It's hard work, but well worth the effort

The month of July is the highlight for many, with The Open Championship acting as a magnet for golf lovers from all over the world. It is a marvellous event both on and off the course as it's the perfect opportunity to see the world's finest exponents of the game up close and also meet friends you perhaps haven't seen for the entire 12 months. In this regard BIGGA is extremely fortunate. Not only does the hard working BIGGA Support Team have the chance to play a key role in one of the biggest events in the sporting calendar but the BIGGA marquee is a superb base for members to meet and enjoy a bit of refreshment between watching live golf.

Having said that, with television sets in the marquee some people do tend to settle in for an afternoon in front of the box and the delights of Peter Alliss and Alex Hay, rather than seeing the action first hand.

This year, Lytham St Annes plays host to the Championship, and the course has been prepared for a Open for the first time by Paul Smith and his team.

Paul was First Assistant to Jimmy MacDonald MBE last time the Championship was played there in 1986, and that experience, coupled with that acquired since he started out in the profession as a 16 year old apprentice at St Annes Old Links, will stand him in good stead when the media spotlight falls on the course.

You can read about Paul’s preparations for The Open elsewhere in this issue but you can be sure that the conditions which face the 156 competitors, who tee it up on Thursday, July 19, to face the weather in the run up to the Championships meet and enjoy a bit of refreshment between watching live golf.

A superb round of 73 around the long and testing Drumoig Hotel Golf Resort in Fife by five handicapper Stuart Raeburn clinched the 2001 Scottish National Tournament.

The 22 year-old First Assistant to current National Past Chairman Elliott Small, played near the back of the field and overhauled the scores of Stuart Taylor, from Glasgow Golf Club, and Richard Lowe, of Kilmacolm, who had been out earlier in the day and posted fine scores. Although windless, the home of the Scottish Golf Centre tested everyone with its succession of long par fours and fives not to mention an array of par-3s in excess of 200 yards.

Beautifully maintained by Ian Stuart Taylor, Glasgow, 73; 2. Colin Irvine, Murthly, 74; 3. Alan Russell, Torshin Hill, 76 BHH

Category 3 STRI Trophy.

Best Head GK, Dick Atkien Trophy, Stuart Taylor, Glasgow 73.

Best Assistant, MBM Trophy, Kenneth Mitchell, St Andrews 74.

Best Apprentice, Seuter Trophy, Richard Love, Kilmacolm 74.

Best Veteran, SGGA Trophy, Duncan Gray, Priess, 75.

Team Trophy (Best four net scores) St Mungo Cup, North - Stephen Brown, James McCormack, Andy Wilson and John Urquart.

Trade: Pat Allan, Stewards.
Guest: Scott MacCallum, BIGGA

BIGGA survey: An excellent response

As this edition of Greenkeeper International goes to press, Mike Williamson of MW Associates is busy analysing the responses to the market research survey we reported on in March.

"The response to the survey has been excellent," said Mike.

We have received completed questionnaires from 570 BIGGA members, and have conducted about 150 telephone interviews with companies and organisations in the golf industry, as well as representatives of golf clubs and greenkeepers who are not currently BIGGA members. A lot of people have applauded BIGGA for having the survey carried out - and are looking forward to hearing the outcome!

As a first step, Mike Williamson will be reporting key findings from the research to the BIGGA Board at their June meeting. The Board will then decide on the best way of considering, and responding to, the detailed results that will be in the full report.

In the meantime, Mike passes on his thanks to all those who took the time to respond, often very fully, to the questionnaires and interviews. And Mike’s communications to the 570 members who did not win the £100 voucher in the questionnaire prize draw.

Scottish National Championship

Results

Scottish Champion, SGGA Challenge Cup, Scrath, Stuart Raeburn, Tulliallan, 73.

Friendship Trophy, Best Net, Stephen Brown, Newmachar, 68.

Category One, Ransomes Trophy
1. George Thompson, Goswick, 72.
2. James McCormack, Kinneur, 73BHH; 3. Archie Dun, Auchterarder, 73.

Category Two, Pettis Trophy
1. Craig Pennycook, Winterfield, 72; 2. Colin Irvine, Murthly, 74; 3. Alan Russell, Torshin Hill, 76 BHH

Category Three, STRI Trophy.

Best Head GK, Dick Atkien Trophy, Stuart Taylor, Glasgow, 73.

Best Assistant, MBM Trophy, Kenneth Mitchell, St Andrews 74.

Best Apprentice, Seuter Trophy, Richard Love, Kilmacolm 74.

Best Veteran, SGGA Trophy, Duncan Gray, Priess, 75.

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Stephen boxes clever at John O’Gaunt

Stephen Thompson, of John O’Gaunt Golf Club who has previously reported on the success of the bird boxes installed on the course has further good news to report.

"So far 11 out of 14 tit boxes have been accepted and we have 84 young blue tits ranging in age from half a day to 14 days. 31 blue tits were ringed and we also had a nest containing three young great tits," said Stephen.

The majority of the boxes were put up in February and March this year to give the birds time to get used to them and possibly to roost in them.

"Out of six open fronted boxes one was used and a complete nest found, presumably used by a wren," said Stephen.

"This was the first year for these boxes and it was very successful," said Stephen who works closely with Peter Wilkinson of Bird Life International, who was able to ring some of the birds.