A MAN WITH TARTAN IN HIS VEINS

A Scotsman winning the US Open! Who'd have thought Michael Campbell would become the first Scottish Major winner since Paul Lawrie in the 1999 Open? Now I know strictly speaking Campbell is a New Zealander but he himself is quick to attribute his golfing prowess to his Scottishness. His great, great, great grandfather - not sure about the exact number of greats - was a man called Logan Campbell who travelled from Scotland to the land of the long cloud and settled in very nicely it would seem.

Like Lawrie before him Campbell did well even to be at Pinehurst having to go through pre-qualifying. He snatched one the last qualifying places at the first UK-based US Open Qualifier at Walton Heath, superbly presented by Ian McMillan.

To then take on and beat the big boys in the main event was quite an achievement but no more than you would expect from a man with tartan blood flowing through his veins.

Taking the Championship as a whole the USGA went some way to rescuing themselves following the self-inflicted problems of the previous year at Shinnecock when, in their manic desire to protect Old Man Par, they made the course virtually impossible to play.

Indeed on one green you'd have had more chance of halting a droplet running down a window pane than of stopping a golf ball on the short stuff. The problem reached such heights that the USGA decided to water the green during play which goes against the rules of golf and is definitely unfair to those players who had already gone through.

Now this year the weather was extremely hot and particularly in the early part of the week but they had to do the same again and water greens which were threatening to bake and become rock hard. Now, surely the trick is to anticipate the potential problems and prepare the course virtually impossible to play.

Surely the trick is to anticipate the potential problems and prepare the course accordingly. Euan Grant, at St Andrews, tells me that he could get the greens stimping at 14 for this month's Open but because it can be windy and the ball can be blown around they keep them down at around 12. Pure common sense!

I was also interesting to read about Ian Poulter complaining about the hole cups not being inserted properly after a perfectly good looking putt bounced out. By all accounts, according to the British press, he had a valid point.

I've been to the US Open once, back in 1994, and was amazed that in the Media Centre scores were written on the huge scoreboard manually and very, very slowly, years after a much more effective and quicker system was in use in Europe.

We can be all too quick to compare ourselves unfavourably against our American cousins but we shouldn't. Our know how and skills are up there with the very best.

We shall see a perfect example of that at The Old Course where we will also see how the new US Open Champion copes on his return home.

Scott MacCallum, Editor
TO THE LAST

The annual South Wales Spring Seminar recently took place at the Royal Porthcawl Golf Club. The day, sponsored by Farmura Environmental, was deemed a great success by the 70 attendees that took part in what was an enjoyable and informative day.

Jonathan Harmer, Managing Director of Farmura, got the day off to a flying start with his talk on 'A Balanced Approach to Plant Nutrition'. This was followed by Ian Elliott, Marketing Manager of the Omex Group, and his talk entitled 'The Targeted use of Plant Nutrients, to improve plant health and vigour'. George Attwood-Harris, an independent golf course Agronomist, completed the morning line up with his presentation on 'The Agronomist and the Golf Course'.

In the afternoon our guest speaker, Jim Arthur, took the stage. Our sincere thanks to Farmura and Jonathan Harmer, MD, for the support and for ensuring that Jim was present. Jim had been advised by his doctors against travelling to Wales, as he was not in good health, but despite this warning he attended and we are truly grateful to both parties for this, his last ever presentation to an audience of Greenkeepers.

Quite fitting that following his talk, Jim was presented with a gift from the members of BIGGA's South Wales Section to thank him for his support, friendship and services over many years. The gift presented to him by our Chairman, Angus Macloed, was a print of the changes made at the Royal Porthcawl Golf Club by Simpson in 1934, where Jim was an Agronomist for over 30 years.

Our sincere thanks to all at Farmura for their support, especially Gerald and Jonathon. To the Royal Porthcawl Golf Club and especially Course Manager, David Ward, for his assistance and support and to Jim for making the effort, he will be sadly missed.

Peter Lacey - Section Secretary

BIGGA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

The BIGGA National Championship, sponsored by Ransomes Jacobsen, will soon be amongst us once again. The 2005 two day event will take place at both Workshop GC, Sheffield, and Sherwood Forest GC, in the East Midlands, on October 3 & 4.

Many Sections are holding National Championship Qualifiers currently, but if you miss the cut at Section level, you can still be part of this superb Championship. Entries of all standard of play are most welcome to play in the BIGGA Tournament, as the two days offer a wonderful chance to meet, socialise and play golf with fellow greenkeepers and trade members at all levels and new and old friends.

Graeme MacDonald, Newark GC, claimed overall victory at Alwoodley GC in 2004, with marathon runner Noel Crawford, Royal County Down GC, winning the Scratch Championship. Many will be aiming to get their hands on their trophies this year. The annual event includes Nearest the Pin and Longest Drive competitions, with Regional team trophies and individual prizes in various categories up for grabs each day.

An information leaflet and entry form is included in this edition of Greenkeeper International. If you have not received this entry form in the magazine or require further information on the BIGGA National Championship contact Sarah at BIGGA HOUSE on 01347 833800 or by email, sarah@bigga.co.uk.

HEDLEY GOES GREEN

The Scottish Golf Environment Group (SGEG), a partnership of the Scottish Golf Union, the R&A, Scottish Natural Heritage and the Scottish Executive, has appointed Carolyn Hedley as its new Project Manager to lead the delivery of its research and developmental work.

Carolyn's background is in civil and environmental engineering within the water industry and she brings with her a variety of project and environmental management skills.

"I am delighted to join the team at SGEG and look forward to the challenge of building on the achievements during the next phase of this unique initiative. I am keen to ensure the group's extensive work continues to have a positive impact on the environment and the Scottish golf sector," said a pleased Carolyn.

Over the past nine years SGEG has provided advice to over 330 golf clubs and facilities, and distributed a range of technical support materials - addressing issues such as climate change, waste management, energy conservation and new golf course development.

DIAMOND AT RAIN BIRD

Rain Bird have appointed Kneale Diamond as Golf District Manager. Kneale previously worked as Course Manager for the Marriott Hanbury Manor Hotel and Country Club.

"Besides strengthening our sales force Kneale will also provide valuable training for greenkeepers in the use of Rain Bird central control software," said Victor Jamieson, Regional Manager Northern Europe.

JOINING FORCES

Barclay Chemicals Manufacturing Ltd has joined forces with SumiAgro Amenity. The move is part of Barclay's growth strategy in the European amenity and turf management sector and will compliment its existing crop protection business.

The Barclay/SumiAgro Amenity business will form a new division of Barclay, trading throughout Europe and serviced from Dublin. The division will be headed by current SumiAgro Amenity Business Manager, John Gregory.
SGM HIRE MATHIESON

Colin Mathieson has been appointed in the position of Business Development Manager, Scotland, for SGM Hire, as part of the company’s continued growth. Colin brings to SGM a wealth of experience, gained in both the agricultural and groundscape markets.

“I am sure Colin will prove to be a valuable addition to our team as we continue to develop our Hire presence in Scotland,” said Steven McInroy, SGM Hire’s Managing Director.

Brian Goudie will continue to operate alongside Colin within the golf market in Scotland, but will now also take on additional responsibilities for the development of the company’s presence within golf, across the whole of the UK.

CARRARO’S CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Kaizen was the watchword at the recent Antonio Carraro Tigrone World Meeting Day, held in Padova, Italy. The Japanese word, which means continuous improvement, has become the motto of the Italian tractor manufacturer after the company has spent the previous few years redeveloping, rebuilding and reevaluating its whole working process.

After investment in Porsche Consulting these changes, including a new production theory, which is used by Toyota, and increased concentration on Research and Development, have resulted in a new outlook for Carraro and an even brighter future for the Italian giant.

The day was marked by the unveiling of the new Tigrone Series, seven new models of tractor to further enhance the range. Carraro, whose tractors uniquely have equally sized front and rear wheels have 605 sales outlets worldwide, and their tractors are available in the UK via Carraro UK, a division of Riko UK, headed by Stephen Cabrol.

The celebratory event, which hosted over 500 individuals, including Dealers, Importers, Branch Managers and the press, involved a factory tour, a tractor show of the Tigrone Series, Dealer awards, the unveiling of the Giovanni Carraro monument in celebration of the manufacturer’s founder and culminated in a dinner with entertainment provided by Al Bano, a famed international singer and UN Representative.

“The Tigrone Day marks a change of an era for the company which will allow us to look forward with hope and optimism. A new generation is here, Antonio Carraro is much younger today and ready to face the future,” said Antonio Carraro, President.

BIGGA INVESTMENT SUCCESS

BIGGA has had its Investor in People Award reaffirmed after successfully passing a recognition review. The review, which occurs every three years, involved interviews with current staff at BIGGA HQ to establish if the Association continued to meet the high standards set by the award scheme.

BIGGA Staff with Investor in People inspector Steve Hudson, middle

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SWAN DESIGNS BLAKES

Howard Swan, golf course Architect, has designed an 18 hole golf course called Blakes, near North Weald in the heart of Essex which opens later this month.

Construction on the 6,631 yard Par 71 layout began back in 2001 following a six month planning and design process. Swan Golf Designs were appointed by the developers in 2000 to refine the course as 18 holes from an original 27 hole master plan.

Blakes Golf Club will operate on a pay and play basis, with a limited membership, and will be home to the Scott Cranfield Golf Academy with a bay driving range and a designated chipping and bunker practice area for players to hone their skills on.
Gilholm Liverpool Bound

Craig Gilholm has been appointed Links Manager at Royal Liverpool Golf Club. Craig started his new role on Monday June 6.

The new headman succeeds Derek Green, who died earlier this year after playing a major role in getting The Open back to Royal Liverpool. Craig, 33, has 16 years experience as a greenkeeper at Muirfield, with the last eight as Deputy Course Manager. He brings considerable experience of managing a top grade championship course and has recent knowledge of accepting the varied demands of the Open Championship, with the 2002 Open being held at Muirfield.

IoG’s Gosset Retires

Patrick Gosset is stepping down this summer as Chief Executive of the Institute of Groundsmanship. Patrick joined the IoG in 1996 as its first Chief Executive.

"It has been a great experience working with so many people, both in the Institute and across the wider industry, who are so truly dedicated to their work and to the advancement of their profession," said Patrick.

Alex Millar, IoG National Chairman, added: "Patrick’s departure at the end of July will be deeply felt across the organisation and his contribution will be greatly missed."

A new Chief Executive will be appointed in due course.

No More Waste

Course Care has installed a purpose made granulator at their Keighley base to process thousands of plastic chemical containers.

Instead of taking them to a landfill, the machine turns the plastic into chips which are re-processed and turned into useful roof top items for use around the golf course, including fence posts, seating, walkway, sleepers, etc. The company are encouraging waste reduction by recycling and composting.

Their new composting machines will turn grass clippings, twigs, branches, leaves, green kitchen waste and all that cardboard from the pro shop into compostable material.

The company is also busy warning golf clubs of the changes to the Hazardous Waste Regulations that came into force in April. These regulations require all clubs that are producing hazardous waste to register with the Environment Agency.

Us Open Began in England

Malcolm Campbell, victorious at the US Open in June, actually started his Championship run at Walton Heath Golf Club by taking one of the last qualifying spots on a score of 139.

The first US Open Regional Qualifying to be held outside of the United States was hosted by Walton Heath on June 6. 53 European Tour players played 36 holes for nine places to play in the US Open.

The club was approached in the spring of 2004 by the USGA to host this inaugural event and have signed up for a two year trial period. From the club’s view this was an easy tournament to host without the usual infrastructure that comes with most Tour events. The crowds were allowed to walk the fairways and get up close to see the competitors play, which worked well.

The Walton Heath green staff were ably assisted with course preparations by greenkeepers from Queenwood, Hendon, Hankley Common, Tyrells Wood, Ashridge and Letchworth. No major requests were made in relation to the set up of the golf courses, apart from a stimpmeter reading of 10.5ft.

"This has been a fantastic tournament for the golf club to host and we look forward to hosting it again next year," said Ian McMillan, Course Manager.

Sandburn Sets the Scene

Staff from irrigation and drainage company North Staffs Irrigation attended the opening of Sandburn Hall on Friday June 10, and were greeted with the sight of the new course looking its very best. The par 72, 6700 yard course is nestled in woodland on the outskirts of York.

Under the direction of irrigation consultants IrriPlan, North Staffs began work installing the irrigation system in April 2004. Water that’s drawn from a bore hole near to the clubhouse is held in a water tank before being applied to the greens, tees and approaches using a Tonick 2-zone controller and Hunter sprinklers.

A series of man-made lakes cascade across the course, which is on an incline creating a four metre fall. A pumping transfer system directs water from the lowest of the lakes through 1100 metres of pipework before discharging it into the highest, which is directly outside the clubhouse.

Director Martin Hinchcliffe commented: "Those who’ve been involved in creating it have looked beyond the irrigation system and used water creatively, with stunning results, to enhance the relaxing, picturesque setting for guests and golfers to enjoy."
ALUN RACKS UP THE MILES

Alun Wright, Sales Manager at TH White Ltd, has fulfilled a lifelong ambition by riding his Honda XRV 750cc Africa Twin motorbike from Land’s End to John O’Groats.

It took three days overall, a total of 915.5 miles avoiding all motorways, with the exception of one mile on the M48 over the old Severn bridge. He spent 16 hours 15 minutes actually in the saddle at an average speed of 56.33 miles per hour and averaging 54.2 miles per gallon.

Using all of his charm he managed to acquire a set of HotWired heated clothing, normally used in winter by greenkeepers, from the marketing department at Ransomes Jacobsen to ensure that he kept warm and dry throughout the 1,946 mile round trip.

"I've always wanted to do it and I had to use up some annual holiday by the end of April or lose it. This presented the ideal opportunity, so I hopped on the bike and just went for it," said a delighted Alun.

LELY TEAM UP WITH YANMAR

Yanmar’s range of compact tractors and power products will be distributed by Lely (UK) Ltd as from September 1. The announcement comes after Claymore Grass Machinery and Yanmar decided to go their separate ways.

Claymore, Yanmar and Lely will work together over the coming months to ensure a smooth transition of the distribution and, in particular, the continued availability of spare parts and services. Lely’s Peter Wheeler will head up the activity.

AVONCROP ADD NEW NAMES

Joe Crawley and Ceri Richards have joined their sales team.

Following the loss of Colin White, Joe Crawley will be covering the Hampshire, East Dorset and West Surrey area for the Company. Ceri Richards will be taking over the South Wales area in July after the retirement of Ray Burrows.

Both Ceri and Joe are well known in the amenity industry, both having worked for Vitax in the past.

“I'm really pleased that Joe and Ceri have joined Avoncrop Amenity Products. For both of them they have hard acts to follow, but I'm sure they will look after their customers with dedication and excellent technical support," commented Chris Briggs, Business Development Manager.

SYMBIO UP BY TWO

Symbio has announced that two new members are joining its technical sales team.

Paul Sheather, previously Head Greenkeeper of the Arden Course at the Marriott Forest of Arden, has joined Symbio as Regional Technical Manager covering North London, East Anglia and Leicestershire. Paul completed his HND in horticulture and moved rapidly through the greenkeeping ranks, preparing the Arden course for several European tour events and of course The Masters Championship.

Vicky Willet, whose first degree was in agronomy and forestry, did a PhD assessing the role of organic nitrogen in plant growth. Vicky is based in Skipton North Yorkshire and will help Symbio to grow in the North of England. Vicky spent a year in Malawi managing a plant research project on top of seven years of research into UK soils and she is looking forward to applying her knowledge to help greenkeepers improve growing conditions and their playing surfaces.