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Who will be on cloud nine after this year's Open? Picture by Brian Morgan
Tees fit for a Queen

Jimmy MacDonald has seen it all before and he knows you do that little bit more when The Open pays a visit.

The Open Championship, the pinnacle of the golfing year, is just six weeks away and the Head Greenkeeper of Royal Lytham and St Annes is in his office looking as relaxed as one would if it were the Club Championship that was just over the horizon.

Jimmy MacDonald is that type of character. Nothing much fazes him. Well why should it? He's already been Head Greenkeeper at three Opens and four Senior Opens, been Deputy at another Open, and also has a Ryder Cup and a Curtis Cup under his belt. He also coped with what would be many greenkeepers biggest nightmare during an Open.

"I'd led to believe that I'm the only living greenkeeper to have had both the Ryder Cup and The Open Championship."

For all that his Championship CV is unrivalled Jimmy had one regret.

"I've just walked off the 17th and I haven't had many double bogeys but I haven't had many birdies either - I reckon I'm about level par," is how he described his round.

"With the drought of last year followed by a spring the like of which I've never experienced before it wasn't scary but it was slow. People have asked what I think will happen to the course but not many greenkeepers have experienced this so a lot of it is guesswork. You don't know what's going to be thrown at you," said Jimmy.

In those circumstances, although it is a new situation, experience is all the more important.

"We've had Fusarium on the odd green but I haven't had many double bogeys but I haven't had many birdies either - I reckon I'm about level par," is his modest assessment of a career which charged course dramatically at the age of 27 after he had trained and lectured in ceramics.

It's his reserved and measured West Highland way and one which is ideal for coping with the conditions which are being thrown at him.

"I never want to overfeed although I know people would be tempted because of the weather situations but in the main we don't do anything differently to a normal year."

"We just maybe spent a little more time on the fairways more regularly and cut bunker banks more regularly but perhaps not as close," he explained.

The drought of last summer caused Jimmy and his team to assess the damage at the end of May which is a big amateur event and I was tempted to cut a bit closer but I had to resist. As it was the course was not as good as it has been for other years for the event but it's a general feeling throughout the country."

Another area to which Jimmy pays particular attention in the run up to an Open is the fertiliser programme.

"I've been looking through one or two old diaries from the 50s that are in the club. Things have changed. They mention 'gang mowers off for winter service mid October.' Not now they are still cutting. The change in standards may have something to do with it but they also mention greens being mown three or four times a week in mid April so it looks as though the seasons have shuffled just a little bit."

Being in a ideal position to reflect on the job of a greenkeeper he does feel that improved machinery has made it easier.

"But you still go out to a bunker like I did 30 years ago with a rake a brush and a shovel. When you build bunkers with reveted walls you still build them with the same tools."

"It is nice to see a young apprentice lay a turf and you watch as he pulls the top of it - just a little thing. I can remember the old man who taught me it the same way. The little lore was important."

He is also immensely proud of his home nine hole course at Traigh in the West Highlands where he assisted in some rebuilding work. The 4th hole a 247 yard par-4 is called "Jimmy's Choice" after him.

"On the back nine on the scorecard it is called "Jimmy Choice" in Gaelic so I really have two holes named after me," he says proudly.

Among the other work carried out this year in advance of the Championship has been the complete rebuilding of 56 of the 185 bunkers to go along with the 50 which were done last year.

Work on developing a borehole is also well advanced and it is hoped that they'll be able to extract up to 80,000 in 12 hours, enough for one night's watering.

"It's not enough to keep them green in a drought situation too long. It's only survival kit - it'll still go brown but will recover faster after rain."
Preparing tees fit for a Queen

Ah rain! This brings me to the situation at the last Lytham Open in 1989 which would have had many lesser men reaching for the strait jacket and voluntarily admitting themselves to the padded cell.

The Saturday of the '89 Open was completely washed out and Royal Lytham became the only venue to have had the final day of the Championship played on a Monday.

"In the end we made more friends than enemies by getting it right," recalled Jimmy.

"I just couldn't believe what I was seeing. I'd never seen anything like it before or since."

After a full day's torrential rain Jimmy and his Green's Chairman left the course at half past midnight.

"We left some pumps running and at that stage we weren't winning. It was stalemate. I went home and dozed in my chair and when I got back to the course at half past four what I saw was unbelievable - 80% of the water had gone. It must have stopped raining while I'd been dozing and while I was away the water must have penetrated the crust on top of the ground because the drains were empty."

Pressure was put on to start as soon as possible but Jimmy resisted and play resumed at 11am in threeballs.

"There wasn't a pool on the course. I felt the course that year was as good as I've ever had it and if it hadn't rained and the sun had shone the greens would have been as good as I could possibly have wanted them. I've got video of all the Opens I've been involved in and watching the film of '89 the puts were rolling as truly as they could possibly go."

It says much for the condition of the golf course that year that it will always be remembered for the brilliance of Seve and his wonderful chip on the final hole to seal it against Nick Price.

"Wouldn't it be nice for Seve to win it at Lytham for a third time," said Jimmy, who is the proud owner of the flag from the 18th signed by Seve as well as a flag signed by both teams from the '61 Ryder Cup.

To emphasis the fact Jimmy asks if I would mind if he listed the names of his team rather than give an equipment inventory. "They are far more important to me than machines."
Are you wearing the RIGHT GEAR this summer?

How do you buy protective clothing for yourself and your staff? Do you consider the job to be done and then seek out the specification that best protects those vulnerable parts of the body from the hazards identified as part of the risk assessment? If your answer is yes then you are one of the very few who have got it right!

In most cases protective equipment is bought on price (often the lowest!); this results in either a failure to protect, or a failure in performance, that is, it didn't do the job. In accident investigations involving injuries to the worker inadequate, or unsuitable, protective equipment is often found to be a contributory cause to the injury.

In our work conducting health and safety audits for clients we frequently find respirators hanging in sheds covered in dust, personal ear protection dirty, torn and left on benches, or worse! Face shields so scratched that they are almost opaque and inconvenient nail! This type of protective equipment requires special information to enable the right choice to be made. If there is any doubt as to what would be the most suitable type for a given situation, there are technical staff available to give advice.

When reviewing your existing protective equipment there are several important points to keep in mind:

• The Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 1992 place duties on the employer: (Regulation 4) "Every employer shall ensure that suitable personal protective equipment is provided to his employees who may be exposed to a risk to their health or safety while at work"..."it is capable of fitting the wearer correctly, if necessary after adjustments within the range for which it is designed". Where you employ staff who are very small, or in the case of greenkeepers, very large, it may be necessary to order specially made equipment.

• The Regulations now set quality standards for almost all protective equipment. Your equipment should have the BSI kite mark, or the CE mark, or both. If you find that existing equipment does not have the correct quality mark, then they may not be suitable.

• Before making a final decision on equipment for a job where you are not sure what would be suitable and/or adequate, seek advice. It may be better to buy one or two items and issue them to staff to use. If you do this you must monitor the use before making a decision.

• Where staff are issued with new equipment, they will need training that deals with correct use and maintenance. (Regulation 9)

• In addition to purchasing the equipment you must provide the correct facilities for cleaning and storage. This is very important not only for hygiene reasons but it will also have a significant effect on the life of the equipment.

Jon Allbutt

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There's a new range of CE standard protective clothing from Michael Richmond - the mail order specialists of forestry tools, clothing and equipment.

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Cream hide chainsaw gloves

CHANGING ATTITUDES FOR THE BETTER

Among the advances taking place on the golf course is the attitude to greensstaff clothing. This has been brought about by a number of factors including the need to ensure: 1. Safe working practices, 2. Protection from the elements, 3. An eye to security where staff can be identified from casual intruders on the course and 4. An extension of the dress code applied to players to the club's own staff, developing the professional image of the club.

As a result Course Care, which is already supplying a full range of consumables to the greenkeeper and Course Manager has undertaken a study and introduced the Course Wear range. Course Wear offers a wide range of clothing to meet all of the above needs. This ranges from Chain Saw trousers to foul weather trousers for machine work. It includes shirts and jackets with embroidered logos to identify the club and the wearer. Course Wear supplies fully water-
proof footwear and protective toecaps to prevent serious injury, safety wellingtons and even a safety trainer.

Embroidery of logos can be undertaken by Course Wear to any design required at an extra charge giving that extra look of professionalism and real feeling of identity for all staff.

**GETTING TO GRIPS WITH LAW CHANGES**

The new legislation of Chainsaw clothing – known in the industry as PPEs – has caused confusion as to the level of individual protection needed.

As from July 1 1995 all chainsaw protective clothing had to be made to a CE standard, and display the Chainsaw in a shield logo. Also the clothing had to be tested to a certain speed rating and classed as follows. Class 0 – 16 metres per second, Class 1 – 20 metres per second, Class 2 – 24 metres per second, Class 3 – 28 metres per second.

In addition chainsaw trousers are divided into three further categories. Type A. Front protection with some extra protection on the outside of the left leg. Type B. Front protection with some extra protection on the inside of both legs and some extra on the outside of the left leg. Type C. All round protection with the same amount of layers all around – usually nine or ten.

Types A & B are for ground workers and Foresters experienced in using chainsaw and certified to National Proficiency Test Council standard. Type C is for the climbing arborist and the occasional user. Most trousers are to Class 1 standard.

Leather and rubber boots come into this category but Class 0 will only be allowed until December 31 1999.

Chainsaw mitts are usually to Class 0 with no time limit. There are two types. Type A which are chainsaw mitts which give coverage up to the fingers on your left hand. Type B which cover the whole of the left hand.

Most of the clothing apart from the boots use the long loosely woven fibre that will be pulled into the cutting trevin and clog chain rotation, whereas boots provide a medium that a chainsaw will not readily bite into.

Finally no PPE can give 100% protection against cutting by a chainsaw. Training and safe working practices are essential, workers must not become blase because they are fully equipped with PPE.

Honey Brothers of Guildford, Surrey, stock a full range of trousers and bib and brace to the latest PPE standards and to Class A, B and C standards. The company also stocks tree surgeons trousers which have extra material in the knee and crotch for easy movement. Chainsaw Gloves to Class 0, Type A; Chainsaw Boots to Class 0 and Class 1, Chainsaw Wellingtons to Class 2.

Honey Brothers Tel: 01483 561362 Fax: 01483 3568.
I t is a depressing thought that my own back problems, earned over after over 30 years of abusing simple principles of correct lifting, puts me in the that large group of people where it is not even a topic for discussion. It seems to be unusual to find someone of my generation without a back problem, even more depressing is the fact that we all know how it happened! And yet we are not taking some simple steps to ensure the next generation are able to walk upright, don't need painkillers, can play sport and work without fear of ending up laying on the floor for days! Why is it that we accept physical injury as an inevitable result of a lifetime at work. Have you examined your accident records, or staff sickness records lately? Have you calculated the number of days lost in the last year connected to work related injuries, sometimes old ones that seem to be unusual to find some-
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Scotland
Scottish Region
Was there ever a saying so true as, "the sun shines on the righteous". On Tuesday May 28 it pored rain all day, on Thursday May 30 it pored rain all day, so what happened on Wednesday May 29? Of course it was the Scottish Region Final of the Hayter Challenge and what a grand day it was too. The sun shone, a reasonable temperature and just a light breeze, perfect!

Royal Aberdeen Golf Club lies on Balgownie Links, a natural links which must rank high in the list of best links in Scotland.

Even though it was just a light breeze it was still a very stern test, in fact many found it rather more than stern. They did think that the fairway off the tee or you are in trouble and with quite a few long par fours scoring was never going to be easy. However Sam Morrison and his staff had the course in excellent condition, especially the greens and hospitality from all on the staff and our thanks go to the Management staff and to the clubhouse staff under Maureen Sinclair, the service was first class and the food wasn't half bad either. Your sticky toffee pudding was excellent Maureen.

We were delighted to have BIGGA Chairman Dean Cleaver and Executive Director Neil Thomas join us for the day and what better place for Dean to have his first taste of golf in Scotland (don't ask him about his two at the 8th) We were especially pleased to have with us for a meal and to present the trophies the Captain of Royal Aberdeen Golf Club, Jim Christie. A true gentleman and host we learnt quite a bit about Royal Aberdeen over the meal. And to answer the question that Royal Aberdeen had posed to Sam Morrison, yes we did think that the course was in great shape. Sam, of course, as well as being Head Greenkeeper is also Chairman of the Scottish Region, so between an early morning start making sure the course was ready for us, then playing in the tournament and acting as host to our guests he must have been a tired man that night. The fact he did not get to bed till 2am the previous night would have nothing to do with it, of course. But what about the important people and none more so than our sponsors Hayter led as ever by that, forced to live south of the border to earn a crust, Scotsman Kim Macfie (we'll accept that, Kim as long as you don't lose your accent) It's a great tournament Kim it gives so many people a chance to compete locally, regionally and nationally and we are indebted to Hayters for giving us this opportunity. The next most important people are of course the players and we had a great mixture from far and wide, and I'm sure the Dumfries lads did not get home the same day they did. However it was a marvellous day and as I said at the beginning "THE SUN SHINES ON THE RIGHTOUS" Out of all those good players the following were the best and they qualify to represent Scotland at Fairhaven in September.

Cat 0-9: George Mitchell, Newmachar, 73-3-70; Bob McKay; Prestwick St Nicholas, 80-9-71; Ian Bell, Glencorse, 78-6-72.


Cat 19-28: Graham Shearer, Balmore, 98-24-74; Gordon McRae, Rutho Park, 97-22-75; Garry Crosbie, Dumfries and County, 97-22-75.

Inter Section Prize: West Section. Elliott Small.

North
The Section outing at Cruden Bay was a great success with 70 members, guests, and trade being in attendance. All credit to Hamish Stephen and his staff for presenting the course in such great condition, the only complaint I heard was from Scottish Chairman Sam Morrison about the stone in the 18th fairway which must have been there as this was the only way he reckoned Gordon McKie could have been in the longest drive competition. Seriously though, I envy Hamish having such beautiful links land to work on, no wonder Cruden Bay is so highly rated in world golf. The lucky prize winners were as follows: Scratch, I. Colin Forbes, Aberdyke 73; 2. Bradley Wood, Westhill, 79. Class One, 1. Steve Sullivan, Craighellie, 75-4=71; 2. Ian Macleod, Tain, 80-4=76; 3. Kevin Peace, Inverness, 81-4=77; Class Two. 1. Gordon Moir St Andrews.79-72; 2. Gordon Mckie, St Andrews, 87-11=76, 3. Ken Kinnaird, Granton-on-Spey, 89-12-77.


BIGGA Chairman Dean Cleaver was especially pleased with the day and I hope to be there with Downfield's Paul Murphy to represent the Section on the Greenkeeper Support Team. Let's hope for a good week. Also this month at the Carnegie Golf Club at Stirling, 70, we are in our section, we have the opportunity to see a challenge match in the Shell Wonderful World of Golf series. The match is between Greg Norman and Fred Couples and I believe is, the only one to be held in the UK, so if you have got the time to spare on Sunday July 14 you know where to go.

Finally congratulations to Muir of Ord Assistant Stevie Macintosh on winning the North District Championship at windswept Tain with a 56 hole score of 142, just two over par which was excellent scoring as a cold North West wind gusted over the course all day. Iain Macleod

Northern
North West
Penrith GC, once again played host to the Cumbria Cup competition sponsored by Course Care. This competition in its second year, is mainly for greenkeepers in the N/W section, who work in the Cumbria area, and are out on a limb as far as getting involved with most of the N/W competitions.

Cource Care sponsored the day, the prizes, and the meal, and we are indebted to Hayters, who also honoured to have Lord Whitelaw, the President of BIGGA, join us for a meal, and the presentation.

The course was in great condition thanks to John Berry and his staff and I must admit I was also pleased to see so much wildlife of the course. (The animals and birds of course).

The spring tournament on the 30th May, was played at Morecambe GC, and almost a record number of 60 played. Myself and many others not having visited Morecambe before, were pleasantly surprised to find, not a links course, as expected, but a well established parkland course, in beautiful condition, with magnificent views of Morecambe Bay, and the lake district.

Mark Broughton, the Course Manager, whom I am happy to say, has gained his Master Greenkeeper Certificate, had the course in excellent condition considering the bad start to the season we have all had.

Many thanks to Morecambe GC, for allowing us the courtesy of the course, and to Ken Dean and his wife, Eileen for the fair banquet they gave us.

The results were:
Best gross. P. Pease; 68; Best nett. P.Simpson. 80-14-6; Over 55s. W. Shipley. 82-11-71; 2. nett C. Ball; 3. nett C. Stanley; 4. nett J. Coar; 5. nett W. Merritt.

Many thanks to the companies who supported us with the prize table. They were: SISIS, Acorn Equipment, Gary Worrall Course Care, Rhone Poulenct Premier Turf, Miracle Grow, Gem, Hayter.

The competition was also a qualifier for the Hayter Regional Final, and the qualifiers are:
10-18. P. Simpson. C. Ball.

Keeping in touch with news and comment from the regions

The regional final to be played at Abergele & Pensarn July 5.

Finally the Roses Match will be played at Whitefield GC, on
Wednesday 14 August. A team of 16 will be required so anybody interested please contact me on 0151 724 5412.

Bert Cross

Northern
Well, it’s well into the year and most courses seem to be struggling to get any kind of growth in the right places. But at least everybody seems to be in the same boat, so that’s not too bad.

With regards to our Spring Tournament held at Scarborough South Cliff Golf Club, may I thank Nick Gray, Managing Director of Martin Brothers (UK) Ltd, for their kind sponsorship of the prizes and Mel Guy who represented them on the day.

I would like to welcome the following new members to our section and look forward to meeting them at one of our forthcoming events: Kevin Alderson, Shipley Northcliffe G.C; Steven Slator, Beverley & East Riding G.C; Benjamin Pearson, Shipley Northcliffe G.C; Eric Garlick, Redhall Services; Stephen Dwards, Swingtime GC; Stephen Couzens, Flamborough Head G.C; Roger Biebly, Hornsea G.C; Leslie Bunker, Filey GC; Tucker Filey GC.

Anyone who has any problems or wishes to put their name down for any golfing dates, please contact me Tel: 01484 519829.

Finally, I am pleased to announce that Andrea and I were married in the Caribbean on the 13 May 1996.

Simon Heppenstall

Sheffield
Firstly, good luck to Paul Unwin who after 21 years at Hallowshire GC is leaving. He is to run his own pub in Sheffield called The Hallowshire Hotel which, I am told, has nothing to do with the golf club!

Just a reminder of a couple of dates – our annual competition on July 9 at Abbeydale GC and our autumn competition at Hickleton GC on September 2.

Finally it is with regret that I have to report that Tony Wadkins passed away recently. May I, on behalf of the Sheffield Section convey our sympathies to his family.

John Lax

North Wales
The Section’s Spring tournament and Hayter qualifier was held on May 14 at the Bull Bay Golf Club, Almyth, Anglesey. Given that we have had such a cool start to the year it was an unusually sunny day with temperatures into the high 70s and hardly a cloud in the sky, at least one member was sighted wearing regulation shorts and I for one was suffering from sunburn the following day. Eighty five members and guests took part in the competition and for those members who did not play, you missed a real treat. We have quite a few thank yous to say for what was a wonderful and most pleasant day out. Firstly to Bull Bay Golf Club, which at short notice provided us not only with courtesy of the course for the day but also with a splendid venue and a good challenge of golf, also to the caterer and his staff who provided a beautifully prepared and presented meal and not forgetting the splendid job done by the bar staff in re-hydrating us on such a hot day. Our thanks must also go to Andy Peel and his staff for presenting the course in such fine condition, especially the firm, fast and true greens. Last but by no means least our thanks must go to our sponsors for the day who provided all the prizes:- Hayter, Acorn Equipment, Gem Professional, Grosvenor Nurseries, John Osman Machinery, Ki-Chem, Major Owen, Martin Brothers, Mannonsteeg International, Richard Campen, Rigby Taylor and Walker Engineering.

The results of the competitions were as follows:

The best scratch score was achieved by R. Cowell 68 – 5 – 63 a little bit of local knowledge might have had something to do with this, he is Captain of Bull Bay. Very well done.

The following qualify to represent the section in the next round of the Hayter Competition:

Cat 1 Pat Valentine 76-6-70.
Darryl Davies 81-76-75.
Ian Buckley 83-7.6.

Steve McCabe 90-17-73. Andrew Jervis 89-16-73.

Don Rowland 96-24-72. Stuart McCall96-24-72.

We are pleased to welcome two new trade sponsors for the section: Aitken Sportsturf (Nigel Prestwick) and Strike Top Turf (David Robertson).

Our Chairman Brian Anderson wishes to thank our Section President Terry Adamson and Vice President Phil Davies for the effort and hard work that they have given to the section over the years and especially in the last few months, it is only with support like theirs that we have such a active and successful section. Brian also wishes to thank Andy Campbell for his support and service. Andy resigned as Section Secretary in May and has transferred to the North West section. It has been decided that all future section competitions will have properly organised starting times. This will entail a bit more work for our Match Secretary (MS) Terry Evans. Entry forms will require you to indicate at what time you would wish to start your game and will need one person to act as the contact for the MS to advise you of your allocated starting times. To make life easier for the MS entry forms will also require you to indicate for each entrant whether they are guest or member. Completed entry forms will of necessity have to be returned to the MS approx. one month prior to the competitions. Please remember that first come will be first served and the earlier you return your entry forms the more likely you are of teeing off when you want to. It should also be noted as that we are granted courtesy of the host golf clubs our guests are expected to be golf club related ie. Captains, Vice Captains, Secretaries, Green Chairman etc. Our Match Secretary, Terry Evans would like the winner of the ‘95 Christmas Cup at Prestatyn and the cup winner of the Autumn 95 Chirk competition to contact him on 01352-720692 as soon as possible.

With over 130 members in our section I am sure there must be some news out there or someone with an idea for a new activity or event. Remember that this is your magazine and if you have anything that may be of interest to the rest of your colleagues please feel free to phone me on 0151-336-6675 or write to me at 11 Ashtree Close, Little Neston, South Wirral, L64 9QS.

Trevor Johnston

Cleveland
Our Spring Tournament was held for the first time at the new course at Ramside Hall Hotel golf complex, Durham City. This magnificent 27 hole course is now fully open to all.

Our congratulations must go to the owner Mike Adamson, for the wonderful layout and to Roger Shaw, Course Manager and staff for the fine rescue greens and fairways and the tee mix of Bent grasses. The condition of all was superb.

### Around the Green

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