Welcome

A Special Week Awaits
Eight years after feeling the heat of the media spotlight and the wrath of a few players, Carnoustie Links Superintendent John Philp and his team are gearing up for another Open Championship this month.

The narrow fairways, severe rough and high scores brought about a renaming of the course in some newspapers to “Carnastie” last time around and took away from the great work John and his team had done on the areas he describes “as the areas the players were supposed to be playing from”.

This time round John has already had to face the media again as they looked back at the last Open and quizzed him on his preparations. He handled himself well when faced with a barrage of questions and took the wind from the sails of one journalist who, hoping to highlight John’s lack of knowledge of the game, asked if he played golf and, if so, of what handicap? John was able to say that while he doesn’t play so much now, he did once play off 1.

I was lucky enough to catch up with him a few weeks later to talk about the preparations in a more detailed and measured manner and can honestly say that a couple of hours in John’s company is as refreshing as it is exhausting. I came away with my head buzzing full of the ideas and philosophies of a man whose passion for the game and, if so, of what handicap? John was able to say that, while he doesn’t play so much now, he did once play off 1.

Those of us who were at Carnoustie in ’99, and had the unforgettable experience of cheering home a home grown winner in Paul Lawrie and losing it before he could place the order materials on the back of a cigarette packet, memory has to be Don taking an order for the family before turning to the topical sports story of the day.

Don lived life to the full with his positive attitude. Many of you will have your own story of the day.

He said: “I have decided only to take on a limited number of design contracts at any one time, as this gives me the opportunity to get personally and deeply involved in each of the projects.

“I hope that my signature design courses will be my legacy in Europe, personally and deeply involved in each of the projects.

First and foremost Don was a family man who loved his wife and daughters and later on his grandchildren. West Country greenkeepers all over the West Country passed away suddenly on Monday, May 14, 2007.

Don lived life to the fullest with his positive attitude that rubbed off on everyone he met, he would always see the good points in people and encourage them with his positive manner.

During recent times Don has been working for Roffeys as their representative in the Devon & Cornwall area, he was also the Section’s events organiser for Devon and Cornwall where he continued to drive the Section forward.

I’m sure Don would like us to remember him with a smile, many of you will have your own memories of gentleman Don, my fondest memory has to be Don taking an order for materials on the back of a cigarette packet and losing it before he could place the order back at his desk.

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Richard Whyman, BIGGA Past Chairman