



## Welcome

### AS CHANGEABLE AS THE WEATHER

Well, we can honestly say the season has well and truly started. Phil Mickelson has shaken off the tag of "Best Player Not to Have Won a Major" in outstanding fashion at Augusta. Ironically I missed the best Masters for several years as I was on holiday in Tenerife where none of it was shown live on television. With so many good Spanish players I found that a little strange, and not a little frustrating.

Back home, competition secretaries are sharpening their pencils, or to be more precise in this modern age, dusting down their software and you are receiving plaudits for the excellence of your winter programme construction work... well, it would be nice wouldn't it? But what can we hope for in 2004?

Well good weather would be nice. I know how much you suffered from the cold start to the season last year and I'm sure a plea for warm sunshine and a little nocturnal rain would not go amiss.

If you think about it so much rides on weather in the greenkeeping profession. A good dose of the the aforementioned combination and you will have every chance to prepare your course to its best. Golfers have the sun on their backs and putting surfaces which give the best chance for the ball to drop. Result? Happy golfers, and happy golfers mean fewer moans and fewer moans mean fewer complaints flying in your direction. That allows you to get on with your job. If you're not pulled away to answer the complaints of a 23 handicapper who thinks the only reason he three putted five times was the state of the green you can concentrate still further on the course condition.

Alternatively, if the weather goes against you, you will no doubt find that it is your political acumen rather than your agronomic know how that is of most use.

You would hope that more people would appreciate that the weather can't be controlled and a degree of understanding for the problems it brings wouldn't go amiss.

So can I shed any light on the upcoming weather? I've trawled the web to find out any long term forecasts and can reveal that May is going to be significantly warmer than average with rainfall below average. Having said that the third week will see rain in most areas of the country.

Looking further ahead scientists say that sea levels will rise by four centimetres a decade increasing the risk of flooding.

Further still and by the year 2080 we can expect double the number of days 25 degrees or above than we have now but we will also experience more intense storms.

That's what our successors can look forward to and no doubt that will cause them just as many problems as you are facing at the moment. By then though I'd like to think that golfers were able to take a more objective and mature approach and cut the greenkeeping staff some justifiable slack.

**Scott MacCallum, Editor**

### NEW LOOK TO BIGGA'S SALES TEAM



▲ Samantha Richardson, Sue McDonough and Amy Newport

The BIGGA sales team has taken on a new look with the arrival of Samantha Richardson, Sue McDonough and Amy Newport who, together with Sales Manager, Rosie Hancher, will be responsible for selling adverts and exhibition space in Greenkeeper International, the BIGGA Golf Directory, BTME and ClubHouse.

Advertising Sales Executive, Samantha, 28, joins the Association from Maxi Print in York where latterly she was selling advertising for the official magazine of English Cricket. Prior to that she worked for an IT company in York.

A qualified Beauty Therapist, Sam married Dominic in Las Vegas last year and they have just moved into a new home in Fulford, York, which they share with two dogs, three cats and two rabbits. In her spare time she is a keen artist, specialising in landscapes.

Sue, 35, is Exhibition Sales Executive and is reunited with Rosie with whom she worked in Harrogate where, together, they launched a magazine for school leavers.

Previously she worked for News International in London. As part of the team on the Times Educational Supplement (TES), she sold advertising on Nursery World Magazine and was involved with the launch of the Nursery World Exhibition held in Olympia and GMEX.

Now happily living in Harrogate Sue juggles her work and home life with her husband, Michael, and five and a half year old daughter, Hannah.

Amy, 25, is Sales and Marketing Assistant and arrives at BIGGA HOUSE

from a post with an agricultural company based in Harrogate. She holds a BSc in Business Technology from Sheffield Hallam University, where she also spent two years in army training before deciding on life as a civilian. She is currently undertaking a marketing course at night school.

Amy once took four months to travel round America and during that time dropped into Gracelands to pay homage to one of her heroes, Elvis.

She lives in Harrogate and got to hear of BTME and ClubHouse through her fiance, Chris, who is an exhibition designer with his own company, Ncompass. They have a dog called Vegas.

The changes to the Sales team were brought about following the departure of Cheryl Broomhead and Katie Davies and the need to support the growing Exhibition sales of the Association.

### UPDATED USGA GUIDELINES

After a nearly year-long review by more than 100 scientists, agronomists and industry experts, an updated edition of the USGA's publication Recommendations for a Method of Putting Green Construction is now available.

For more than 40 years the USGA Green Section has published recommendations for the construction of golf putting greens. USGA greens are widely recognised for their agronomic excellence because of their history of success throughout the United States and many other countries.

Many of the greens constructed to the original recommendations, which were released in 1960, are still in use today. However, to

address the increasing demands placed on modern putting greens, the USGA conducts updates which incorporate the latest research information from around the world, much of which is sponsored by the USGA Turfgrass and Environmental Research programme.

The guidelines represent a time-tested, agronomically sound method of building putting greens. They are offered to the game of golf and turfgrass industry at no charge. The 2004 USGA recommendations can be obtained by visiting the USGA Web site at:

<http://www.usga.org/green/coned/greens/recom-mendations.html>

## MIKE LINCOLN-SMITH RETIRES



One of the best known and respected salesmen in the business, Mike Lincoln-Smith, of Hayter, has retired.

Mike started as an apprentice agricultural engineer at Eastern

Counties Farmers Aylesham almost 40 years ago, he then became a salesman, covering the Diss area.

On the way to Hayters which he joined in '92 he worked for Vicon, Turners and Ransomes. Mike's thorough knowledge of engineering, both from a theoretical and practical perspective, has always meant that he has been heavily involved in product development as well as sales.

Mike has had many and varied interests outside of work. An accomplished sailor he is qualified to instruct in all aspects of the sport. He

is a keen golfer although often other activities like motorcycling and building and driving kit cars would take precedence.

Where he has found the time for his other interests, DIY and photography, is anybody's guess. Running the marathon when he was 50 years old was another of his accomplishments.

Hayter have announced a number of changes to their sales team for commercial products. Joining the company is Simon Holmes who will be responsible for Scotland and the North of England. Simon, who is 26 and lives in Morpeth, comes to Hayter with a solid background in agricultural and horticultural sales.

Following Mike Lincoln-Smith retirement this has meant a realignment of the territories covered by Barry Halls and Sales Manager Robin Boyes. Stephen Clarke, who is currently a Territory Manager for Hayter consumer products, will also now take on responsibility for the commercial dealers in the South East.

## NEW KIT FOR GLENEAGLES



The Gleneagles Hotel has taken delivery of a new tranche of course maintenance equipment from their local dealer, Scottish Grass Machinery. This latest round of machinery which includes

Iseki TK546 compact tractors, two new E-Z-GO ST 4x4 and ST480 golf utility vehicles, Cushman Turf Trucksters and Ryan GA24 aerators, is part of a four-year tripartite agreement signed between Ransomes Jacobsen, Scottish Grass Machinery and Gleneagles.

"The golf courses here at Gleneagles are second to none and our members and our visitors from around the world, expect the very best playing surfaces. We are open all year round and therefore, the maintenance of the courses is very important to us. This new machinery is an invaluable aid to the daily preparation of the courses," said Scott Fenwick, Golf Courses Superintendent.

## FRAUDULENT USE OF THE BIGGA CARD

It has come to our attention that fake BIGGA cards are being used to gain courtesy golf in the Manchester area.

The cards being used are the old style plastic wallet cards which are notoriously easy to fake. We have changed the membership card to a white plastic credit card due to these problems and the plastic wallet cards have therefore not been in circulation since 2001.

If you are presented with one of these cards please confiscate the card from the individual and send it in to BIGGA House. The people involved in this scam risk affecting the courtesy golf scheme for genuine members of BIGGA.

## "NEW" CHALLENGE FOR DAVID



A Head Greenkeeper for the 109-year-old championship New Course at St Andrews Links has been appointed following Euan Grant's move to the Old Course.

David Coull, previously Course Manager at Glen Golf Club, in North Berwick, took up the position at the Links last month. David, 37, has been at the Glen Golf Club since 2000 and has made a number of improvements including lengthening the course, building new tees and greens and revising bunkering. In 2002 he was one of three additional greenkeepers to work at Muirfield for the week of The Open Championship.

Prior to working at the Glen Golf Club, he was Head Greenkeeper at Oldham Golf Club and Greenkeeper at Luffness Golf Club.

"David impressed us with his commitment, enthusiasm and experience," said Gordon Moir, Links Superintendent at the Links Trust.

"I am very much looking forward to working with him and am confident he will make a significant contribution to the Links."

## Royal Inverdivot GC...

Strip Cartoonist of the Year [www.tonyhusband.co.uk](http://www.tonyhusband.co.uk)



## NEW MAN FOR WIEDENMANN



Wiedenmann, the Glasgow based distributor of specialist aeration equipment has appointed Bruce Alexander as Area Sales Manager for their Central sales area.

He has recently returned from the UAE where he

has been serving as Sales Manager for Omtag, the Ransomes Jacobsen and John Deere distributors for the Middle East.

Bruce will be responsible for Central and Northern England as well as Wales, adding to the excellent support already enjoyed by Wiedenmann customers throughout the UK.

## GENTLEMEN'S WHITEOUT!



The day of the Gentlemen's Evening at Walton Heath dawned. Grey but dry in Worthing (where I live). That's good I thought, no sign of the snow that had been forecast.

With 108 teeing-off, 130 sitting down to dinner, an obligation to pay a fee to the comedian booked as after dinner speaker and the last Gentlemen's Evening that I shall be organising the last thing I wanted to see was snow!

The first phone call came at around 6.30 am. It was Tony Dyke, of Wyke Green GC. "What's happening?" he asked. Gradually the full horror hit me. North of Worthing there had been snow. It was confirmed by Mick Haynes, Deputy at Walton Heath, at around 6.50 am. "One and a half inches," he said. I left home at 7.30 am and apart from a light dusting in the Horsham area there were very few snow flakes to be seen. I took the back lanes to Walton Heath, still no snow and I was only two or three miles away. As I climbed the hill the odd patches of white appeared to get larger the higher I got until I was driving alongside the practice ground. Totally, totally white!

But the staff at Walton Heath were tremendous. The Secretary, Mike Bawden, was on to the Met. Office for a local prediction while Caroline Edwards and her staff were answering non-stop telephone calls about whether the event was on or not.

As a watery sun appeared, all eyes and ears were on Clive Osgood (his last Gentlemen's Evening as Course Manager as well) who had done a quick tour of the course. "You can start at 12.15 and you will all get 12 holes in," were his most welcome words.

The only problem was where to put Johnny Beck and the Sherriff Amenity Services chuck wagon. In the end it was decided that the safest place was on the 1st tee so that all players could start with breakfast, as usual, beautifully cooked by Johnny, ably assisted by James Watson, Headland Amenity.

This also meant that Starters Dennis Smith, now retired from Rigby Taylor, and Joe Crawley, Vitax, would, of course, be pigging it out all day!

Of the 108 originally playing we did, of course, lose some, especially those with long journeys and no promise of play, but in the end 92 teed off. The only casualty to the weather was the Sisis Putting Competition as the snow did not clear in time but David Luxford still arrived for the dinner and was happy for the Sisis prizes to enlarge the raffle.

I would like to make a serious observation at this juncture. At no time did anyone complain. Nobody moaned and they just got on with it and turned what could have been a disaster into a really good day.

The dinner despite everything was very well attended, with most of those who hadn't made it for the golf turning up for the banquet. The Region had made sufficient funds to keep themselves viable for another year!

The highlight of the evening was when a presentation was made to Clive Osgood. Clive has been at Walton Heath since leaving school and has been Course Manager for this event since its inception. In all of those years

nothing has been too much trouble for Clive, we have always played the course in its best possible condition for the time of year. So it was with much pleasure that Regional Chairman, George Barr, presented Clive with a memento of his last Gentleman's Evening.

The golf had taken place, a superb meal had been enjoyed, speeches were done, the raffle had been drawn and Kevin Devane (ably assisted by John Jennings, of Dukes Meadows GC) had entertained us well.

The winners of the various categories were:-

0-9 Handicap 1. (and the Shullochie Putter) David Murdoch, Liphook GC; 2. David Badham, Stockley Park GC; 3. Mike Gould, Copthorne GC. 10-17 Handicap 1. Jon Hill, Birch Grove House; 2. David Gibbs, Kingswood; 3. Tony Dyke, Wyke Green. 18 - 24 Handicap 1. Lee Strutt, Richmond; 2. Ray Godall, Saffron Walden; 3. Murray Long, Coombe Hill.

Greenkeeper playing with Club Official. Winners. David Gibbs and Kevin Constable, Kingswood; Runners-Up. Anthony Kirwan and Adrian Livesey Colchester GC. Guests 1. Jack Buchanan, Hindhead; 2. Gary Ogilvie, Avoncrop; 3. Mark Day, Tacit.

All of those prizewinners received their prizes from the Captain of Walton Heath Golf Club, Tim Taylor. Tim had a lovely story to tell after the dinner when he replied to the toast of 'Walton Heath Golf Club'.

His daughter, aged 15, had acted as a scoreboard carrier on the first day of The Open Championship at Royal St Georges. She was very nervous, having been allocated the very prestigious game, and the wind was very strong making it difficult to carry the board. She managed with the help of the Open Support Team member who had been allocated the game. Tim was full of praise for this unknown (to him) greenkeeper who had been such a gentleman to his daughter.

With the help of Peter Boyd, Scotland's Regional Administrator, I discovered that it was Richard Saunders, St. Neots GC, and I was able to offer him the Barry Pace, of BSP Landscapes Ltd, sponsored place at the event for a "Deserving Greenkeeper".

Richard duly attended the event and was surprised to receive a mention (not to mention the bottle!) as well as sincere thanks from this year's Captain of Walton Heath Golf Club.

As usual Regional Chairman, George Barr, got the last word. I wondered what was afoot when he told all assembled that although it was well known that I was a lousy golfer, my real game had been cricket.

With this in mind he had acquired a cricket bat autographed by the South African Touring Team of 2003 and asked me to accept it as a memento of my last Gentlemen's Evening. Once again, thanks guys.

All that is left is for me to thank our sponsors who make the day what it is and to remind you that they were:- Amenity Technology; Avoncrop Amenity Products Ltd; BSP Landscapes Ltd; CMW Ltd; Complete Weed Control Ltd; Ernest Doe And Sons Ltd; GEM Professional Ltd; Golf Innovations Ltd; Grass Roots Trading Co Ltd; Headland Amenity; Rolawn (Turf Growers) Ltd; Symbio; The Scotts Co (UK) Ltd; John Shaw (Machinery) Ltd; Sherriff Amenity Services Ltd; Sisis Equipment Ltd; Tacit Golf Equipment Ltd; Vitax Ltd; WOLF-Garten.

**Derek Farrington, South East Regional Administrator**