

# Managing with less

Malcolm Peake reports on an enlightening workshop held at Temple Golf Club

**Over the years Temple Golf Club has received numerous calls for advice and support from other golf clubs that have adopted, or are considering using, a more natural style of course management.**

The Club is now working closely with the Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust and the two bodies decided to host an evening workshop entitled, "Managing with Less", sponsored by Symbio, which was at the end of February.

The aim was to explore the economic and environmental benefits of a sound and sympathetic course management policy, while maintaining the quality and playability of the golf course and respecting and positively contributing to the indigenous and social environment.

The workshop drew an audience of Secretary/Managers, Chairs of Green, Course Managers and greenkeepers from a wide area.

Since the early 90s, Temple has worked hard at reducing course management costs and enhancing biodiversity without compromising on the quality demanded by today's golfer. The workshop told the "warts and all" story of the journey.

Michael Barratt, broadcaster and former advisor to the R&A Golf Course Committee, chaired the evening and welcomed the guests, which included the Club President's wife, Strilli Oppenheimer, a world renowned environmental conservationist.

Temple's Secretary, Keith Adderley, spoke, not without a little irony, of the problems currently facing golf clubs. He posed the question "Why do we need to manage with less?" Many clubs are suffering from reduced income, and therefore having to reduce expenditure, yet golfers have increasing expectations.

What golfers see on TV, with tournaments being played around the world in eternally summer conditions and on golf courses especially prepared for one week of







the year, bears little relationship to the real world of golf played in the UK during the winter months.

Keith explained the issues affecting clubs comparing the expectations of the “Old Guard” of traditional club members, the lifeblood of any golf club, and the “New Kids on the Block” being those who were juggling an exceedingly busy workload with family commitments, with retirement seeming further and further away, and trying to squeeze a round of golf in whenever and wherever possible.

The time pressure of work and home life meant that most were unable to commit to joining a golf club full time but when they took to the course their expectations were even higher because their leisure time was so precious.

Keith expressed the opinion that communication was the key and stressed the importance of golf clubs having a robust Course Management Policy Document in order to ensure continuity and protect the Crown Jewels.

Keith talked about the benefits of holding informal members’ liaison meetings and the use of the internet and email to inform and educate members about what was happening on their golf course.

He also reminded the audience, that normal business principles

should apply - even to golf clubs.

Course Manager, Martin Gunn, then spoke eloquently of how a sound course management policy benefited the playing quality of the course and the indigenous natural environment.

He talked of how the low input natural poverty grasses had been restored with as much as 85% fescue/bent present on some greens and at worst 60% on others, and explained the substantial savings this made.

Martin then discussed how some clubs are using mains water at £1.17 per cubic metre, where as at Temple the club is using borehole water at £.09 per cubic metre, and since the early 90’s has reduced the quantities used by nearly 70%.

He also talked of huge savings in fertilisers reduced by nearly 75%, and where Temple used to apply 7/8 applications of pesticide to the Poa dominated greens, it is now normally only one application, which at around £800 a time, is a really big saving.

Martin discussed how course management objectives could best be achieved and provided guidance on quality standards with an emphasis on the benefits of using the measuring tools now available.

Soil moisture content could be measured by a probe, firmness by

**“Martin discussed how course management objectives could best be achieved and provided guidance on quality standards with an emphasis on the benefits of using the measuring tools now available”**







a Clegg Hammer and trueness by conducting holing out tests using a specially designed HOT ramp (shown).

Martin went on to explain that this information could be used to assist in preparing a golf course for play in sympathy with the way the architect, in Temple's case Willie Park Junior in 1909, intended.

He pointed out the delights of playing the British style of golf on firm, fast greens where shot-making skill and imagination are the name of the game, rather than the American style of target golf to softer surfaces.

He pointed out that this was now even being recognised in the USA where in 2010, the then President of the USGA, stated the need to look at golf differently, where brown, as opposed to lush green, was beautiful.

After supper, Gavin Bennett, of the BB&O Wildlife Trust, took the floor and talked about the benefits, including cost savings, of a less

intensive management style on the biodiversity. He discussed the management of the chalk downland meadow roughs and of their rarity and value as a UK priority habitat, which contain many nationally and internationally rare and endangered species.

Gavin pointed out that the meadow roughs at Temple represented 49% of those present within the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and added that as in excess of 80% of the natural grasslands had been lost nationally since 1950, this was a very valuable asset.

He explained the importance of scrub as a crucial component of the habitat mosaic and how it should be maintained sensitively with work completed by the end of March to avoid disturbance to nesting birds.

He talked about the restored indigenous hedgerows and of their continued management, as well as grant funding available for scrub

and ancient woodland management. He suggested the woodlands would benefit with varying the structure to promote more diversity particularly for ground flora and suggested most of this work could be achieved when the weather was too bad to work on the primary golf course areas.

He finally talked about the advantages of golf clubs working with their local Wildlife Trusts and to an agreed management plan.

He explained that many rare and endangered species had been identified at Temple eg 425 species of moths and 24 of the 57 species of butterflies found in the UK which proved that Temple was an exceptionally valuable environment although there were still many areas where improvements could be made.

An open discussion and exchange of views, ideas and experiences and Michael Barratt closed the evening, with a vote of thanks to all at Temple.

Malcolm Peake is author of *Confessions of a Chairman of Green and A Natural Course for Golf*, available through STR!



# Alternative mowers

Take a look at the range of mowers offered by John Deere, Ransomes Jacobsen and Toro and it is soon clear that, between them, they will offer pretty much every model to suit the mowing demands of most greens, tees, roughs and fairways. But what if you are looking for something different? James de Havilland investigates...



*LEFT: By combining flail mowing, collection and zero turn agility, the Amazone Profihopper is well suited to mowing awkward areas. The powered collection system also enables it to cope with litter and leaves, with the claim that the 700 litre hopper can be fed up to 1,000 litres of material.*

*RIGHT: Zero turn mowers took their time to become established in the UK but now they are widely used in both amenity and sports turf sectors. The pictured SCAG Cheetah is a heavy-duty model designed to be operated for extended periods, with enhanced levels of operator comfort.*



*BELOW: Cricket square and bowling green mowing is the typical application for mowers such as the Lloyds Paladin. But as with Allett and Dennis, these British built mowers are offered in designs that may suit your mowing needs for tees and greens.*

**Sit down and tot up the number of pedestrian cylinder mower models available and you will soon realise that by the time you take every variation into account there are probably nearly 100 different models to choose from.**

Sounds a lot, but few of these are designed to keep golf greens and tees in trim. In addition, much of the variety will be down to detail specifications, such as mowing width, cylinder size and blade numbers. Not to mention various options to include groomers et al.

In other words, once you home in upon key demands your walk-behind mower choices are narrowed. Sheffield-made ATT is one of the newer additions to the walk behind market with its patented

So there is perhaps more choice than you may think among pedestrian cylinder mowers. But what about ride-on 'fine turf' cylinder models? Once you remove John Deere, Ransomes Jacobsen and Toro Hayter from the equation you are left with Shibaura, imported by FGM Claymore, and Baroness, from Kyoeshia UK. At least these two 'brand' offerings are the only ones that spring readily to mind.

#### **What are you looking for?**

Where it starts to get more varied is when you look beyond cylinder mowers. Here there is a much more diverse choice to include a wide choice of rotary and even flail mowers. These can include ride-on, pedestrian and tractor mounted variants too. Add sub-categories, such as zero turn, and you soon



*The latest generation of walk behind greens mowers from ATT combines leading edge technology with the greenkeeping expertise of its inventor, John Coleman.*

*INFINiCut comprises the INFINiPower power unit and the SMARTCut grass cutting cassette (above) to create an advanced dedicated greens and tees mower.*

cassette cutting system while certain mowers, such as the pedestrian walk-behind models offered by Lloyds, Dennis and Allett, also tend to be associated more with cricket, tennis or bowls than greens and tees. The 'big three' have set a design 'template' for pedestrian greens mowers and because of that have come to represent the default first choice for some. That is not to say the aforementioned British built mowers are unsuitable for mowing greens and tees. Far from it. It is more that they just tend to not be considered. The same could also be applied to other alternatives such as the Baroness LM56 greens mowers. The latter have a loyal following with a growing number of clubs but many courses appear not to have given them a try.

end up with so much choice it is hard to know where to start looking.

As is always the case, choosing the right tool is made easier if you identify your key demands. Take mowing steep banks that cannot be accessed by a ride-on mower. If the area to be cut is relatively small and they are mown to keep growth under control as opposed to be trimmed to a fine finish, you may well use a brushcutter to do the job.

But what about smaller banked areas adjacent to a bunker? A mower like the Allen Hovertrim, now made by Hayter, is a bit like a cross between a 'Flymo' and a brushcutter, with a mowing width of up to 56cm. Handle extensions allow the mower to be operated down a steep bank, allowing the user to stand on level ground.







Another interesting range of mowers is produced by Lastec. The company's out-front Articulator decks come in designs suitable for use with ride on models by companies to include John Deere and Kubota, with rear mount options for tractors too. The company also produce its own ride-on models. A key Articulator feature is the ability of the r deck to follow ground contours, as pictured.

These useful mowers may be a better choice than a brushcutter for this type of work.

### Need to reduce labour?

Do you have to keep a driving range mown but find it plays second fiddle to main course mowing due to constraints on labour? A mower like the Etesia ETm Robot can be set up and then left to get on with the mowing with very little input. In broad outline, these models just mow away, following no set pattern.

Sensors prevent them bumping into marker posts or other obstacles, including those that may be moved around. A guide wire prevents the mowers straying from a set mowing area, so there is no worry that they will drift off where they are not wanted.

### Lateral thinking

Other mowing 'systems' can also be worth a look such as the Amazon Profihopper. Think zero-turn ride-on with flail mower and auger fed 700 litre capacity collector and you get the idea.

This type of unit can be used to mow, scarify, collect or mulch. It is the type of machine that can be a real time saver when you need to deal with leaves, litter or divots. Clubs with large areas of non-golf grass can find tools like these a real time saver too.

You do not need to have a collector with a flail mower either,

STM and others offering a range of pedestrian flail as well as ride on mowers that can tackle considerable overgrowth. These are just the sort of machine to bring out to control boundaries beyond the rough, periodic control being the key demand.

Then there are tractor powered rotary mowers, such as the Trimax Merlin and the Progressive series brought in by The Grass Group. As an alternative to a traditional tractor trailed cylinder gang, these mowers can make an ideal partner to a ride-on fairway mower, coping with longer wet grass and being ideal for out of season maintenance mowing. They should follow contours well too.

Those that 'conservation' mow small areas of a course may want to carry out just one cut in late autumn. A traditional cutterbar mower, such as the once ubiquitous Allen Motor Scythe, can be just the tool for this type of work.

A 'two-wheeled tractor' fitted with this type of mower can tackle really long 'meadow' grass. Suppliers include Tracmaster with its BCS models.

As is always the case, it pays to stop and think back to what your mowing needs include. Although there are seldom really new advances, developments such as the Etesia Robot models show there are alternatives to traditional mowing systems.



Kubota modified the pictured 40hp STV mid-mount rotary mower for a disabled operator. Fitted with a hoist and hand controls, the mower operator can mount and dismount the tractor from a wheelchair without help from a third party.

Etesia now markets s ETm Robot models throughout Europe, the pictured ETm 105 featuring five twin-bladed cutting units. Designed to operate day and night, the mower will work with little attention between annual services. Will cover up to 20,000m<sup>2</sup>, adopting a random mowing pattern to prevent developing wheel tracks.



ABOVE: Traditional tractor trailed gangs still have a place on many golf courses, but for some a rotary alternative is preferred. The pictured Trimax Merlin is designed to produce a high quality finish over wide areas to include fairways.





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## Section Notes

Please email your notes to  
[scott@bigga.co.uk](mailto:scott@bigga.co.uk)  
by the 5th  
of the month



All the latest news from your Section

# Around The Green

## Scotland



### Central

On behalf of everyone in the Section I would like to say a massive thank you to Peter Boyd and wish him the very best in his retirement from his role as Administrator for the Scottish Region these past 14 years. Peter, we hope you have many good golfing days in the future and that some of them will be at our outings.

Speaking of which, the spring outing is very nearly upon us at Craig on April 17 and entries, with the entry fee close on April 11. We have no more educational events confirmed for the near future but are trying to set up an evening talk with John Kaminski, a lecturer from Penn State, who will be in the area this summer. Members should keep an eye on the website for this or any other things we set up.

We will mail shot everyone we have an email address for as normal. However, there are a huge number of emails coming back to us undelivered. If you haven't been receiving emails from either Gordon McKie or me on a regular basis, then check the website where we will have a list of these names and you can contact us. Maybe we have typed it in wrongly or you have changed your email address and forgotten to notify BIGGA. One event, which is taking place on April 26 is an Environmental Seminar being staged by St Andrews Links Trust in The Scores Hotel, in St Andrews. Entry is free but you have to register so numbers for food can be calculated. You and your Club Manager/Secretary should have information about this already but if you haven't

then please contact me.

Finally for this month congratulations to John Watson who has become the Course Manager at Downfield GC.

Gordon Moir



### East

Here is the April news from the East Section, up here in Scotland land. Hope you are well.

The Committee had its monthly meeting on February 21, where we discussed a number of ideas that could help and improve our Section run smoothly in the coming months.

Our education lads are trying hard to initiate seminars, workshops, or site visits for us to enjoy and our secretary will keep you informed of any future education events.

Hopefully we shall have some social events later in the year, as well as that there has been a couple of different ideas brought to the table.

There has been some feedback collated from green staff in and around the Edinburgh area. These issues will be discussed further at Section level to see if we can improve the level of attendance at BIGGA events in our Section.

We look forward to the Scottish Conference next week in Dunfermline, where we will enjoy many good speakers passing on experiences and expertise in their chosen fields.

It will be Peter Boyd's last event that he will be organising for us and the East Section would like to say: 'THANKS PETER!' for all the help and enthusiasm he brought as Scottish Regional Administrator. Good Luck for the future from us all.

Look out for the invitation for the spring outing at the Glen

Golf Club soon. The course is looking good already, Des! I hope you have got some good hole positions in mind for us.

Remember if you want to be considered for the Patrons' award at the end of the year, the more you attend the better chance you have at picking up this exceptional award.

If you have any news or views please do not hesitate to email me at: [s.crawford@live.co.uk](mailto:s.crawford@live.co.uk).

Stewart Crawford,  
Chairman.



### Northern

As I am writing this report in early March the weather has been really good to us and I am getting through the spring work, hopefully this will continue into the summer and we can have a good season weather-wise because it has been a few years and the golf course would benefit from it.

I would also like to say on behalf of the Committee thank you to Ben Brookes for all his hard work that he has done for the Committee over the last few years, and to wish him every success in the future as he has left the greenkeeping business. It's a shame because more people are leaving and it's hard to replace them in this financial climate, but that is another story.

There is also some movement in the greenkeeping world. Callum Anderson has left Aspire Golf Centre and joined Newmachar Golf Club as an Assistant Greenkeeper and we wish him every success.

Also, it's not long until the Spring Outing which should be a great day at Royal Aberdeen, hopefully the weather will be kind to us and will look forward to seeing you there.

If you have any information I can put into the magazine please feel free to get in touch with me as it would be helpful to try and get as much information as possible to you. On a final note we have set up a Facebook page, please feel free to like it because we will be posting information on there, and hopefully we can get some suggestions from you.

Ross Macrae

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### West

Started to type this up and funny enough it was raining outside. Oh what a surprise, when are we ever going to get some decent weather, as in dry conditions, whoops! Sorry, I forgot, we had two weeks of good weather in February didn't we? That must be our quota for the year. Guess what guys they're moaning in the East for not having enough rain and how dry it is. Never mind, there is always a bright side somewhere. Don't ask me where, but something will cheer us up.

So what's happening in the Section recently, other than moaning about the weather? Well a recent Seminar held at Renfrew Golf Club took place with 20 plus in attendance, organised by Fraser Ross and Everris, covering subjects such as feeding programmes, fungicide treatment, and sand materials. The day seemed to go very well and all those in attendance found the content extremely interesting, so many thanks to Gary Smith and Craig Aitken for their contributions, and well done to Fraser and Gavin for organising the day.

Next the Scottish Conference at Dunfermline, which saw 190



people attend a very excellent day of speaking from seven key speakers, Graeme Francis and Robert Smith, on irrigation; Robert Patterson, on the Journey to the Walker Cup; Grant Moir, on Setting up your Course; Les Howkins, on Bunker redevelopment, Dave Vrooman on Optimum nutrient efficiency, and, finally, John Philip on The golf ball development. I would say that I found all the talks to be very interesting and there was a good diversity of subject matter, interesting to both young and old. Congratulations to all the speakers and thanks to Ian Macleod for chairing the morning session, and all those who attended which helped make the retiring gift presentation to Peter Boyd all the more poignant.

May I take this opportunity to thank Peter for organising such a successful event, and for his excellent service to the Scottish Region over the last 14 years. He has helped establish a very well organised run region and I hope he enjoys his retirement over the coming years.

May I also take this opportunity to thank the patrons for their continued support of the Scottish Region and I hope this will continue in the future to help build on what has been established.

Finally, thanks to the catering unit and the organisational team at Carnegie Conference Centre for the expert way in which they conduct their business and the attitude they convey with nothing being a problem. Well done, Refa, Janice, Allan, and Stuart.

Please remember the Spring Outing is at Cardross Golf Club on May 10 and the Scottish National Tournament is at Ratho Park on June 20.

Should anybody have any information to pass on then please contact me on 0141-942-5554, or 07790823914, or by e-mail to [stuart.taylor@glasgowgolfclub.com](mailto:stuart.taylor@glasgowgolfclub.com).

Stuart Taylor

## Northern Region



### North East

Congratulations on a first class February magazine especially the BTME Review. It was good to see so many pages given to photos. Did you see anybody you knew? On page one we had

Terry Charlton of T.S.L, if it's not him then it's a good look-a-like; then Andrew Black and David Common, both from Rickerbys of Hexham, attending the Celebration dinner on Tuesday night, in fact, Andrew is in twice. Lastly, Martin Woods, of Bedlingtonshire Golf Club, attending a seminar, I'm not sure if he's having a catnap or not,

This year the section sees two more Head Greenkeepers retiring, these being Graham Smith of Whitley Bay, and George Gainford of Prudhoe Golf Club. Best of luck to you both, maybe we will see you at section golf days. No excuses now lads, I will continue to send you notifications of future events.

I was expecting some new members to be joining the section from Close House. There was a rumour that four people were going to do just that. Me thinks I'd better chase them up quickly before they change their minds. Also two staff from Longhirst Hall were doing the same, looks like I'm going to be busy. Sorry lads if you have joined already, as this news is for six weeks in advance.

And lastly, when I was helping out at BTME on the Museum, I was reading the BGGG Minutes from 1912 and came across the following (these are to do with the North East Section by the way): 1946 Mention was made of a Northumberland Greenkeepers Ass, 1957 The N.E. Section, now defunct, where a report came to light that a golf tournament had been held in the North East under the BGGG banner, the secretary to investigate and a couple more nationally, 1948 wages recommendation: Head Greenkeeper £6-10s to £8-00pw, and finally, 1955 golf clubs to be asked to pay £10 for protective clothing. My how things change over the years.

Jimmy Richardson



### Northern

I'll start by making a huge apology to those guys who I offended with the comments in the notes regarding my good friend, James Bentley. I now realise that my sense of humour does not wash with everyone. People who know me come to expect wit and banter as the norm, especially at work and

when we socialise. I had spoken to James before the comments went in and have apologised since. He saw the funny side, as I knew he would, but it was wrong and I regret it. I have said sorry to John and the rest of the Committee and now to you guys. Sorry again.

You should all have the flyer with the fixtures on and entered them on your wall planners. A big thanks goes to Greensman Ltd for their kind sponsorship of this flyer. It's truly appreciated.

I have been up to Easingwold golf club on a reconnaissance mission, to talk shop and menus with the Secretary. It is looking in great nick. The first golf day should be a great day out.

That's all folks, please let me know if you have any goss, movements at your places and so on, and I will gladly pop them in the notes.

Andy Slingsby  
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### North West

Summer should be well and truly upon us by the time you read this!

I am currently sat in my office its 14°C outside and it is March 1. "Unbelievable" for the time of year! The potassium nitrate has been applied, now it's fingers crossed that we get that early kick-start.

One person moving last month was the Deputy at Mere GC who has moved to St Anne's Old Links. Good luck with the move Greg.

Unfortunately there isn't a lot to tell you about this month, combined with the fact I've been out of the country, so sorry about the lack of news. Hopefully I will supply you with a bumper edition next month.

The spring tournament is to be held at Leasowe GC, the times and dates will be sent to you very shortly on your fixture list. Anybody wishing to play in the tournament; please contact Phil Dewhurst - 07768180604 as he is the compiler of the start sheet.

So let's have a good turn out at Leasowe GC, and I will see you there.

Spencer Lloyd-Pye  
[spencer@lloyd-pye.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:spencer@lloyd-pye.freeserve.co.uk)



### North Wales

Here we go the season starts now, with the fixture lists filling up and the grass heading skywards!

On catch up, I hope everyone who went to the Charlie's Groundcare utility vehicle demo day enjoyed themselves as much as I did. The bacon trap was lovely, but that test track they set up was amazing, and if I ever need the use of a laxative I'll only need to think of that track to remedy the situation!

The Spring Tournament takes place at my home course at the Vale of Llangollen on the 25 of this month and it's normally based as an individual Stableford and National Championship qualifier.

I hope you all can play as well as Paul Roberts of Baron Hill did in August last year, when he hit a course record on his home course with a 62; then in the same week went to St Deiniol where he's also a member and hit a course record of 61, and to top it off became Club Champion at both courses.

We're making an appeal for e-mail addresses as we now have our own e-mail address - [bnwales@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:bnwales@hotmail.co.uk) - so if you can e-mail your e-mail address, name, address and any thoughts or needs you have of an educational nature we can then send out fixture lists and seminar/golf day entry forms direct for you to download and better formulate our sections educational needs.

In Section news the aforementioned Paul Roberts, and Rhys Butler, have made it on to this year's Support team at The Open. I know you both will do our Section proud.

I think that's about it for now, please keep your news coming in you've no idea how difficult it is some times to fill a column with no news to use!

All the best until next month,  
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## Sheffield

We now enter April and all our spring renovation will be complete and the golfing season will be creeping up on us quicker than expected. With the continued exposure of golf on our TV sets the expectations of golfers is ever increasing, which can lead to pressures of creating something that is just not ready to be created yet. It all takes time and is a lesson for us all from time to time that patience is a virtue and with the correct management methods the golfers will get the conditions they want, when the course is ready to give it to them.

On the Section front we have found a replacement for our long serving Section Treasurer, Mark Crawshaw from Hallamshire GC has agreed to take on the position and I'm sure he will be a very good replacement for Alan. The role of Treasurer isn't an easy one but with all our support I'm sure Mark will settle into the role with no problems.

I must at this point once again thank Alan for his service. He has covered many roles and has put in a lot of time for the benefit of the Section. I hope you will all join me and thank him for his service and we hope to see Alan at Section events for years to come.

Hopefully you will all have received your fixture cards by now. If you haven't then they will be posted on Facebook and Twitter so check us out.

That's all for now, have a good month,

James Stevens

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## Midland Region



### East Midlands

By the time you are reading this month's notes the vast majority of your Easter eggs will be but a memory and all your April Fool's jokes will be

long forgotten as the workload of the greenkeeper starts to ramp up and we start to think about showing off our courses to their maximum potential to members, visitors and societies.

Maybe you have been at your course for a while and 'know the ropes', always an advantage, or perhaps this is your first summer and you are watching carefully, asking colleagues, listening and learning about the behaviour of your new workplace. For all of us it is a relationship, and like all relationships respect and understanding plays a huge part in that relationship's success.

April is always a month of challenges; just ask Asa English who has recently completed the Brighton Marathon AGAIN! Well-done Asa. Although your abilities are a long way ahead of mine, I know just how much time, effort and commitment it takes to complete the training schedule, let alone the race itself. I have been fortunate enough to complete the London Marathon on two separate occasions, and no it wasn't me in the deep-sea diver's suit. My biggest obstacles on both of those days were a couple of Kenyan runners and a guy on a motorbike in front of me who wouldn't move out the way. Rather selfish of him I thought as traffic is banned on race day?

You should all have now returned your Spring Tournament invites to be held at the end of this month. As stated in previous months' notes, this year there is only one National Championship qualifying competition so, if you haven't, please dig them out and return them ASAP or email your intention to attend to Nick Miles or me at [biggaeastmid@gmail.com](mailto:biggaeastmid@gmail.com). In fact, as an inclusive Section, any suggestions or opinions that you have on how the Section should be run please also use this email address to communicate them to the Committee.

Due to 'Pit Crew' issues I am unable to report on the results of our Toro-sponsored Go-Karting event. Hopefully May's edition of GI will let me enlighten you on all the incidents and accidents of the evening.

Finally, my personal note this month is for Pete Larter, our Regional Administrator. Pete is retiring from his role at the end of May after many years of service to BIGGA and the East

Midlands Section. I'm sure that those of you who know Pete will join me in thanking him for his help, support, advice, opinions and jokes over the years. Good luck Pete!

Tally Ho!

Greg Skinner

07970 095264



### Midland

Well here we are then, April. The month that is the month before the month that is the month of May (try reading that after a glass or two of Shiraz Cabernet). Such brings me to the full emergence of our courses in their ever-splendid glory, and the hatching of the May Fly (If you're not a fisher, duffers' fortnight).

As I'm sure you can tell, I don't have a lot to report this month so here's a light funny; a greenkeeper (whom shall remain nameless for legal reasons) was brushing greens and an early player asked, "What does that do?" The greenkeeper responded, "It hurts my legs".

Talking about funnies, we come to our sponsor's of this month's calendar page our old friend Nigel Tyler/Sherriff Amenity. Nigel should have been an Otter of Briton, not a Beaver! A little humour is a many splendid thing, and the world without it would surely be a far sadder place. Jest aside, Nigel and the products of Sherriff Amenity can be relied upon. For your fert's and pesticides and other related products please contact Nigel on: 07989 548 058 or visit [www.sherriffamenity.com](http://www.sherriffamenity.com) The Section's thanks for your long and continued support.

Chris Stilgoe, Course Manager at Great Barr GC, and his wife, Lyndsay, have had a baby boy, Benjamin, born in February weighing 8lb 4oz. Congratulations to them all.

Don't forget our first golf day of the year coming up at The Chase GC, on Wednesday, May 23. This will also be the day we draw the first round of the Everis Doubles Competition. Please get your entries in for both to Gary Cunningham as soon as possible. Details of all our golf

days and seasonal education events can be found on our website [www.biggameidland-section.co.uk](http://www.biggameidland-section.co.uk)

The klinkhammer addict.

Sean McDade

## South East Region



### Surrey

Monday March 5. The sun has just thrust his head through the clouds but it is very cold. This is not from personal experience, the kitchen fitters who arrived at 8 o'clock, and woke me, told me from the other side of the letterbox. I have now let them in after checking their ID cards and they are now doing what they do.

Please tell me what's happening in your part of Surrey as Ron Christie has threatened to take my laptop away if I continue writing about my fascinating life at the old people's home here in Dorking. Have you read Ron's yearly report? Tony Bremer has, and was most upset that Ron failed to mention that the England v Scotland match at Hankley Common GC was another resounding victory for ENGLAND. Personally, I have no particular interest as I am now the 10th reserve and not wanted by either team. It is true, I must admit, that my golf is a little poor at the moment but there are few who are as enthusiastic, be it in a rather confused and uncoordinated way.

The programme for 2012 is as follows: May 22. Blackmoor GC, Spring Tournament; Date TBA Worpleston GC, Cresta Cup. Date TBA Sunningdale GC, McMillan Tankard. October 8&9, Irvine Bogside GC, National Championship; November 6 Hankley Common GC, England v Scotland - does anyone need a caddie? November 21, Section v Secretaries, The Berkshire GC; December 7, Turkey Trot, Guildford GC.

Well that's it for another month except to inform you that, after falling of my ladder, I am now nearly back to my old self and the memory is returning slowly.

Brian Willmott