The wind was blowing hard and the formidable West Lancs course was baring its considerable teeth, but one man stood firm to clinch the 2011 BIGGA National Golf Championship, sponsored by Charterhouse and Kubota.

Jason Hunt, a 29 year-old Assistant at Addington Palace Golf Club, near Croydon, kept his cool and carefully two putted the final hole for a single shot victory and the biggest win of his golfing career.

“I have won a few Open tournaments but the quality of the field here makes this the biggest win I’ve had,” explained Jason, for whom it was the culmination of a fine year which has seen his handicap drop from two to scratch.

“These were the toughest conditions I’ve ever faced in a top tournament and it is one of the hardest courses I’ve played. I had to scrap for every par,” he revealed.

“I had it in mind that it was between our three ball on the second day, me, Garry Duncan, from Carnoustie, and Kevin Boxall, from Guildford. Kevin had a good front nine and was in front at that stage, but Garry was leading by the back nine. I just hung in and on the final green I thought I might have two for it and that proved correct,” said Jason, who is self taught, and who has never changed from the left hand below right grip he adopted when he took up the game.

The opening round was perhaps the difference when, in calmer conditions Jason shot a two over par 74 to hold the clubhouse lead by a single shot from Kevin, and two from Garry. It proved to be the difference when both Jason and Kevin shot 79s on the second round and Garry, dropping a few shots in the closing holes, shot 80 to complete the first second and third in the main competition.

“I thought West Lancs was a fantastic golf course and in superb condition. I’m looking forward to going to Scotland next year to defend my title at Irvine Bogside,” said Jason.

Survival of the fittest

The BIGGA National Championship 2011 is sponsored by Charterhouse and Kubota

Mark Blacknell, who won the BIGGA Challenge Cup, was in a purple patch when he arrived at West Lancs, having just won his Club Championship at Leen Valley, but he could not have expected how his 36 holes would pan out.

The 5 handicapper shot a 10 over par 82 on the first day, without making a birdie, but when he set out on the windy second round he soon made up for it.

A 6-iron to eight inches on the
1st was a fine birdie start and he followed it up with a 50 foot eagle putt on the 2nd to be three under par gross after two. But that wasn’t the end of it as he holed his 4 iron from 170 yards into the wind at the 13th for a two and his second eagle of the round.

“I thoroughly enjoyed the golf course, it suits my game as I hit a low ball, and I think it is a great event. I’ve already planned to take my wife with me to Scotland next year. I always enjoy it when we go to Scotland,” said Mark, who celebrated his 50th birthday the Sunday following his win.

The Challenge Bowl for affiliates was a hotly contested category this year and it was Phil Dewhurst, of Rigby Taylor, who emerged victorious with a two round score of 157 to win on the better second round. The 18 hole Stableford Challenge Plate was won by Brian Robinson, of De Vere Belton Woods, with 32 pts, while the Regional Cup, for the best four nett scores from each Region over the opening day was won by the South East Region with a score of 295 with the Midland Region, two shots adrift.

The difficulty of the West Lancs course can be amply illustrated by the fact that the scoreboard operator was deeply concerned that he was running out of number “8”s. “2”s, “3”s, “4”s and “5”s were in plentiful supply and “6”s and “9” were interchangeable, but with many scratch, and indeed handicap scores, in the 80s and thus including the “snowman”, contingency plans were put in place for the second round.

While it was exceptionally tough the course is also very fair and the conditioning was second to none and a real credit to Course Manager John Muir and his team while the warm hospitality generated by the clubhouse staff was second to none. Club Captain, John Morris, attended the dinner and delivered a lovely speech and personalised Grace, and Lady Captain, Bernadette Metcalfe, joined John at the Tuesday Prize Giving.

Charterhouse and Kubota, in the shape of Nick Darking and Curtis Allen, of Charterhouse and Tom Dunlop, of Kubota, were superb partners during the two days and the display of machinery they brought along was a demonstration of the commitment both companies give to the Championship.

The 2012 BIGGA National Championship will be held at Irvine Bogside Golf Club, Ayrshire, on October 8 & 9, 2012.
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The BIGGA National Championship sponsors were a great partnership.
The anatomy of...

Cylinder grinders

Some points to consider when choosing a grinder.

- **Precision and Durability.**
  - The grinder should operate accurately for at least a decade. When choosing a unit, find out the machine's maintenance demands and its projected service life. Compare the machine specifications and ensure the unit will yield to the tolerances you demand and that these are easily achieved.

- **Coping with Cuts.**
  - Some modern cutting units will have the cylinder and rear roller fixed in the frame during manufacturing. During use, the cylinders can be subject to very thin cuts that cannot be corrected other than through correct grinding. Check the machine you purchase will be able to remove such cuts.

- **With thanks to Hunter Grinders – a division of Lloyds & Co of Latchworth Ltd.**

Despite the simplicity of methods employed in cylinder grinding, there remains a degree of confusion regarding spin and relief methods. What is the difference and do they matter? James de Haviland offers his thoughts on the issue.

**Technical terms**

- **Spin grinding**
  - As the name suggests, spin grinding will typically sharpen the cutting edge and, assuming the grinder has been set up correctly, restore the edge profile to its original angle to the manufacturer's specification. The time it takes to do the job is influenced more by how long it takes to get the cutting unit into the grinder and correctly setting it up than the actual grinding process itself.

- **Relief/Relief spin grinding**
  - Terminology can be confusing, so it is best to consider relief grinding as a separate process; its job is to grind a relief into the back of the blade.

  - If the blade cutting edge can be reground at the same time, then it follows that the job will be carried out faster and hence the somewhat confusing description of spin relief grinding; the grinding produces spin but the cylinder blades are ground in turn - the cylinder is not powered and spun as it is when spin grinding.

- **Is a relief essential?**
  - No, but it is accepted that relief ground units will stay on cut longer than those that are spun ground only. Cylinders can be exclusively treated to a spin grind and still deliver decent performance.

  - Manufacturer advice, however, tends to favour a relief grind for fine turf mowers, noting that with or without contact the technique reduces friction which in turn cuts heat generation which can help preserve the cutting edge for longer. Reduced friction also reduces overall wear and power consumption. The latter can help save fuel.

  - Of equal importance, a reduced land on the blade can ensure the...
Some points to consider when choosing a grinder.

- **Accuracy and Durability.**
  - The grinder should perform accurately for at least a decade. When selecting a unit, find out the machine specifications and its projected service life. Compare machine specifications and ensure the unit will meet the tolerances you demand and that these are easily achieved.

- **Coping with cooling.**
  - Some modern cutting units have the cylinder and rear roller fixed in the frame during manufacture. During use, the cylinder can be subject to ‘coning’ that cannot be corrected other than through correct grinding. Check the machine you purchase will be able to remove such coning.

Step-by-step Analysis...

Cylinder grinders

It could be argued that those responsible for the sale of cylinder grinding equipment have outlined what specific tools do far more complex than it needs to be.

In very simple terms, modern golf course mowers are designed to produce a high quality of cut. This quality can only be maintained if the cylinders – or reels – are returned to the original manufacturer’s specification.

- **Rough mowers** for example, may have a thicker cutting edge with a reduced relief.
- **Fine turf mowers**, noting that with the existing relief on the back cylinder blade is likely to have sufficient depth not to be ground off. So although the spin grind will not have cut a relief, the existing relief may well remain and the cutting edge will still benefit from the relief.

Conversely, the relief is obviously eroded each time the cylinder is reground.

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cylinder blade to bottom blade angles are more tightly controlled for a cleaner and more consistent cut.

A spin grind will typically need to be carried out more often as the cutting edge tends to dull sooner.

As with backlapping, spin grinding delivers best results if carried out little and often.

Regardless of technique adopted, the most important issue is to keep cylinders sharp. So spin grinding will always be preferred to running cylinders sharp. So spin grinding is only effective if the units are acting on a dull or incorrectly profiled bottom blade.

So it follows that grinding the bottom blade is as important as sharpening the top blade. It is not just a case of slapping on some backlapping compound, winding on a little extra pressure on the bottom blade and then running the cylinder up to speed in reverse.

The job needs to be carried out according to the mower manufacturer’s instructions and performed long before the blades on the cylinder are really dull.

There are those who actually advocate a modest backlap post grinding; the argument is that grinding leaves a burr on the cylinder blades and backlapping removes them.

The more widely accepted consensus is that any burrs quickly dislodge during initial mowing, making a backlap unnecessary.

What about the bottom blade?

The correct bottom blade ‘shear’ angle is absolutely critical to the performance of the cutting unit.

The sharpest cylinders will not deliver if they are acting on a dull or incorrectly profiled bottom blade.

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Bottom blades also have a finite life, with a wear limit mark cast into many OEM designs.

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cylinder blade to bottom blade angles are more tightly controlled for a cleaner and more consistent cut. A spin grind will typically need to be carried out more often as the cutting edge tends to dull to be carried out more often as a dull blade. So spin grinding delivers best results if carried sooner.

Regardless of technique adopted, the most important issue is to keep cylinders sharp. So spin grinding is a good idea. As with backlapping, spin grinding will always be preferred to running dull cylinders.

So relief is best?

Simple answer is yes. Manufacturers put a relief on the back or trailing edge of a blade for a reason. When this relief is worn away, it needs to be reinstated.

So spin grinding can only work well as long as the original relief remains post sharpening. It may be the case on some commercial mowers that no relief is present but not always.

Conversely, if you want to retain the relief as per the manufacturer’s specification you need to regrind it as it is eroded by blade wear. Contact ‘reel to bedknife’ settings, it depends upon who you talk to: Toro is in the light contact camp, John Deere and Ransomes Jacobsen setting most of their cutting units for golf with an air gap.

As a rule, it is best practice to follow the advice offered by your equipment supplier.

What about backlapping?

Not everyone thinks backlapping is a good idea.

The process re-hones the cylinder cutting edge from the rear and also possibly takes the cylinder ‘out of true’ as it relies upon the action of a grinding paste between it and the bottom blade.

Backlapping can actually further dull cutting units that are blunt to start with too.

The counter argument is that backlapping is not intended to sharpen a dull blade. Its job is to help retain an existing cutting edge, helping to restore it as it just starts to dull. Judicious ‘little and often’ backlapping can help lengthen the periods between regrinding the cylinder.

The problem with backlapping is that not everyone understands that it is only effective if the units have been relief ground because the relief is necessary to force the paste to the cutting edge.

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So it follows that grinding the bottom blade is as important as honing the cylinders. Bottom blades also have a finite life, with a wear limit mark cast into many OEM designs.
Back in time looks back at cuttings of greenkeeping news from days gone-by. 2012 will be a landmark year, as it will be the centenary of Greenkeeping Associations, as well as 25 years since BIGGA was formed. Each month we will look back at the current month, but in a different year, from over the last hundred. This month we travel back to November 1975.

The issue covered Drainage Problems, a piece written by D. F. Boocock, an Advisory Officer, at the STRI and a piece on turf which came from a paper entitled Composition and Nourishment of Amenity Swards, delivered by Robert W. Palin, Technical Director, of Sutton Seeds, at Turf 75, held at Reading University.

A pub honours the fine art of greenkeeping featured in the issue. The Greenkeeper was built at the entrance to Thorpe Wood Golf Course in Peterborough and the magazine appealed for the subject of the pub sign to make himself known. The success of the search is not known.

The information was provided by Mr F.E. Sismey, Head Greenkeeper of nearby Peterborough Milton Golf Club.

Do you have any old artifacts from days gone-by? Perhaps your granddad was a greenkeeper and has something stored away in the loft? Maybe an Association tie, or a journal? If so we would love to hear from you. We are particularly interested in the early part of the last century, but anything you have would be worth considering for future editions of this article.

Please contact us on 01347 833800 or email Elliott Small, BIGGA Past Chairman, elliott.edna@hotmail.co.uk
Back in time

To this month in... 1975

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Drainage problems

The surface drainage of a golf course is greatly influenced both by design and by the character of the soil. This applies to all types of the course but particular points to note. Slopes should not exceed 1:2 and where the soil is clay-based, a well-drained sub-soil should be present. Wherever possible, the drainage lines should be kept to a minimum distance from the playing area and not intersect it. It is very important that drainage lines are not too close to the playing area.

When the ground is not too wet, a well-drained sub-soil should be present. The sub-soil should be kept to a minimum distance from the playing area and not intersect it. It is very important that drainage lines are not too close to the playing area.

Please contact us on 01347 833800 or email Elliott Small, BIGGA Past Chairman, elliott.edna@hotmail.co.uk
Scottland

Petercruiter Golf Club on September 22. This was another fantastic Section outing with a total of 62 guests attending and it was a really warm sunny summer’s day. The prize winners on the day are as follows:

Nearest the Pin winners were on the 3rd hole. Robert Patterson, Royal Aberdeen GC; 4th hole. Andrew Scott, Petercruiter GC; 6th Metcalfe, Crashow Green.

First in the sweep was Stewart Clayton, Brother; Derek Green, Inverurie GC; 3rd Neil Metcalfe, Crashow Green; 4th Stuart Addison, Meldrum Bay; 5th Jim McCormick, Kirriemuir GC; 6th George Stavert, again, he and it was nice to see my old friends, one of whom was myself some excellent advice on presentation of the course and under rated course, with some great sunny ‘breezy!’ day. I played on September 14 on Terras, Gossick GC. Nearest to the Pin at hole 13. Willie Lewis; 2: Stewart Brown, Royal Aberdeen GC; 3: Jim McCormick, Kirriemuir GC; 4th David Middleton, Royal Aberdeen GC; 5th Mike Craig; 6th Neil Metcalfe, Crashow Green; 7th: George Stavert, Royal Aberdeen GC; 8: Stewart Brown, Royal Aberdeen GC.

David Middleton, Royal Aberdeen GC; 3: Mike Craig, Kirktonbog; 4th Neil Metcalfe, Crashow Green; 5th Simon Roy, Royal Aberdeen GC; Scratch: 1: Derek Green, Inverurie GC; 2: George Mitchell, Newmachar GC.

The winner of the Main Trophy was with 25 mates attending to catch up to get the run in the team, all are welcome so please let me know and keep you informed.

The annual match against the club masters was arranged for October 14. The autumn tournament was then the 24th, results for the day were as follows, Div. 1: 1. D. Donnelly; 2. A. Court; 3. B. Walshe. Div. 2: 1. D. Cameron; 2: 1. Stewart Brown, Royal Aberdeen GC. First Class winner. Alan Campbell, Aberdeen GC. Scratch: 1. Derek Green, Inverurie GC; 2: 1. Stuart Brown, Royal Aberdeen GC.

On the day only 24 people attended and enjoyed the event which was a wee bit disappointing but maybe the next time more can get the time off.

The normal annual dinner has been difficult to co-ordinate a format which everybody wants and will attend, along with trying to get a suitable location which suits all. Last year the cancellation of the night meant a slightly reorganised pub crawl took place with those who had organised their baby sitters and house sitters, so this year it has been decided to do a similar thing meeting in Glasgow at all bar one on November 25 for a few jars and a wee discussion on things. This will be an early meet with the Autumn golf season over the Spring and Autumn Outing was Derek Green, Inverurie GC.

The Committee would like to pass on grateful thanks to the Petercruiter Golf Club and Course Manager, Paul Sharp and his teams, for the superb condition of the golf course.

The 200 Club winners were 1. E. Craig, 2. J. Cameron, 3: D. Douglas Dogwadi with the £120 win by Gina Pendliss. By the time you get thiscopy of the magazine the AGM will have come and any feedback for members’ comments to Graham and his staff will be appreciated.

Now then, let’s not forget the event on the day. The Tynecastle Golf Club on December 17, format for the day will be a fourball am/am. Please remember if you haveโปรแกรมเมอร์ for the day to book your tee times by e-mail stuart.taylor@glasgow golfclub.com Stuart Taylor.

East

What a fantastic autumn outing we had at the Braid Hills Golf Course. Twenty-two fourballs were due, but 27 took part, and August 14 on a warm sunny ‘breezy!’ day, I believe the Beardies is a highly underrated course, with some fabulous holes, great views and super greens. Thanks to Derek McLeod, the Head Greenkeeper and his crew, for the excellent presentation of the course and also Iain Grimwold, the pro, for providing Jimmy Davidson and myself some excellent advice on the day.

Eight-five year old George Stavert was there with two of his friends, one of whom was Derek McLeod, the Head Greenkeeper of the Braidies, for 12 years, back in the days when tennis men were, eh?

You were very welcome boys, and it was nice to see my old friend George Stavert again, he even gave me a smile. Cheers boys.

Scores on the doors: Scratch winner, Philip Burton, Murrayfield; First Class winner, Derek McLeod, Braid Hills GC; Runner-up. Yohan Svard, Edinburgh University; Class winner, Alan Campbell, Euan Murray; Assistant Captain, Jimmy Maxwell; Runner-up. Ryan McCulloch, Gossick GC.

A small but enthusiastic band of players were fortunate to hear a presentation from John Vargus, of Michigan State University, on October 3.

I spoke for over an hour on this subject of how to catch the ball, the different characteristics of the ball and the frustration with the putting on so many greens.

As far as I can read this, the Section AGM will have come and gone and a full report will be on the website www.agensgolf-transaction.uk.org

Allan Patterson, Course Manager at the Castle Course, was selected to represent ST Scotland in this year’s Alfred Dunhill Links Champions and acquitted himself well. Playing with Jean-Baptiste Burel, he was selected to represent St Andrews University and the North Region.

The autumn tournament was held on September 21, and the next Section golf at the Grove, Baildon, BD17 5NQ. The next Section golf at the Grove, Baildon, BD17 5NQ. The next Section golf will be on November 29 to 2018, this column has to go to Petercruiter Golf Club on December 17, format for the day will be a fourball am/am. Please remember if you have programmes for the day to book your tee times by e-mail stuart.taylor@glasgow golfclub.com

North

Hope everyone is well and by now you will be looking for the Section outings next year. Our Autumn Outing this year was held in touch with your Chairman Robert Patterson email Grass- rootsgolf@btinternet.com or Secretary Dal Robertson dalt@nurberg@y.com

Northern

Hello everyone. Hope you are all well. Nice to be here writing these few notes in such a beautiful hot weather. On September 28 the Section held the Autumn at Huddersfield Golf Club. The weather was followed by a very strong wind playing havoc with the golf it just seemed either on line, or right over, or not right to left. As we played The Lakes course a lot of balls found the water. We just never seemed to have any holes downhill. Apparently the locals thought the wind wasn’t too bad. Come to think of it, I reckon they played the other course. If that wasn’t enough the rain came upon us for an hour, so you can imagine scores were rather high. But compliments must go to David Common for that great course as was the excellent condition, especially those slick greens.

Now then, let’s not forget the sponsors on the day. The Tynecastle Golf Club on December 17, format for the day will be a fourball am/am. Please remember if you have programmes for the day to book your tee times by e-mail stuart.taylor@glasgow golfclub.com

North East

On September 21 we held the Section’s Autumn competition at Longhirst Hall Golf Club. This was the second time in recent years but for a reason it was only last year that Deputy Head Greenkeeper, Richard Stewart tragically lost his life. After having a meeting with Stuart Wilson, Manager, Graham Chambers, he thought it would be a good idea to have the day in Stuart’s honour.

Well the day started with the ceremony at the 18th. The section would like to thank Huddersfield GC for allowing us courtesy of the course, the catering staff for looking after us so well, and Ben and his team for presenting the course so well played in temperatures more like mid July. Results for the day were as follows, Div. 1: 1. D. Donnelly; 2. A. Court; 3. B. Walshe. Div. 2: 1. D. Cameron; 2: 1. Stewart Brown, Royal Aberdeen GC. First Class winner. Alan Campbell, Aberdeen GC. Scratch: 1. Derek Green, Inverurie GC; 2: 1. Stuart Brown, Royal Aberdeen GC.

The Section also held the Autumn with 25 mates attending to catch up to get the run in the team, all are welcome so please let me know and keep you informed.

The committee were re-elected to stand for another year through a new Secretary, and the rest of the Committee were as follows, Div. 1: 1. D. Cameron; 2: 1. Stewart Brown, Royal Aberdeen GC. First Class winner. Alan Campbell, Aberdeen GC. Scratch: 1. Derek Green, Inverurie GC; 2: 1. Stuart Brown, Royal Aberdeen GC.

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North Wales

I hoped you all enjoyed the Indian summer that the end of September and beginning of October brought. It was a very handy occurrence for anyone who was doing anything outside, but personally I can’t remember our greens coming back from heavy frost so much so quickly and tidly. Now we’re all starting to think about winter, snow, long froster nights and golfers who cry foul when you ban huggers to protect the course. But it’s not all bad, we can now get our teeth into some building work and that doesn’t sit on machines endlessly cutting grass as we seem to do in the growing season. A good bit of showwalling and raking to keep us warm, with the hopeful (with fingers permitting) finishing line of the Christmas break.

A good link because the Christmas tournament isn’t too far away with it being held at Petercruiter Golf Club on December 7, format for the day will be a fourball am/am. Please remember if you have programmes for the day to book your tee times by e-mail stuart.taylor@glasgow golfclub.com

The Northern Region Seminar will be held at Petercruiter Golf Club on December 17, format for the day will be a fourball am/am. Please remember if you have programmes to book your tee times by e-mail stuart.taylor@glasgow golfclub.com

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