

of taking steps to deny the algae one or more of these growth stimuli.

Logically the first step is to consider ways of removing excess nutrients from the water. In the long term we should try to identify the source of nutrients leaching in to the pond or lake and attempt to correct this.

This will be simpler if the source of pollution is under the same ownership as the pond or lake.

There are many golf courses where the water features are polluted by fertiliser applied to other parts of the course. It may be possible to reduce the amount of fertiliser applied to the land nearby and so minimise the nutrients leaching into the water.

Alternatively, conventional fertilisers could be replaced by products with controlled release characteristics.

Over the years fertiliser manufacturers have developed a variety of techniques for extending the release period of their products to achieve a reduction in clipping yields as well as cutting down on nutrient leaching.

Some products employ a nitrification inhibitor to increase the period of nitrogen availability while others use organic nutrition sources that cause a delay in nutrient release while microbial degradation takes place to unlock the plant foods and make them available to the plant.

In principle, the use of controlled release fertilisers aims to put much lower amounts of nutrient onto the ground, since there will be less wastage through leaching.

Probably the best type of controlled release mechanisms for reducing leaching are the products employing a polymer coating where the nutrients are released in response to temperature alone (e.g. 'Multigreen' from Headland Amenity).

In periods of prolonged rainfall the micro-pores on the surface of the coated granules will react to the cold rain by closing up, preventing further release from the nutrient core.

After the rain, surface temperature on the granule will rise and re-open the pores allowing nutrient release to resume.

Controlled release fertilisers are more expensive than conventional feeds but they do have other benefits that can reduce labour and machinery maintenance costs, which may help to balance the case for using them to improve the quality of a water features nearby.

The next strategy to consider is the removal of nutrient from water



Bloom caused by Cyanobacteria – photograph by kind permission of Mike Hopwood - wightfishing.co.uk

using specially selected species of bacteria that thrive in nutrient-rich water.

There are several manufacturers that can supply bacterial cultures in freeze dried forms (e.g. 'Lake-Pak' from Becker Underwood and 'Pro-Crystal' from Everris).

They are usually packaged as measured doses in water soluble sachets to make application very simple.

These products can only be used from late spring onwards, when the water temperature is sufficient to sustain the growth and proliferation of the bacteria they contain.

A minimum temperature of 10°C and water pH within the range of 6 to 8 will provide ideal conditions for these bacterial based products to work.

Refer to product manufacturer's literature for rates of use and re-treatment recommendations, as these can vary with the product.

It will be necessary to measure the approximate volume of the water requiring treatment to determine how much product is needed.

Aeration of the water is beneficial for the development of bacteria so, if possible, use an aerating fountain to enhance the effectiveness of these products.



Measure the volume of water body

The traditional method of removing nutrients from water involves the placement of barley straw bales or 'sausage shaped' bunds (made by netting barley straw with the type of machine they use to wrap real Christmas tree at the garden centre) - at strategic points in the pond or lake. Barley straw rots in the water, releasing substances that inhibit the growth of algae. It doesn't actually destroy algae already growing in the pond; instead, it prevents the reproduction and spread. The breakdown and decomposition of barley straw in the water is thought to release a number of chemicals that react together in the presence of sunlight

Multigreen 20-0-32 – coated prill magnified





ABOVE: Pond treated with 'Lake-Pak' and 'Blackout' 2hrs after application
 RIGHT: The same pond 2 weeks after application.



to produce hydrogen peroxide – a chemical known to inhibit most species of algae. This is a gradual process that is very temperature dependent; accelerating as the water warms. Once the barley straw treatment becomes effective, it will inhibit algae growth until the straw is almost completely decomposed. As a general rule, the effect of barley straw treatment lasts for about six months.

This method probably works out cheaper than using bacterial treatments but the lake or pond will suffer from an untidy mess left by fragments of rotting straw.

The next method at our disposal is the use of water colorants that filter out the wavelengths of light that are essential to algae for photosynthesis.

There is a choice of either blue or black – both produce effective results. They are available in

liquid or water soluble sachets. The liquid products are applied from the water's edge whilst water soluble packs can be thrown out to the middle of a large pond or small lake. The colorants will disperse evenly after a few hours. The use of colorants will also reduce light availability for the growth of submerged weeds as well as algae. Only products that have been developed specifically for algal control in water should be used, as these will have been tested for safety to fish and waterfowl.

Water colorants will work earlier in the season than freeze dried bacteria and their use will tend to cause a slight increase in water temperature as a result of the coloured material absorbing some of the sun's energy. It therefore makes sense to use colorants in combination with bacterial products as an integrated programme.

CLAIM YOUR BASIS POINTS

SELF ASSESSMENT

Use the questions below to check your understanding of this topic. Readers can claim Two BASIS points if the questions are answered correctly, by filling in the form at: www.sherriff-amenity.com/technical.asp?newsid=21

Circle the correct answer(s)

- 1) Which group of Algae were re-classified as Cyanobacteria?
 - a) Filamentous Algae
 - b) Blue-green Algae
 - c) Stoneworts
 - d) Unicellular Algae

- 2) What is the main cause of Algal problems in ponds and lakes?
 - a) Insufficient sunlight getting into the water.
 - b) An excess of dissolved nutrients in the water(nitrates and phosphates)
 - c) High mineral deposits in the water
 - d) The lack of chemicals used for their control

- 3) What is the minimum water temperature recommended when using bacteria to remove excess water nutrients?
 - a) 10°C
 - b) 15 °C
 - c) 8 °C
 - d) 18.8°C

- 4) When using the traditional barley straw method of removing algae in water, how long may we expect the effect to last?
 - a) 6 years
 - b) 18 days
 - c) 6 months
 - d) 18 months

- 5) What chemical is thought to be responsible for controlling Algae using the barley straw method?
 - a) carbon dioxide
 - b) methane
 - c) ethanol
 - d) Hydrogen peroxide

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* Will vary depending on walking speed.



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Quick...clean...easy!

Maximise your utility budget



Golf courses have really taken to utility vehicles. From Gators to Cushmans and Mules to Workhorses, you see them all over the place. If you have not looked at what is on offer more recently, however, you may not appreciate that the choice of kit on offer has widened. James De Havilland writes...

As is so often the case these days, there is a bewildering array of utility vehicles to choose from. Put together a few basic requirements, however, and that wide choice narrows.

First up, you have the established Cushman Turf-Truckster from Ransomes Jacobsen, the Pro Gator from John Deere and the Workman HDX models from Toro.

These models are so familiar it is common for them all to be called the same regardless of who makes them; hands up those of you that call a Workman a Truckster, a Gator a Workman and well, you get the point. A key feature of these 'heavy duty' machines is that they are designed to do a lot more than

provide a load platform and a passenger seat.

These key models have pretty similar capacities as well; the diesel-powered line-up that comprises the 24hp Pro Gator 2030A rated at 1,182kg, the 26.5hp Workman HDX-D-4WD offering a 1,289kg payload and the 23hp Cushman Turf Truckster offering a 1,293kg capacity. In the real world their overall specifications are broadly similar, with mechanical transmissions and a choice of hydraulic packages to suit specific attachments.

It is important, however, to remember that you need to look at these vehicles in the wider context of what you want them to do. The chances are you will want

BELOW: Heavy-duty utility vehicles really come into their own when matched to their own when matched to demount kit such as a sprayer or top dresser. When costing vehicles it pays to also price up kit to go with the vehicle too.





Simple, light and petrol powered. There are an increasing number of 'entry level' utilities to choose from but factor in running costs if they are going to cover a lot of ground. A more expensive diesel may make better long-term financial sense for some, but by no means all, courses.

to consider a range of demount kit that will also fit, such as a sprayer, and it is the easy integration and complete package price of the latter that can have a big influence upon your final buying choices.

It is entirely feasible to specify an 'off-the-peg' vehicle based around a utility 'skid' that will subsequently undertake key spraying, top dressing and even core collecting requirements. The total equipment package could be more cost effective than an array of trailed and tractor mounted alternatives.

This is an important point as heavy-duty utilities are relatively expensive bits of kit; a price tag north of £20K will make any accountant sit up and take notice, but it is the ability of these tools to work with purpose built attachments that can make them a viable buy. Build quality is good too, so expect a long life from well-proven models.

Kitting out a machine with a sprayer is a good example. All the listed models will take a sprayer of

around 750 litres, with boom widths of around 6 to 7m dependant upon model. The sprayer will sit low on the machine, to improve stability, with the weight more evenly spread between the wheels than perhaps would be the case with a trailed unit. The same will apply to a top dresser. When these attachments are not in use, they demount easily and free the vehicle for other work.

The caveat is that there are now keenly priced dedicated sprayers available as alternatives; these we looked at in the May issue. The trick is to work out how much work you will do with a sprayer on a utility. If the unit spends more time fitted to the vehicle than sitting in the shed on its stands you may find it more cost effective to buy a dedicated sprayer. Conversely, if you need to rebuild a bunker and ferry turf and sand around, a utility can often do the job better than a tractor and trailer; you do not have that option if you have gone for a dedicated sprayer.

Alternatively, you could also go



The cold spring of 2012 will perhaps be forgotten as temperatures climb, but an enclosed cab can make life a great deal easier for the operator. When choosing a utility, price in various options when making price comparisons.



When it comes to personnel transport, the key is to look to a lighter utility that can also carry a modest load. Space for essential tools, replacement greens flags, rakes or whatever will soon be exploited, so a large load platform is a help.



It really is worth taking the trouble to have a demonstration of alternative vehicles; Deere Gator and Toro Workman controls, for example, have essential features in common but the designs are more different than the spec sheet suggest.



left field and buy a dedicated sprayer and a more general-purpose utility vehicle.

The latter need not have the heavy-duty capacity or fixed forward speed ability of a big Toro, Cushman or Deere, but if your need is to help move personnel and kit around, an entry-level petrol model may be the way to go. Take Kawasaki Mule 610 and Polaris Ranger 400.

These machines have a relatively low initial purchase price and are reasonably cheap to run, despite the need to run on petrol.

There are also diesel powered models to consider, such as the evergreen Kawasaki Diesel Mule, together with alternatives from companies such as Club Car, Bobcat, Kubota, JCB to name a few.

The key is to establish the difference between basic utility units designed to have a light footprint and modest load capacity and machines that have a bigger payload and the ability to power attachments.

Often overlooked are battery powered electric vehicles. These tend to go in and out of fashion, but there is no denying these tools do have a future.

Polaris, for example are selling increasingly large numbers of its Ranger E, essentially sharing the same chassis as its Ranger 400 sibling with the result of it delivering good performance in more extreme conditions.

However, there are other electric models to consider. These include vehicles that can be specified in road legal form, with Ransomes Jacobsen having recently taken over the importation from France of the Mega electric truck range.

This is quite a significant move as Ransomes Jacobsen will no doubt help promote the greater use of this type of vehicle on golf courses. In terms of cost, a road ready electric truck will cost a similar amount of money as a heavy-duty 'turf truck'; well worth a look.

Regardless of what is on offer, the key to selecting the right utility vehicle is to work out what it has to do.

Heavy-duty models fit the bill perfectly when used as 'self-propelled' sprayers and top dressers, but they may not be the most economical choice as a general carrier.

If you can take the time to shop around and try several vehicles for a few days, you stand a much better chance of choosing the right tool.



ABOVE: Battery powered utilities are not new, but the concept of road legal models has yet to gain as wide acceptance in the UK as it has on the Continent. The Mega range imported by Ransomes Jacobsen could change that.

LEFT: More serious off-road ability may not be necessary, so check how well a vehicle on turf-friendly tyres performs on fine turf by doing the odd tight turn. All-wheel drive has its pros and cons, even when a proper differential with locking diff lock comes as part of the package.

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Section Notes

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

All the latest news from your Section

Around The Green



Scotland



Central

The Section had an enjoyable day at Crail for their spring outing with over 50 players participating on a course that was in excellent condition. Although the overnight and early morning weather was grim, by the time golf started it was a pretty decent day. The full list of winners are on the website, but by the principal the winners on the day were as follows:

Best Scratch, Gordon Moir, St Andrews Links, beating Stuart Robertson, Strathmore Golf Centre by a shot. Best overall nett, Kenny Mitchell, St Andrews Links. Paul Murphy of Fife Golf Trust won the 1st section and Shaun Anderson, Piperdam, won the 2nd. Kevin Brunton from Greentech won the trade prize. Our thanks go to Crail Golfing Society their staff and our Patrons for making the day such a success. The 2012 Pairs competition is well underway and again results are on the website.

Congratulations to Sandy Reid who will be succeeding John Philp at Carnoustie Golf Links after John retires at the end of June.

There are a couple of dates for educational events. Eric Lyons of Guelph Uni in Canada will give a talk at Elmwood at the beginning of June while John Kaminski and Rick Latin from Penn State and Purdue Universities respectively will give one on 12 July, also at Elmwood.

The results of the survey carried out recently will be analysed, this along with more information on the talks will be on the website. Thanks to all

who took part.

www.biggacentralsection.org.uk or join us on Facebook,
Regards,
Gordon Moir



East

Well gents, we had our spring outing at the Glen last Tuesday and the weather was perfectly acceptable this time in comparison to the stormy day we had originally planned. Thirty-three attended and here is a list of all the winners:

Scratch winner 68 gross Philip Butler, Murrayfield Golf Club

1st class winner Keith Burgon, Hirsell Golf Club

Runner up, Grant Moran Mortonhall Golf Club

2nd class winner Stuart Ferguson, Dundas Park Golf Club

Runner up, Ryan McCulloch, Goswick Golf Club

3rd class winner Kenneth Mason, Longniddry Golf Club

Veterans winner Aalister Holmes, Seahouses Golf Club

Best Nett winner Scott Corrigan, Greenburn Golf Club

Apprentice prize James Balmbrro, Hirsell Golf Club

Trade winner, Stewart Clayton, Greensman limited

Novelty prizes nearest the pin at the 13th hole, Pat Allan, Symbio

Longest drive at the 18th hole, James Johnston, Greenburn Golf Club

The Glen was very hospitable and Des Kerr, Course Manager, and his staff had the course in top condition. I played with the Captain Mr. Mike Curry, who was very impressed with the way we, as a section, went about our business, so well done to all of you for attending and I hope you all enjoyed your day. Well

done to George Stavert again for making it on the day, but next time bring your clubs George. A big thanks again to Stuart Ferguson for all the administration and planning on the day. Hopefully we will see the sun soon and get some heat from it to help the links grow as this last month has been too cold, fingers crossed.

Stewart Crawford
s.crawford@live.co.uk



West

Just a couple of things to mention for the section news, the main item being the recent retirement of Peter Boyd as regional administrator after 14 years of service. Peter finished on the 20 April and the west section committee had a small get together of all those people who had been involved with him over the years through committee work. A dinner was arranged at the citation restaurant in town and 12 people from the west turned up along with 4 from the Ayrshire section, all in attendance appeared to enjoy themselves and were delighted to be part of the evening. The section would like to wish Peter an enjoyable retirement and hope we that he can enjoy some more time with his wife Eleanor and the family.

I attended the annual match against the secretaries on Luffness New course on 8 May. The course was absolutely superb for the time of year and David Coull explained all the different projects he had completed over the last few years to help improve the course. I thoroughly enjoyed the course and the company and even better, the greenkeepers won. I would like to express my thanks to all those

involved in the day which helped make it such a success: Stuart Greenwood, Peter Boyd, Tony Yates, Brian and Julie Denholm and the house staff.

The next big event to consider is the Scottish National Tournament over Ratho Park golf club on the 20 June; entries have to be submitted to the head office at Aldwark Manor.

I will report on the spring outing results in the next issue and once again if anybody has any information for me could they please get in contact on stuart.taylor@glasgowgolfclub.com or by mobile on 07790823914 or 0141 94 5554.

Hope you have a good season,
Stuart Taylor



Ayrshire

The spring outing of the Ayrshire section, which includes Dumfries and Galloway, was held on arguably the best municipal golf course in the UK, Belleisle in Ayr, on Tuesday 1, May.

The course was in excellent condition thanks to the efforts of Billy, Kevin and the rest of the greenkeeping team, and the weather was kind for a wee change, especially after the rigours of Turnberry in the autumn.

The scoring reflected this as four players beat their handicap on the day. The prize winners were: First class winner - William Mcmeikan 38 points, 2nd - David Nelson 37 points, 3rd - Ian McDonald 35 points, 4th - Ian Barr 34 points. Second class winner - David Wason 40 points, 2nd - Gregor Wilson 33 points, 3rd - Martin Lothian 30 points, 4th - Barry Crate 24 points. Stewart Clayton won the trade prize with a score that suggests

he spends plenty of time on the golf course!

The Section would like to extend their thanks to South Ayrshire Council for allowing us the use of the Belleisle golf course, always an enjoyable experience. As there are only limited catering facilities at Belleisle we retired to the Abbotsford hotel, where we enjoyed an excellent two-course meal in a private room, so thanks to all the staff in the hotel for looking after us. I'm sure it will be recommended as a good venue by everyone in attendance.

The only other news I have is that George Morrison is doing a bit of bird watching, looking out for that elusive stork arriving, hopefully with a soft landing George.

The BIGGA national tournament is at Bogside this year on the 8 and 9 of October, so get it in your diary and let's have a good turn out from the section.

If there is anything happening on your course, or with our members in Ayrshire, or anything else that may be of interest, please get in touch with me by e-mail on duncan@lawnsforyou.com.

All the best for the season.

Northern Region



North East

I shall remember April 18, 2012, at South Shields G. C. for a long time, and it's not just me, but also other members of the Committee of the North East Section, as it was the worst turn out ever for a Competition. I don't know what the answer is; we have tried changing the day of the week and teeing off time, yet still we struggle. Wouldn't it be nice if we could get just one person from a golf club where they have more than one member of the Association, What a difference that would make.

Now getting back to Competition; what a pleasure it was to play the course, which is kept in excellent condition by Phil Hargave and his staff. The greens were superb and I reckon you wont see any better than them this year despite having the driest March on record and the wettest April. Lucky for us it only rained for the first hour,

but another ten minutes and we would have walked off it was that bad, but we carried on and enjoyed the rest of the course. Thank you to the catering staff for the great meal.

Now for the scores: Best Gross - J. Gibson 79, Northumberland GC, Best Nett R. Reid 72 on count back. J.S.Richardson 72, R. Black 87.

Thank you to Glen Baxter of Rigby Taylor and Alan Morton of T.S.L. and Wearside GC for donating prizes on the day.

I have received news from Tommy Harrison, Gosforth GC, of movement from his place; Andy Jeffries has left and become a self-employed landscaper, Chris Walker been promoted to first assistant and Connor Bush has been taken on as an apprentice; good luck to you all

That's it for another month; let's hope that we start getting some sunshine and not as much rain.

Jimmy Richardson



Northern

Well here we go folks, the section golf days are under-way. The forecast for the first event at Easingwold was pretty poor, but 30 of us mad golfers made the effort. A huge thanks and my respect to you guys who made it , we got a little wet, but eh we are used to it!

Even bigger thanks go to Easingwold golf club for allowing us to play and of course Andre and the boys for working so hard to present a great course in testing conditions. We had a fantastic prize table provided by John Hughes the pro, which was kindly sponsored by Sherriff Amenity and the lovely Rebecca, thank you very much indeed.

Congratulations to Dave Collins who cleaned up by winning the Division one trophy and the Scratch trophy...

Div one: 1st Dave Collins, 2nd Stu Mason, 3rd A baxter

Div two: 1st R. Smith, 2nd N Booth, 3rd F Stewart

Div three: 1st G Street, 2nd J Baxter, 3rd J Rowbottom

Nearest pins: Stu Mason & A Scaman; Trade prize winner: I Collitt. The next event will be The Presidents day at Scarcroft golf club on the 27 June with a 1.30 tee off, so come on guys

put a shift in and come and support the section. We will be having a brisk EGM regarding the Treasurers position, we have a candidate who has come forward, but if anybody else fancies the role please let me know.

On the fixture list you all have we noticed a wee error, the Sheffield match up will be played at Howley Hall and not Meltham as stated. Whoops. Anybody wishing to play in this please let me no asap, or I will be pestering you lot at the next event.

And finally I end with some lovely news about our committee member Richard Smith, he and Elizebeth are expecting there 2nd child in October! Congratulations big fellow, you never know we might have a whip round and get you some new golf shoes! He plays and works in his white golf shoes; I think they were white.

Last but not least, it was great to see Ben and Steve from Scarborough make it to Easingwold, fantastic effort boys.

Any goss, news, please let me know... Any of you guys successful in getting on to the open support team?

Andy Slingsby, 07506407867
Slingsbyfamily@virginmedia.com ; Facebook Andy Slingsby (spiderman)



North West

Hi all,

Well the golf season is certainly up and running and we've had the spring tournament, which was held at Leasowe GC. A turn out of about 30 played in good conditions on this seaside links. First of all let me thank Leasowe GC for the courtesy of the course, the catering staff for the meal and the Head greenkeeper Chris Peddie and his staff for the presentation, which made it such an enjoyable day.

The winner was Craig Morris with a score of 36points, which was a three-way tie. Triumphant with a back 9 count back with two other competitors who were John Mcgloughlin and Chris Gibson.

The longest drive and nearest pin prizes were picked up by Billy Merritt and John Mcloughlin. Well done to everybody on the day.

There are a couple of people moving this month; Neil olferey is moving out of our area and down to Exeter, so good luck

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Worzel with the new life down south. With any luck his able deputy Damian will get the promotion he deserves, but hey we are in the golf industry.

Matt Shimwell is leaving Hopwood GC to work under deputy manager, Gwynn Davies, at The Mere GC, so good luck Matt.

Mere GC has had a busy month they also held a GTC H&S day, which was very well attended.

The next golf event will be played in June at Lymm GC for its North West v North Wales Team match. By this time you will all have your fixture lists as they have been sent out, but if anybody would like more information please contact Chris Sheehan.

On a lighter note, I had a chat with Paul Smith, Course Manager at Royal Lytham, this week and me, being on a Parkland, bemoaning the constant rain we seem to be getting in the North West, well Paul being on a links thinks it great apart from the fact that the ROUGH is getting a little thick and very penal, something for the pro's to think about as the Open Championship closes in.

Spencer Lloyd-Pye
spencer@lloyd-pye.freeserve.co.uk



North Wales

Let's all hope that, now mid-summer is here, we can finally have some summer, because April and the beginning of May were hardly anything to get excited about. The spring tournament at Llangollen was a complete washout; thankfully everyone took the day and disappointment in their stride and stayed for a drink and meal in the clubhouse. Although no meaningful golf was played on the day, I know we all enjoyed the meal, had a good chin-wag and a laugh. The golf has been rearranged to the 19 June. Anyone who paid to be on the original day will play free of charge, on a play only basis, food will not be included on the day. Anyone who would like to fill spots left vacant by replay drop outs will only have to pay towards the prize fund and ball sweep and

organise your own refreshment options with the catering staff.

A big thank you goes to Phil, Gaynor and the rest of the hospitality staff for their hard work and patience in feeding us all at once with some rather excellent food when they were organised on a completely different format.

Thank you also to Bob Hardy who came up with alternate dates as soon as we had to cancel.

In other news we welcome Jason Moody back from the dark side to greenkeeping as he has taken a position at The Plassey Leisure Park, welcome back Jason!

I think that's about it for now, but I would like to hear from you all, please feel free to text, call or e-mail your news. All the best until next month,

Pete Maybury, e-mail, petemayb66@aol.com Mobile 07756001187 Facebook group North Wales B.I.G.G.A

Midland Region



East Midlands

As the hose pipe ban got into full swing and the rivers and reservoirs started rapidly filling up following the coldest, wettest April for over twenty years the East Midlands Section played our Spring Tournament at Scraftoft Golf Club on Thursday 26 April. Many courses around the area had been closed due to the extreme weather conditions but Nigel White and his team, through lots of hard work, produced an excellent golf course for the day. A well supported day, although there is always room for more people, saw Russell Allen claim the Category 1 prize with Rob 'local knowledge' Duval and Adi Porter finishing second and third respectfully. In Category 2 Andy Marsh took first place, with Adrian Henshaw and James McShane also in the prizes. An East Midlands golf competition wouldn't be complete without Garry Thurman picking up a prize in the Trade/Associates category. Garry has continued to support this section for many years and his consistency is beginning to

gain legendary status, especially in the raffle!

Tacit sponsored the Nearest the Pin and Longest Drives for which the section is extremely grateful and was won by Russell Allen (again!)(NTP) and Adrian Henshaw (LD) for the greenkeepers and Mick Marvel won Longest Drive for the Trade/Associates. Unfortunately no one from Trade/Associates managed to hit the green on their respective Nearest the Pin hole. The committee are also extremely grateful to the sponsors of the day for their generosity, Sherriff Amenity, Campey, Platts Harris and Henton & Chattell and also to Scraftoft Golf Club who produced a first class meal and were also excellent hosts. It was noted that the menu didn't include brussel sprouts this year... you know who you are!

So the Jubilee Bank Holiday has past us by now, all the bunting and ill fitting Union Jack hats are packed away, until Prince Harry gets spiced at least, and we can hopefully look forward to a good summer with happy golfers on our courses. The April wet weather, although inconvenient, was very welcome, and with temperatures slowly starting to rise there is definitely the prospect of the country experiencing proper seasonal weather for the first time in many years.

On a final note invites to Nailcote Hall for our Rigby Taylor sponsored Par 3 Competition will be out in the not too distant future, we are trying more and more to email invites because of the cost of postage so please make sure that we have your correct email address on file. You can easily update us by emailing your details to big-gaeastmid@gmail.com and we can keep you informed of events/matters within your section. That's about it for now, the next issue will be my last... before the Olympics!

Thank you for calling,
Greg Skinner
07970 095264



Midland

Well after the unseasonably dry and hot March/April, the old prophecy of "it won't know when to stop raining when it comes" has finely come true. There is nothing quite as rewarding as raking sodden wet sand day after day, I don't think! Such wet weather reminds me of an old boy from Harborne, George Noyce/Formby son. When sent out to mow banking's etc. on his Tri-king in the rain, under great sufferance and complaint I might add, he would take an umbrella with him. Who did he think he was, Mary Poppins? It was so funny though.

I hope that by the time our summer event is here on 11 July at Oxley Park G.C. that we have had some sunshine to warm our backs. I should be able to report the spring results in next month's notes.

This month's calendar sponsor is ALS. They offer a multitude of services including Course Equipment, Contract Works, Turf Care Products and Machinery Servicing etc. For their full range please visit: www.amenity.co.uk or Tel: 01952 641 949.

Sean McDade.



BB&O

As summer approaches and the golfing season kicks into full swing hopefully many of you will have managed to get your courses in to shape and completed all renovation/maintenance work in what must be the wettest start to any drought on record! That said those of you impacted by the hosepipe ban will be enjoying the respite and are no doubt breathing a sigh of relief. As ever we have little control over the biggest influencing factor – the weather! We wait to see what summer brings.

Kirtlington GC played host to this year's BB&O Section Spring Cup. The day was well supported