Changing of The Guard

Following a dramatic conclusion to the 37th Curtis Cup, a ceremonial changing of the guard has taken place at The Nairn Golf Club. The handover, which marked the conclusion of an exceptional 31 year tenure, saw golf course manager Iain Carson pass on the reigns of the club’s proud greenkeeping tradition to Ritchie Ewan, his deputy of 25 years.

In a career spanning more than three decades at the Highland course, Iain Carson masteredmind a Walker Cup, Scottish Amateur Championship, a Senior and Amateur Open and one of the most loved contested Curtis Cups in recent times.

“One of the biggest changes has been the development of Nairn’s from a relatively small club in the north of Scotland to one that is recognised throughout the world,” he said. “We are all part of a team here, committee and management, and we have all been involved in bringing the club forward.”

The staging of the Curtis Cup–coupled with the club’s highest entry (23) in Golf World’s recently published Top 100 Golf Courses in Britain & Ireland has ensured Mc Carson leaves on a high. “For me, having the Walker Cup here in 1999 and getting the Curtis Cup in 2012 has been a great honour. No other club in the north of Scotland has had both of these events and it means Nairn is one of only ten clubs to host both,” he said.

“It has been a fantastic adventure which I have enjoyed from the start.”

In what may see as a continuation of what came before, the new keeper of the greens will be tasked with ensuring the famed Highland links preserves its reputation for its exceptional greens. Discussing his new position, Ritchie praised his former boss and looked forward to the future.

“It has been a privilege to work alongside Iain for the last 25 years,” said the club’s new green course manager. “He has worked hard to achieve the playing surfaces that we have at Nairn which are admired by so many. This shows through in how the course is presented and the feedback we get from the members. My job will be to continue this tradition so that Nairn can be enjoyed long into the future.”

It’s not just the members who enjoy the club’s smooth running greens. Former Ryder Cup captain Colin Montgomerie is also a fan, describing Nairn as “one of the best links courses in our great country,” while World Number One Luke Donald said he considered it a great test of links golf and one of Scotland’s best courses.

With the only goal of a cagey final which looked destined for penalties, Pyrford Golf Club saw off the challenge of West Hill Golf Club to retain the JSM Cup.

The preceding rounds of very competitive 5-a-side football were played out during one of the warmest days of the year. The commitment of all the teams led to penalties having to decide 2 of the quarter final matches as well as the semi-final in which Pyrford sneaked past Cuddington Golf Club. West Hill defeated Queenwood 2-0 in the other semi-final.

Before the presentations could take place a penalty shoot-out also had to decide the winner of the ‘golden boot’ for tournament top scorer. Zane Percival (Pyrford) narrowly defeated Ben Edwards (West Hill) during sudden-death penalties, both having finished level on 6 goals at the end of the final.

JSM’s Managing Director David Cole remarked, ‘The commitment and standard of play has been great to see, particularly on such a warm day. Our football tournament in turning into a great social event and we must thank Tony/ Lely UK for their support in making it such an enjoyable success’.

Entry to the JSM Cup was open to teams of greenkeeper’s, groundsmen and other turf and landscape professionals from around the south-east. First played for in 2008, the competition is held biannually.

GTC ANNOUNCE NEW DATES FOR CHAIRMAN OF GREEN WORKSHOPS

The Greenkeepers Training Committee has announced three new dates and venues for their very popular Chairman of Green Workshops. Presented by Laurence Pite & MG the Workshops provide a first class introduction to the role and responsibilities of the Chairman of Green and are a must attend for all golf club officials who have responsibility for liaising with the course management team. Events will take place as follows:

Thursday 13th September 2012 at Priory Barn, Bridgwater College, Cannington Centre, Richmond Hill, Cannington, Bridgwater TA5 2LZ

Thursday 20th September 2012 at Comyn (Caernarvonshire) Golf Club, Moela, Comyn LL32 9ER

Tuesday 25th September 2012 at Llanishen Golf Club, Hend Hr, Cardiff CF14 9UD

On Course Foundation Charity Golf Day Success

The On Course Foundation which seeks to find work opportunities for injured servicemen in the golf industry held a Charity Golf Day at Royal Birkdale. Alex Harrison, who is employed full-time as a greenkeeper at Gainsborough Golf Club after being placed there by the On Course Foundation, took part in the Chantley Properties Ltd team. Alex was joined by Royal Birkdale Captain, Sid Ludlow, Formby Captain, Niall Roy and Peter Unsworth of Chantley Properties. Pictured, from left to right, are Niall Roy, Sid Ludlow, Bert Beddow, Peter Unsworth and Alex Harrison.

For further information about the On Course Foundation email info@oncoursefoundation.com or telephone 0208 334 3310.

25 YEARS FOR STUART AT JOHN O’GAUNT

IGCEMA Board Member Stuart Hall recently celebrated 25 years service as Workshop Manager at John O’Gaunt Golf Club in Beddow, and was presented with a commemorative gift by the Club Captain, Martin Pettit. 2012 is turning into a landmark year for Stuart, following his selection to be part of the BIGGA Delegation to attend the Golf Industry Show in Las Vegas (courtesy of Bernhard and Company). In 2010 he was also part of the workshop team at Celtic Manor for the dramatic Ryder Cup Matches.

On receiving the presentation he remarked, “it doesn’t seem like 25 years since I first arrived at John O’Gaunt for my first day’s work, hand cutting greens of all things. Since then I have done many different jobs in an ever changing environment, it’s been an enjoyable journey to where I am now and along the way I have met and worked with many different people from all areas of the industry, each and every one of those people have helped, encouraged and influenced me in some way during my time here.

“I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of those people for their help and support over the years and thank the staff and committee of John O Gaunt for their continued help and support.”