larter
Tel: 01476 550115
Mobile: 07866 366966
petelarter972@aol.com

South East

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

South West & Wales

Jane Jones
Tel: 01454 270850
Mobile: 07841 948110
janejones1@btconnect.com



Peter Boyd Peter Larter



Clive Osgood Jane Jones

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

Welcome to New Members

For more information on new members log in to the Members Area of the BIGGA website:

www.bigga.org.uk

...and select 'Welcome New Members' from the Menu on the left hand side.

This month BIGGA welcomes the following new members...

Scotland

Peter Casbolt, Ayrshire
Grant Frogley, Central
Ross Glendinning, East
Kevin Lewis, Central
Lukas Mati, Central
Andrew McGarry, West
Inzer Price Gendron, Central
Stephen Robertson, Central
Alan Walter, Ayrshire

Northern Region

Tahir Albert, North West
Paul Barrow, North West
Tom Beardsworth, Northern
Steve Bowes, Northern
Phillip Dodds, Northern
Ian Hamilton, North East
Martin Ishmael, North West
Richard Ishmael, North West
Gareth Kendal, North West
Liam McKendry, Northern
Steven Nixon, Sheffield
Jon Scruton, Northern
Joe Tiplady, Northern
Mark Turner, North West
Jonathon Wilkin, North West

Midland Region

Ricky Amos, Mid Anglia
Peter Buckley, Berks/Bucks & Oxon
Matthew Hardman, Midland
Jason Higgins, Mid Anglia
Simon Reardon, East Midland
Roger Smith, Berks/Bucks & Oxon
Mike Tipping, Berks/Bucks & Oxon
Jordon Tromans, Midland
Sam Voss, East Midland

South East Region

Mark Barber, East Anglia
Sam Hoggett, Surrey
Matthew Webb, Surrey

S West/S Wales Region

Richard Bailey, Devon & Cornwall
Geoffrey Price, Devon & Cornwall
Kevin Tigg, South Coast
Daniel Townsend, Devon & Cornwall
Rob Worster, South West

International Member

Challe Antoine, Denmark
Leslie Cain, Belgium
Caralynn Cullen, Canada
Cameron Kusiek, Canada
Cathal Sexton, Republic of Ireland

Assistant Profile

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

Red Devil, Mike, wants to be a Firefighter, and when he's not watching Man United play, he enjoys repairing cars!



Name: Mike Stewart
Age: 44
Club: The Tytherington Club
Position: First Assistant
Nickname: "Stumpy"

- 1. How long have you been greenkeeping?**
28 years
- 2. What was it about the career that attracted you?**
Outdoor Life
- 3. If you weren't a greenkeeper what do you think you'd be?**
A Firefighter
- 4. Which task do you most enjoy doing and why?**
Cutting holes and setting a good test of golf.
- 5. Which task do you least enjoy doing and why?**
None.
- 6. What one thing - other than a pay rise - would improve the greenkeepers' lot?**
People having a greater understanding of what we actually do.
- 7. Hobbies?**
Golf, car repairs and walking
- 8. Favourite Band?**
Beautiful South
- 9. Which team do you support (football or otherwise)?**
Man United
- 10. What is your claim to fame?**
Appeared in various golf related magazines

What's your number?

Our regular and random profile of an industry figure continues with this month's lucky number...

Bill Hawthorn of 2iC comes under the spotlight



1. What is your position within the company?

I am the founder of 2iC Consultants and also a Director

2. How long have you been in the industry?

Since 1964 when I became the General Manager of BOIL.

3. How did you get into it?

I was an engineer at The Harland Engineering Company and Wright Rain was one of our clients. I used to design hydraulic and electrical systems for Jack Wright. One day Jack offered me a job and he said he had secured the distribution rights for Toro popups. He wanted me to find a market for them. I proposed golf and developed an electrical automated system. The first course to have one was Handsworth.

4. What other jobs have you done?

I was the founder of Watermation, (which I ran for 25 years), who developed the first practical two-wire irrigation control system and the first hand held remote control. I was also one of the founders of EGGA.

5. What do you like about your current job?

The opportunity and freedom to be a creative engineer over a wide range of challenges. Nothing gives me more pleasure than being called in to solve a problem.

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

The move from irrigation being seen as an ad hoc affair to properly designed systems incorporating advanced technology.

7. What do you like to do in your spare time?

I am a very active member of Cranleigh Baptist Church. I also project managed building a new church.

8. Where do you see yourself in 10 years time? Hopefully still alive and active!

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

Greenkeepers. It has been a pleasure to work in an industry where everyone is so pleasant and friendly.

10. What do you consider to be your lucky number?

Well I'm not really one who thinks of luck as such. I am more with "The harder you work the luckier you get" philosophy. I was born on Friday the 13th! so I guess that number will do.

11. Pick a number. 15

Bill has picked Maarten de Vroom from Greentoi

BUYERS' GUIDE



Lakeland Earth Works

Lakeland first and foremost specialise in Golf Course construction, alterations and earthworks. Furthermore, our successful partnership with Fineturf, have gained considerable experience in all types of sports ground construction & regeneration work. With over 35 years experience in the specialist earthworks industry, one thing that our experience has taught us is that successful golf course construction requires a thorough knowledge and understanding of the game.

During these projects we've had the pleasure of working with many professional golfers including Lee Westwood and Darren Clark together with some fantastic Architects, Designers, Course Mangers and Greenkeepers

The creation of a golf hole, whether it be a Green, Tee, Bunker, Lake or the redevelopment of a watercourse requires the ability to work alongside nature to provide an environment capable of sustaining the local wildlife habitat, whilst retaining its natural beauty. A sensitive approach combined with careful consideration and planning makes it possible to enhance the aesthetic appearance of the area whilst maintaining the absolute minimum disruption to play.

With a fully owned fleet of specialist earthwork plant and machinery, including 360 excavators with the latest power tilt attachments, dumpers and bulldozers, all fitted with low ground pressure tracks or tyres, coupled with fully trained, vastly experienced and qualified operatives, attention to detail, and of course full health and safety compliance make Lakeland an ideal choice for your projects.

Contact

Web: www.lakelandearthworks.com

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- PLANT
- PUMPS
- RUBBER CRUMB
- SLEEPERS
- SOIL FOOD WEB
- TOP DRESSING
- TREE MOVING
- TREE CLEARANCE
- TURF
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AGRONOMY

Harrogate week

EDUCATION
 16 - 20 January 2011

EXHIBITION
 18 - 20 January 2011

www.harrogateweek.org.uk

Visit www.bigga.org.uk and check out the latest chat from the greenkeeping industry

TIME TO TALK
www.bigga.org.uk

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