OPEN Q&A

Last month we featured a Q&A on the Open Support Team. This month we’ve spoken to a member of last year’s team and an excited first timer to find out their views on the Open and their work.

Steve Hopkins, Greenkeeper at Broughshiel Park Golf Club, took time out from being terminology by badgers on the course (see the bulletin board) to fill us in...

What’s being on the Support Team like?

It’s fantastic. You’re never going to get that close to professional golfers in any other situation and it’s awesome to see them in action. You also get to spend a good length of time with greenkeepers from all sorts of different courses from around the world.

Can you pick out a highlight?

All of it! It’s extremely well organised and planned. You really are a part of the tournament, and it’s an honour to get ‘inside the ropes’ and watch the world’s best players at the closest proximity you can get.

What advice would you give?

Go and enjoy it! Also, ask questions. You’ve got a hell of a lot of experience there in the BIGGA Support Team and beyond so you can learn a lot from them, and also seeing how things are done at one of the world’s top courses.

Monselvie-Jacy Goodchild, Head Greenkeeper at Broughshiel Golf & Country Club, is gearing up for what will be her 9th appearance at one of the world’s most famous golf competition.

What was your reaction when you found out you had selected for The Open Support Team?

I’ve played a part on support teams at the BMW PGA Championships in the past, and got so much from it, but The Open is the ultimate real and I can’t wait for July to come round.

What are you hoping to gain from the week?

I’m looking to get an insight into tournament preparation, the presentation and the operational side of things. We hold some quite high profile tournaments at Bowood – but obviously these are nowhere near as prestigious as The Open! I’m sure I’ll learn a lot from the week and maybe even bring some knowledge back which I can use on my own course.

What are you most looking forward to?

I’ve never attended The Open even as a spectator so I’m looking forward to experiencing the buzz of the whole event. I know it’s going to be an intense few days but I’m looking forward to the adrenaline rush when I’m there.
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Munroshire-Jacky Goodchild, Head Greenkeeper at Bawbro Golf & Country Club, is gearing up for his third year of being part of the world’s most famous golf competition.

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BIGGA welcomes the following new members

Scotland

- Matthew Martin, RLC (Glenmuick), Student, Central Section
- Ryan McPhee, The Gleneagles Hotel & Kings_Ben, Greenkeepers, Central Section
- Daan Langley, The Gleneagles Hotel & Kings_Ben, Greenkeepers, Central Section
- Finlay Barr, Auchendinmore Golf Club, Apprentice, Mid Anglian Section
- Simon Moore, Auchendinmore Golf Club, Apprentice, Mid Anglian Section
- Graham Taylor, The Gleneagles Hotel & Kings_Ben, Greenkeepers, Central Section

Northern Region

- Carl Richardson, Shawbank Golf Club, Greenkeepers, Stafford Section
- Cian McCallum, Shawbank Golf Club, Apprentice, Stafford Section
- Robert Taylor, Balmoral Golf Club, Student, North West Section
- Robert Dyke, Hugmore Golf Club, Apprentice, North West Section
- Alan McManus, Balmoral Golf Club, Apprentice, North West Section
- David Lock, Hugmore Golf Club, Apprentice, North West Section

Midland Region

- Neil Adams, Toro Commercial Products Ltd UK, Midland Region
- Amanda Gaskin, Toro Commercial Products Ltd, Apprentice, Midland Region
- Simon Brown, Shrewsbury Golf Club, Apprentice, North West Section
- Graham Price, Bala Golf Club, Apprentice, North West Section
- Jamie Clarke, Jubilee Golf Club, Apprentice, North West Section
- Rachel Hassall, North Wales Section
- Craig Owen, North Wales Section
- Kevin Owen, North Wales Section
- Mark Hughes, North Wales Section
- Matthew Evans, North Wales Section

South East Region

- Joe Eynon, Greenast Norwood Heath Golf Club, Apprentice, Surrey Section
- Callum Eccleston, Greenast Norwood Heath Golf Club, Apprentice, Surrey Section
- Paul Shipp, Southwark Golf Club, Apprentice, London Section

South West/South Wales Region

- Jamie Whittick, Greenast Norwood Heath Golf Club, Apprentice, Surrey Section
- Zak Gittins, Queenwood Golf Club, Apprentice, Surrey Section
- James Yeo, Greenast Norwood Heath Golf Club, Apprentice, Surrey Section

Assistant Profile

Our monthly look into the life of an assistant greenkeeper...

Name: Jamie Robertson
Age: 23
Club: Meldrum House Golf Club
Position: Assistant Greenkeeper
Nickname: Cakes

How long have you been greengreenkeeper? Four years

What was it about the career that attracted you? I love playing golf, and being on a golf course all day making it look and play great is really enjoyable for me.

If you weren’t a greengreenkeeper what do you think you’d be? I worked as an assistant professional in a golf shop for two years, so probably would have turned pro.

Which task do you most enjoy doing and why? Rolling the greens, I like getting the green speed up, which I hope the members appreciate.

Which task do you least enjoy doing and why? Clipping the snow, which is normally six months of the year up here.

What one thing - other than a pay rise - would improve the greengreenkeepers’ lot? Greengreenkeepers getting the recognition they deserve for their work.

What are your hobbies? Golf, rugby, fire a side football

Favourite Band? Linkin Park

Which team do you support (football or otherwise?) Turriff United

What is your claim to fame? In the last three years I’ve been to T in the Park and been on TV a few times in the crowd.

BIGGA Members’ Area

To get the most out of BIGGA we recommend you log in to the Members’ Area of the BIGGA Website.

www.bigga.org.uk