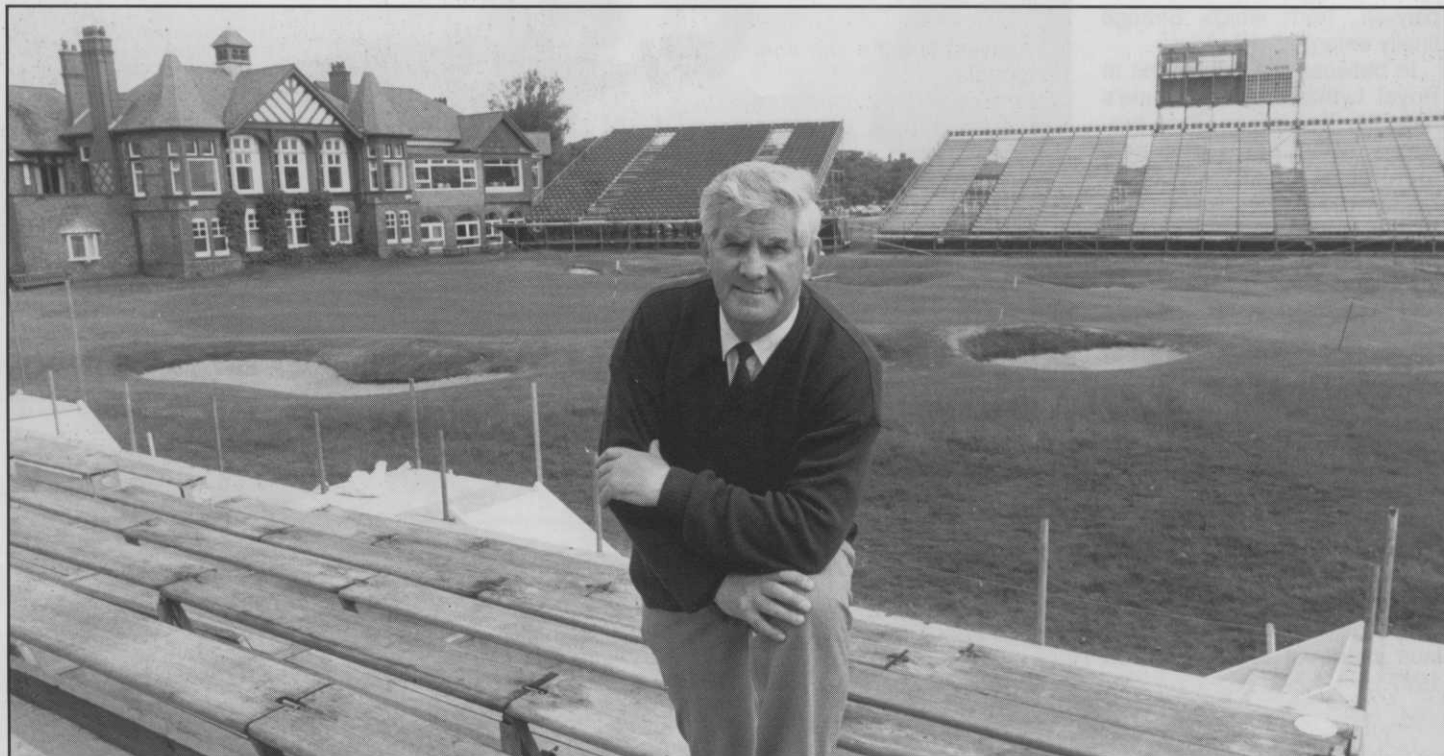


Golden Rollers Midnight Dash



Royal Lytham's Head Greenkeeper Jimmy McDonald controlled the team that saved the Open from a 'watery end'.

If Bernard Shaw had been at Lytham St. Annes in July he might have coined a different phrase for Liza Dolittle, he certainly would not have said "The rain in Spain falls mainly on the plain."

As the rain intensified on the fourth day, play was at first suspended then abandoned because greenstaff could not cope with the flooded greens with the equipment available.

There were two squeegees in the sheds, but these could not combat the standing water which in a couple of hours had turned the course into a gigantic duckpond.

Manfully the greenstaff wielded the timed honoured implement, the back of a rake, much to the disgust of a

number of competitors, particularly the American contingent used to more sophisticated equipment, both mechanical and automatic.

Hubert Green had completed seven holes before play was suspended and was none too pleased when he was informed his efforts were to be struck from the record.

Not many of us would be, if we had started 3-3-3-3-3-4-4, carding five birdies and two pars. Our own "Woosie" was very vocal in his criticism when he was recalled at the eighth after shooting a birdie and an eagle to pull back three shots. He said if the right equipment had been available the Championship could have continued.

A letter published in the na-

tional press from the Chairman of Swindon Golf Club, near Dudley was in similar vein. He suggested the pictures of greenstaff removing water with rakes was totally degrading and not at all representative of golf clubs in England.

But to the rescue, came David Palmer, not quite the build of a knight in shining armour and without his trusty steed, but he was able to open up the Supaturf depots to provide 30 Goldline Roller Squeegees and rush them through the night to arm the waiting volunteers.

Mopping up continued all morning until play recommenced at 11.15am, but then, like most emergency equipment, it stayed in the

sheds for the last two days as the sun broke through to dry out the links.

Supaturf picked up a £1,500 order from the R & A and a great deal of international publicity, though it is not true that David Palmer has invoked the Rain Gods to give us the wettest summer for a hundred years.

As much as we regret embarrassing Michael Bonalack, who has been extremely gracious in his praise of the Greenkeepers Association his quote on the eve of the championship is worth repeating — "Here there won't be the problem of play being interrupted by rain — like Wimbledon!"