Callum beats Long Odds to Triumph

A promising teenage greenkeeper helped his club scoop a coveted trophy – after being called away from repairing a bunker to play a crucial round.

Trainee Callum Long, 17, had to race to the first tee to compete in the St Ives Junior Cup final after a player dropped out, and asked if I could help his club scoop a coveted trophy – after being called away from repairing a bunker to play a crucial round.

Callum, who plays off 12, is currently studying for a diploma in greenkeeping while working at St Ives Golf Club, Cambridgeshire, as part of his work-based training. He said: “I was repairing a bunker when the junior organiser came over to tell me someone had dropped out, and asked if I could play in the Junior Cup Final. “It was a bit of a surprise to say the least, but luckily I had my golf shoes at the club. Before I knew it I was in a golf cart heading to the first tee. I still had my work clothes on. It was raining because I had got up that morning at 5.30am to start work, and because it went to a play-off I didn’t finish until about 6.30pm, but I knew I had to keep my concentration because it was an important competition. “It just goes to show that maybe you don’t need to do too much preparation, my partner and I played some good golf on the day and I was very pleased to help us win the cup.” Callum was delighted by his success as was everyone at the club, particularly Course Manager Phil Gaites.

SOUTH COAST DEFEAT SECRETARIES IN CARE CUP

South Coast Greenkeepers achieved a notable victory in the 16th Annual Course Care Cup. Held at Rushmoor Golf Club, the Wessex Secretaries were keen to reverse last year’s close defeat in fine weather. The match was again fought hard, extremely close, with the result coming down to the final two holes of the day. The greenkeepers prevailed winning by three matches to two.

Home comforts at Verulam

Verulam Golf Club took full advantage of hosting the BIGGA Golf Management Trophy by winning the 16th Annual Course Care Cup. Held at Rushmoor Golf Club, the Wessex Secretaries were keen to reverse last year’s close defeat in fine weather. The match was again fought hard, extremely close, with the result coming down to the final two holes of the day. The greenkeepers prevailed winning by three matches to two.

An idea which began over a chat at the last BTME resulted in the first BIGGA golf battle between North and South Wales BIGGA members.

The tournament was the brainchild of Gareth Knight from Trefloyne Golf Course and Rhys Butler of Aberdovey Golf Course - and Rhys agreed to host the inaugural event.

Gareth, South Wales Secretary, takes up the story: “Rhys kindly booked the dormy rooms for the south team and we played on two of the eight players. 

“We were very lucky to gain sponsorship for both teams. John Mooney of Rigby Taylor organising the North Wales team sponsorship and Peter Holmstrom from Countrywide sponsoring the South Wales team.

“We teed off at 2pm. It was a light breeze at Aberdovey for the North Wales Links Boys, however blowing a gale as far as we were concerned!

“Strong winds and a tight Links course made it tough conditions for some of the inland parkland green keepers. 

“The course was excellent, a beautiful coastal setting, the true undulated elements of the natural rolling links creating an exhilarating rustic and natural course.

“Colt, Braid and Fowler have all had a hand in shaping the course over the years, with tight lies, rolling fairways, natural bunkers, undulating approaches, dry firm surfaces and true, fast greens, a joy for any standard of golfer.

“The match was very close with three of the games heading to the 18th hole, the result being 3-1 to the North Wales team.

“We all sat down to a beautiful meal after and we were joined by Richard Dixon of the Golfing Union of Wales who said a few words, speeches were made and the rest of the evening was enjoyed by both teams enjoying the delights that Aberdovey had to offer.

“Thank you to Rigby Taylor, Countrywide and Farmura for their continued support and assisting this event. Trade involvement is so important to all section events.

“Thank you to all the BIGGA members that travelled far and wide to support the day, and to Richard Dixon of the GUI for his support and Aberdovey for hosting the event.

“The Organisation for next year’s event is already underway and we hope it to be as successful as the last. This proves once again how important networking can be at the BTME show.”

Attention BIGGA Members

Have you got anything that you think might be of interest to other BIGGA members reading these pages? We are always on the lookout for news, stories and goings-on within our membership. Also, if you are doing something outside of your day-to-day greenkeeping role, let us know about it. Maybe a fun activity or a sponsored run? Please feel free to get in touch with our new Communications Executive, Steve Castle on 01234 833800 ext 313 or for emails, email: castle.steve@bigga.co.uk with your news and photographs!

North and South Wales Come Together in Battle

Bothwell Castle Golf Club have appointed a new Head Greenkeeper and an Assistant Head Greenkeeper. Alasdair McDermid, who has been Acting Head Greenkeeper for the past year at the parkland course near Glasgow, has accepted the permanent role of Head Greenkeeper. He’s been with the club for 20 years. Stewart Caraway, who has been employed by Bothwell since 2000, is now Assistant Head Greenkeeper. Stewart has been Acting Assistant since last year.

Everyone at BIGGA congratulates Alasdair and Stewart, and wishes them every success in their permanent roles.

Kings of the Castle

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Trainee Callum Long, 17, had to race to the first tee to compete in the St Ives-Junior Cup final after a player dropped out at the last minute. Despite still wearing his work clothes, he held his nerve to win the cup in a dramatic sudden death play-off.

Callum, who plays off 12, is currently studying for a diploma in greenkeeping while working at St Ives Golf Club, Cambridgeshire, as part of his work-based training. He said: "I was repairing a bunker when the junior organiser came over to tell me someone had dropped out, and asked if I could play in the Junior Cup Final. "It was a bit of a surprise to say the least, but luckily I had my golf shoes at the club. Before I knew it I was in a golf cart heading to the first tee. I still had my work clothes on. It was tiring because I had got up that morning at 5.30am to start work, and because it went to a play-off I didn’t finish until about 6.30pm, but I knew I had to keep my concentration because it was an important competition. "It just goes to show that maybe you don’t need to do too much preparation, my partner and I played some good golf on the day and I was very pleased to help us win the cup."

Callum was delighted by his success as was everyone at the club, particularly Course Manager Phil Gates.

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South Coast Greenkeepers achieved a notable victory in the 16th Annual Course Care Cup. Held at Rushmoor Golf Club, the Wessex Secretaries were keen to reverse last year’s close defeat in fine weather. The match was again hard-fought and extremely close, with the result coming down to the final two holes of the day — and the greenkeepers prevailed winning by three matches to two.

An excellent meal followed and thanks from all were extended to Highbury Golf Club for sponsoring the event.

Pictured: Highbury Group’s Area Manager, Paul Dyter is shown presenting the trophy to Tony Gadd, Chairman of BIGGA South Coast Section.

HOME COMFORTS FOR VERULAM

Verulam Golf Club took full advantage of hosting the BIGGA Golf Management Trophy by winning the competition on home turf.

The event, sponsored by Ticit, provided an excellent prize table.

The Verulam team of Robin Purser, Chris Carpenter, Don Longmore and Neville Custance triumphed with 85 points. Second place went to Buckingham Golf Club with 81 points, the team included Wayne Pagett, Peter Frost, David Barnes and Chris Wilkes. Third place went to John O’Gorman Golf Club with 77 points on count back.

The format was a stableford, four ball better ball with nearest The Pin was won by Paul Toyer from St Neots Golf Club and the Longest Drive winner was Simon Woolley from Brickenden Grange Golf Club. Thanks to all who attended.

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Stuart Carlaw, who has been employed by Bothwell since 2000, is now Assistant Head Greenkeeper. Stuart has been Acting Assistant since last year.

Everyone at BIGGA congratulates Alasdair and Stuart, and wishes them every success in their permanent roles.

Picture: Stuart (left) and Alasdair

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Impact on golf courses

Trees are an important and integral part of virtually all golf courses in the UK and their continued health is vital to the structure and appearance of the course as well as the health and safety of members, players and staff.

Common ash is spread throughout the UK. The ash tree population was recently estimated at 80 million but this is almost certainly a gross underestimate.

Common ash is a pioneer tree which freely germinates from naturally dispersed seed to establish in groves where opportunities arise in woodland, copses and rough open land.

Many if not most golf courses will have ash trees that have naturally established in this manner.

Common ash is also widely planted on golf courses, prized for its fast growth, an open and light shade casting canopy which does not kill the turf grass beneath. And a light leaf load which rots away quickly in autumn and is relatively easy to clear away.

PC and Fera are now recommending that landowners who have planted ash trees in the last five years should inspect them for symptoms of Chalara ash dieback disease.

Greenkeepers should follow this advice even if the trees were purchased from a UK nursery. The nature of trade between EU nations means they could have just as easily come from any one of 26 other EU countries the vast majority of which have endemic chalara dieback disease.

Help is at hand...

Greenkeepers who suspect they may have Chalara ash dieback disease on their courses should contact: Forest Research Tree Health Diagnostic and Advisory Service. Tel 0131 314 6418. E-mail planthealth@forestry.gov.uk

Fera Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate. Tel 01990 466625. E-mail planthealth.info@fera.gov.uk

BIGGA Welcomes Communications Exec

BIGGA are delighted to announce that Steve Castle has joined the Association as Communications Executive.

An appointment that strengthens the editorial team at Greenkeeper International, Steve has bedded in comfortably, finding his feet in his new role, whilst mixing in very quickly and easily with everyone at BIGGA House. Steve, who even managed a game of golf with his new colleagues, one night, brings with him experience of working as reporter for Ross Parry Agency Ltd, which syndicates news stories to national newspapers and magazines.

“I covered court cases, inquests as well as anything from press conferences with lottery winners to exclusive and sensitive interviews with members of the public,” Steve told us.

Looking forward to writing for GI, Steve also expressed interest in finding out more about you, the member.

BIGGA and GCMA Date

The BIGGA and GCMA seminar series takes place on the South West Section on Thursday October 18.

Chipping Sodbury Golf Club is the venue for a host of speakers including former British Amateur Open champion Viren Saunders and Tony’s Andrew Brown, who will be looking at water resource management. There will also be an afternoon presentation outdoors showcasing the benefits of the Bledisloe Lunker Liner for golf course maintenance, with the session being followed by a presentation of the Bledisloe logo.

A joint lunch will be provided.

BIGGA members will receive Continuing Professional Development points. This exciting seminar costs just £25 per person (or £22 for three delegates) and the closing date for registration is Friday 12 October. There is a maximum of three members per delegate per club. If you’re a golfer, pay per head, if you are a manager or course manager, please send cheques made payable to GCMA Society to Karen Drake, Westonsuper Mare Golf Club, Uphill Road North, Weston super Mare BS23 4NQ.

For any queries, or further information about the day, please contact Karen on 01934 626968 or at kdrake@eurotelt broadband.com

Julie Joins BIGGA

Julie Willitts has joined BIGGA as Account Account. Julie has a wealth of experience in the financial area, starting out as an office junior. Her last position was at VRC in Warwickshire as Finance Assistant.

She said: “I’m really looking forward to the opportunity, and have been made to feel very welcome by all the team. I’m particularly looking forward to increasing my financial knowledge working with Finance and Procurement Manager Steve Wragg.

‘I’ve also moved to a lovely part of the world which is a bonus, and am looking to join a local golf club.’

Julie, who hails from Staffordshire, is also a keen cyclist.

North East Competition Venue Change

Please note the venue has changed for the North East Autumn competition. It will be played on October 10 at Tynehead GC. This replaces the original venue of Wooler GC.

“From the stories I’ve received so far, it’s clear that all sorts of interesting things are taking place, and we encourage every BIGGA member to feel free about looking forward to any article which might be worth a mention on these pages.”

Julie, who hails from Staffordshire, is also a keen cyclist.