



Double Tops For SIGGA At The Open Championship

The Open at Turnberry has come and gone and congratulations must go to George Brown and his staff for the fine condition of the Ailsa course.

SIGGA's involvement in the tournament was two-fold. First, a base for greenkeepers and friends to meet and relax away from the excitement of play was provided. Second, the association organised bunker rakers for all four days of the championship.

The SIGGA tent was again an unqualified success. It was where greenkeepers and friends, greens chairmen and club officials, members of the trade, agronomists and consultants and educational associates all made a bee-line for. There were visitors from overseas as well and fellow greenkeepers from the BGGGA and EIGGA.

An assistant greens superintendent from Atlanta in America thoroughly enjoyed her time talking to Scots greenkeepers until she was waylaid by an Irish trade

member - the blarney was something else...

The new system for bunker rakers, one raker for each match, was, after the expected teething troubles, a great success and a more popular method with rakers, players and officials than one man attending to a certain group of bunkers.

The weather, especially during Thursday and late on Saturday, was not ideal for spending five hours raking bunkers and great credit must be paid to those who stuck to the task so diligently, which was everybody.

Even greater credit goes to those fit and hardy souls who went round twice in one day! Well done, lads, you were a shining example to us all. Incidentally, this included three members of SIGGA who are greenkeepers in Sweden and we are delighted to have them in our ranks.

There were greenkeepers from as far afield as the north of Scotland to the north of England and they all considered it a very worthwhile job, which also gave them the opportunity of watching the world's top golfers as close as you can without actually playing alongside them.

I decided at the start of this report not to mention any names, but I feel I must single out (besides George Brown) Tom O'Brian, course manager at Royal Birkdale, who gave Mrs O'Brian a free rein in the exhibition tent so

he could rake bunkers. It was good to see that even a headman from an Open Championship venue was prepared to roll up his sleeves to help out.

The organising team, ever willing to learn from their mistakes, have already drawn up a list of ways to improve the system for the next time, including a base nearer to the 1st tee and the provision of something hot to eat or drink during inclement weather.

I cannot finish this report without mentioning the help we received from George Brown and his staff, who were so helpful even though they had more than enough to keep them busy. SIGGA said thanks to George on the Saturday evening by presenting him with a plaque recognising his endeavours.

Dear Sir

We at Downfield were most appreciative of the remarks on the condition of our golf course, which were made in the report of the SIGGA golf tournament (August's issue of *Greenkeeper*).

At that time, both Bill Milton, the head greenkeeper, and myself were aware that, due to a combination of the weather conditions throughout April, May and early June and our intensive efforts to eradicate annual meadow grass, the darned stuff had died out on us by the square yard, leaving a pretty thin looking sward and, in places, no sward at all.

Despite extensive overseeding and much toil and sweat by Bill and his staff, we were still far from satisfied with the state of the course when SIGGA held the tournament.

However, all the participants appeared to enjoy their day and the *après golf* was very convivial. It was interesting to listen to the shop being talked and the experiences being swapped and it was gratifying to realise the position of high esteem our head greenkeeper enjoys among his fellow professionals.

Yes, it was a great day among good company. Haste ye back to Downfield.

*L.S. Wright, Greens Convenor,
Downfield Golf Club.*

SIGGA Supports New Association

The attendance at an extraordinary meeting in Stirling recently to vote on proposals to unite the three greenkeepers' associations was fair considering the time of year.

SIGGA president Walter Woods was in the chair. After his introduction, Walter answered questions on the proposed new association and its constitution. It was gratifying to see that those present had come prepared to ask many varied questions, to which they wanted reassuring answers before voting on the proposals.

Questions covered aspects such as boundaries, subscriptions, employment, the magazine,

area funding, location of headquarters, powers and duties of the general administrator, backing from the R & A, the rights, if any, of trade members and what benefits greenkeepers will gain.

These and many other questions were dealt with convincingly by the chairman, aided by J. McKean, and when the chairman called for the vote to be taken, the first two proposals were passed unanimously and the third only had two dissenters.

So, SIGGA has decided that, conditionally on the acceptance of the same proposals by the BGGGA and EIGGA, it will become part of the new association.