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### [May Newsletter](#)

Dear Piping Enthusiast,

Welcome to another newsletter which I hope you find informative, interesting, titillating and essentially a good read - I've run out of adjectives. As you may gather, journalism is another item I've acquired and joins the myriad of jobs as a one man business I have to be reasonable at. There is never any shortage of tasks and jobs and this email is too short to list them all - but hey, no complaints at all.

The new season in the Northern Hemisphere is upon us quicker than Usain Bolt in the 100 metres and check out the Field Report below from the first Major. It is also pleasing to note the growing numbers of younger players who were on parade in Paisley and this trend in my customer base which is most encouraging - there was a movement in the opposite direction in the early 1990s which was a worry. The other aspect on display was the influx of guest overseas pipers, along with fine Scottish pipers, travelling distances to play in particular bands. This cross fertilisation of nationalities can only be good for piping in a global context and undoubtedly leads to improving standards. Of course, you have to wonder at times how all the costs of this travel and accommodation are paid for particularly when prize money is pitifully low. We have players at the absolute top of their game and a pleasure to listen to and yet most of them have to put their hands into their own pockets - it's a disgrace really and we could do with a vastly different business model - think about darts, snooker, football and so on. OK - we are not going to make it onto Sky Sports or the like but we could do with a new approach - tough to know what that might be.

A final thought for this month - the size of bands is an issue, in that the strong seem to get bigger and the rest get weaker. The size issue will sort itself out but maybe some preventative measure should have been in place sometime ago to rectify this imbalance. It's the same in solo piping where the elite get stronger and the also-rans get disheartened. The top players are invited to the invitational events which are now in the majority and it's not a healthy situation.

Yours aye,  
James C. Begg  
**Piping Perfection**

[www.beggbagpipes.com](http://www.beggbagpipes.com)

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## News.

The National Piping Centre has a new web site featuring all the latest news - execution is high quality and once fully established should be good. Check it out [here](#).

I purchased some reeds again from Willie Morrison, who is a long time teacher and judge. I was amused to hear he has composed a jaunty hornpipe called The Camels are Coming. He teaches pipers from the Oman Army who come over to Scotland for 15 weeks at a time and the intrepid pipers play their pipes on camels back home - wow! The name of course is a parody of the Campbells are Coming and the hornpipe imitates the effect of playing and riding at the same time. You couldn't make it up.

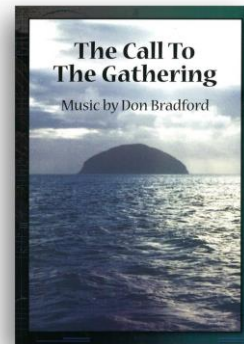
We will be back at the Concert Hall trade show again during Piping Live! in August. It was very successful last year and should be even bigger this year - well worth a visit to chat and peruse the superb equipment on sale. It's the Thursday before the Worlds so do pop in and say hello.

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## Tune of the Month - [Lee Moore's Jig](#)

We are pleased to feature a [lovely 9/8 jig](#), composed by P/M Don Bradford in honour of his friend Lee Moore.

Don writes: "Lee Moore is a very good friend who currently plays in St Lawrence O'Toole Pipe Band and is also head Piping instructor at Preston Lodge High school. Lee has also provided the piping and small pipes sounds with the successful celtic band "PIPEDOWN". We played together in the David Urquhart Pipe band for several years and originate from the same county of Tyrone in Northern Ireland."



Don has been a friend of mine for many years and I first met him when he came over as a young teenager to join Boghall - how time flies! He was P/M of Strathclyde Police as well as P/M of Black Bottle. Don has had many tunes played by various bands over the years and published an excellent book called The Call to the Gathering - no piper should be without a copy. He is now P/M of Lomond and Clyde and I'm sure we are guaranteed to have an absolutely outstanding band with great tone and of course, Don's music.

Thanks Don, for sending this tune to us to publish to our readers.

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## Special Offer - [Drone Reeds](#)

15% off the complete range of drone reeds, cane or synthetic. This is a good saving and post free for most locations (excluding Far East/Australasia).



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## Field Report - British Championships, May 2019

After four fantastic sunny days in Glasgow, you've guessed it! Saturday was overcast and chilly with the temperature going up and down every 5 minutes and making it very difficult to maintain the instruments. Photo below is of Annan and storm clouds! However, I listened to most of the bands tuning up and must say the sound in general was very good from all. The Grade 1 bands really are fairly close tone-wise, with the Power impressing me in particular. The Band had an impressive presence being large, smart and definitely in the mix this year. They are a great credit to Chris Armstrong. Shotts had a good sound under new P/M Emmet Conway and Lomond and Clyde

under new P/M Don Bradford also had a solid band. Both of these bands will improve and all in all, it was good start from them.

I preferred to wander about rather than to listen to everyone in the contest although I did tend to focus on the MSR. This format is chosen as a discipline and test but it can be very uninteresting when the same tunes are played from band to band. John Morrison of Assynt House was listed to be played by 8 bands out of 12. Blair Drummond, Susan Macleod and Islay Ball also appeared multiple times. The winning band was St Laurence O' Toole from Dublin with last year's champions Scottish Power as runners-up.

At the Grade 2 event a rather strange position occurred in that the 2 piping judges had vastly different opinions - one judge had a band 1st whilst the other had them 15th. This was not just a single anomaly but continued throughout the result. No doubt a stewards' enquiry will be required. Coskelt from Northern Ireland won with Buchan Peterson from Aberdeenshire as runners up. I was impressed with The Royal Burgh of Annan who were 5th and are surely one to watch.

There was a somewhat poor attendance from the public which was a little disappointing. The event however was run amazingly well and credit to Renfrew Events - free entry, free buses - brilliant. If Paisley can do this then why not the Worlds? Perhaps it is too much of a cash cow for Glasgow. Why not move along to Paisley when the current deal ends although I have a horrible feeling it's tied up in Glasgow for a few more years. All in all, it was a great day's playing from the hundred and odd bands - onto the UK champs in Lurgan, N Ireland in a month's time.

James C. Begg



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## YouReport - The Queen's Gurkha Engineers.

QUEENS GURKHA  
ENGINEERS

The Queen's Gurkha Engineers recently held their 70th anniversary reunion in Nepal and my piping friend Hamish MacLeod attended - [click here](#) for his really interesting report. Hamish is a larger than life character in every sense and stands I would say in excess of 6 foot 4 inches. It can be no easy feat to tune his bass drone. We are both members of the Glasgow Highland Club - a most august and noble institution of long standing and a great force for Scottish culture. Piping, dance, golf and most importantly, camaraderie all mix well and if it is convenient for you, it would be well worth thinking about joining.

Thanks Hamish for a great Report!



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## YouReport

If you would like to report on any aspect of the Piping World from wherever you live, or if you would like to comment on any articles or issues, we'd be pleased to hear from you. Email to [bill@beggbagpipes.com](mailto:bill@beggbagpipes.com)

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