



With unrivalled access to top golfing talent at The Open Championship, members of BIGGA's Greenkeeping Support Team were widely quoted in press and TV coverage. It all helped raise the Association's profile – and provided a memorable experience for everyone involved. Reports and pictures by Scott MacCallum



## Life's a ball for champ's main man

Mike Ardley, pictured, Head Greenkeeper at Braintree Golf Club in Essex, will remember the 1995 Open and its Champion for the rest of his life.

Mike was the member of the Greenkeeper Support Team working on John Daly and Ernie Els' match on the final day and won a toss of a coin with Iain MacLeod of Tain who had worked on the Costantino Rocca match to work on the play-off.

Once completed, Mike went to shake the new champion's hand and congratulate him on his achievement and was handed the ball which Daly had used to hole the clinching putt.

"I just couldn't believe it. I'd had such a wonderful week and been so lucky first to get the Daly, Els match and to win the toss of the coin with Iain then to be given the ball by John Daly is unbelievable."

Mike, who has had friends calling him up to say they'd spotted him on TV, is having a presentation case made for the ball and has already turned down an offer of £1000 for it from a dealer.



Team spirit: Members of the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team at St Andrews

# Unforgettable!

BIGGA's Greenkeeping Support Team was on fine form at the Open Championship at St Andrews with the 49 greenkeepers providing valuable news items for the world's media as well as their more conventional work.

The team provided information for the Great BIGGA Bunker Competition which was run in the Press Centre as well as made notes of any interesting incidents which occurred during the 18 holes.

The competition was to predict the number of bunkers the world's top players would find during the course of the Championship. Every time a player found sand it was marked on a form and this information provided information used by the BBC and the world's press.

The competition was a major talking point in the Press Centre particularly as one man Andrew Farrell of Golf Weekly won the first three daily prizes of bottles of whisky and was only three bunkers out on his prediction after two days. Andrew, who by

the second day was re-named Mystic Meg, choked in the final round and allowed Mike Kern of the *Philadelphia Daily News* to win the final bottle of whisky and Keith Jones, of *Golf Monthly* magazine to walk off with the £600 Hayter Harrier 48 lawn mower kindly donated by Kim Macfie of Hayters.

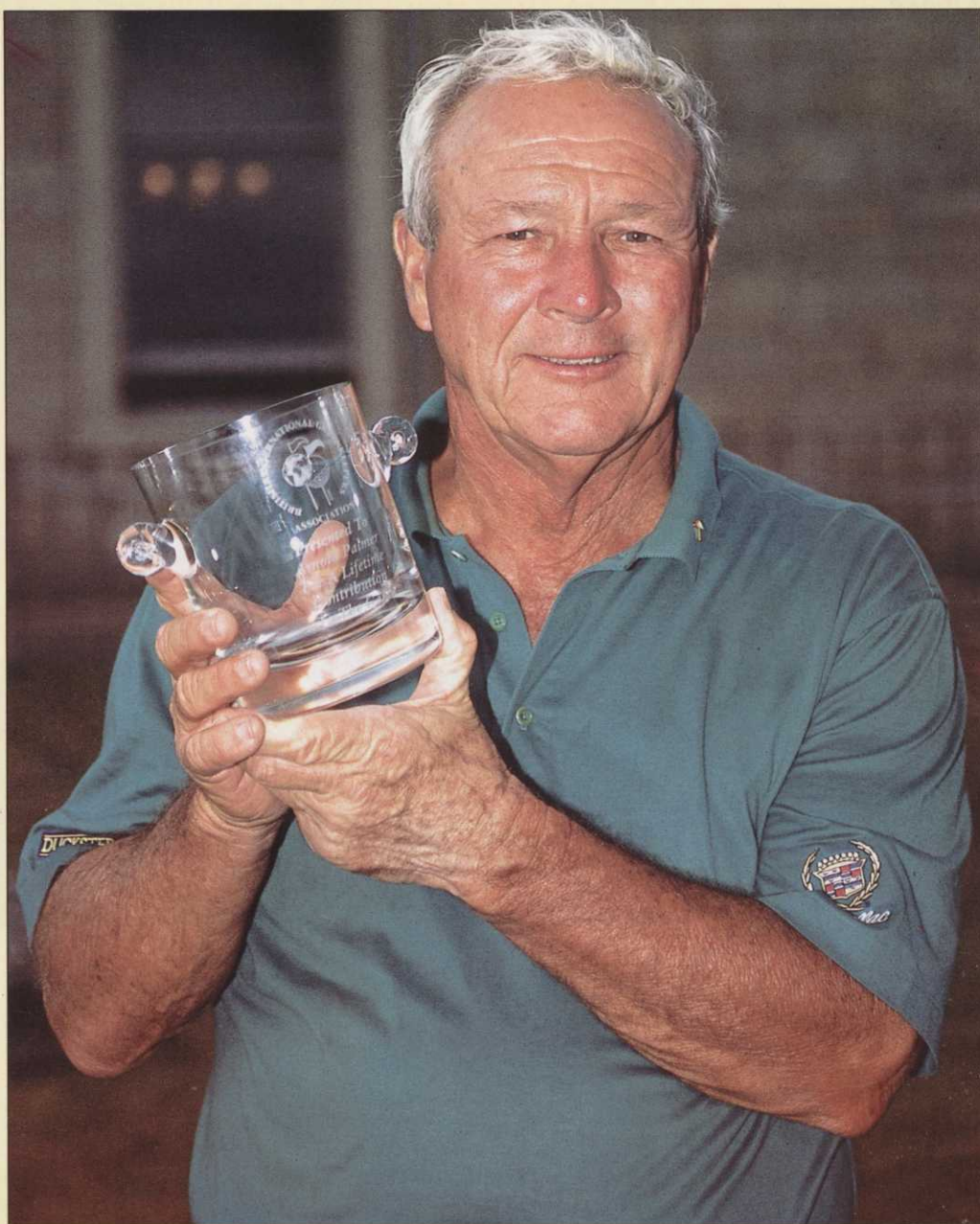
The competition and the titbits of information made it into many of the national daily newspapers and was mentioned everyday on

the BBC coverage keeping the work of the Greenkeeping Support team to the fore and ensuring that BIGGA's profile was high during the most important week on the golfing calendar.

For the record exactly 700 bunkers were found during the course of regular play with Rocca's visit to the Road Hole Bunker during the play-off adding one to the final total.

**Taking a break: Our squad relax!**





## BIGGA adds its tribute to one of golf's legends

Arnold Palmer was presented with the inaugural BIGGA Lifetime Achievement Award in front of the R&A Clubhouse by BIGGA President Barry Heaney and Gordon Moir, Chairman of the Scottish Region on the Wednesday of the Open.

Arnold Palmer said that he was flattered and honoured to become the first winner of the Award.

"My father was in greenkeeping for 55 years and to be recognised by the British and International Golf Greenkeepers means a great deal to me," he said.

He spent a few minutes talking with Barry and Gordon in front of a battery of photographers before going off to prepare himself for his final rounds in the Championship

The citation which accompanied the Darlington Crystal ice bucket read:

"In recognition of the universal debt the game, and all those who are employed within it, owes to Arnold Palmer, the British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association wishes to honour this great and universally revered golfer. As the son of a respected greenkeeper, and a man renowned as much for his sportsmanship and integrity as his talent as a golfer and a golf course designer, there could be no finer choice than Arnold Palmer to become the inaugural recipient of the BIGGA Lifetime Achievement Award."

It is hoped that the BIGGA Lifetime Achievement Award will now become a regular part of Open week.

Picture: Hailey Sports Photographic

## JUST FOR THE RECORD

■ Gordon Sherry has been mixing in high company. He has holed-in-one in the company of Jack Nicklaus during a practice round, spent two rounds playing with Greg Norman and Tom Watson and been introduced to ex-US President George Bush. To top it all, though, he has been staying with Gordon Moir, Chairman of the Scottish Region of BIGGA and Head Greenkeeper of St Andrews Eden Course, for the week.

■ One man who watched Michael Campbell with great interest was Jim Johnstone a member of the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support team. Jim backed Campbell at 100-1 at the beginning of the week.

■ Nick Price was in a playful mood as he completed the defence of his title. When his playing partner Brad Faxon nipped into one of the on course toilets Price stuck a tee into the latch to lock him in. Faxon had to put his shoulder to the door to escape – watched by BIGGA Greenkeeper Support Team member Steve Curtis.

■ A fate nearly befell Robert Allenby which the rest of us have to put up with day in day out – carrying his own bag. Under the watchful eye of Alex Robertson, the accompanying member of the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team, he failed to escape from a bunker at the 9th and turned to his caddie and said, "That's the last time I listen to you." At that the caddie said "Well carry your own bag then" stripped off his bib, put down the bag and walked off. Allenby was forced to carry his bag to the green by which time the caddie had had a change of mind and returned and there was a speedy reconciliation.

■ John Cook was a victim of the weather when his yardage chart blew out of his hand on the 13th. It was retrieved by Brian Rigby, of the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support team, who said, "That's the Scottish weather for you." He replied, "Yeah, you have to keep a firm grasp on everything." He burst out laughing when Brian added, "Especially your wallet."

■ Ian Woosnam putted poorly all day and at the end of the round instead of shaking hands with his lady marker he handed her his putter – reports Richard Barker, of the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team who worked on the match.

MAKING OUR MARK ON GOLF'S PREMIER CHAMPIONSHIP



# The Open



★ Arnold Palmer visited one of the on course toilets during his final St Andrews round. Howard McAddey, his accompanying BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team member, overheard someone say that he was going into write "Arnold Palmer was here" on the toilet wall.

Left: BIGGA Vice Chairman Dean Cleaver soaks up the sun at The Open

Below: BIGGA Chairman Barry Heaney manages to get head and shoulders above the crowds for a better view

Bottom: Neil Whitaker poses beside the Road Hole bunker



## Greenkeeper Trevor just misses out

Trevor Foster, pictured above, Head Greenkeeper at Accrington GC, came perilously close to teeing up with the stars over the Old Course.

He headed his local pre-qualifying event, coming back from two over par after two holes to post a 68, and competed in the final qualifying at Scotsraig

near St Andrews. Unfortunately despite posting a two under par total of 140 he missed out by four shots and his visit to the famous course was merely as spectator and not player.

Teeing up in The Open would not have been a new experience for Trevor. Neither would seeing his name on the top of the leaderboard.

After nine holes of the 1989 Championship at Royal Lytham and St Annes Trevor led The Open and he still has the photograph with his name sitting above the top players in the world on the leaderboard.

"It's a moment I'll remember for the rest of my life," said Trevor.

He has a fine record of making it through the pre-qualifying having failed only once but has only once converted it into a final place in the field.

"I've always played well though and never missed by very much. Even this time I did feel with a few holes to go that I could get a couple of birdies and squeeze in," he said.

# JUST FOR THE RECORD

■ A total of 700 bunkers were found during the course of regular play in the Championship – Rocca's visit to the Road Hole during the play-off took the figure to 701. The final day, including the play-off produced 156 visits to bunkers. The Road Hole claimed 14 including Daly, Els and Rocca in the play-off.

■ The last man to find a bunker in the Championship was Davis Love III who waited until the 8th hole on Sunday before entering a bunker. Dean Robertson pushed him close but his challenge came to an end when he found sand on the 6th during the final round.

■ The 17th produced the most sand drama. The hole claimed 94 victims with 72 of them coming at the Road Hole – including Rocca's visit in the play-off.

■ Lee Westwood was the man who made most visits to sand during the tournament with 12 visits to sand during the four days. Nick Faldo was second with 10.

■ James, Tomori and Nakajima were the men who made the fewest visits to sand during the week. Tommy Nakajima who became known for his Road Hole horror in 1978 made his first visit and only visit to sand on the 14th hole in the third round.

■ The hole which possessed bunkers but which claimed the fewest victims was the 8th with 16 victims all week.

■ Craig Parry was sick of the sight of one particular bunker on the course. He found the same bunker as he played the 7th and the 11th causing extra work for Sean McDade of the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team.

■ After his second successive 75 former US PGA Champion Wayne Grady gave away his putter to a young girl who had accompanied his match. The comment from Robert Hogarth, the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team member who followed the match was, "On this showing I don't blame him."

■ On an unfortunate note. The Editor's pick to win the Championship, Bernhard Langer, and the six lottery numbers he selected for the Saturday of Championship week failed to live up to expectations. The Editor expresses his regret to anyone who was daft enough to invest in them and can only rub salt in the wound by saying that he clean forgot to put any money on them himself.



Moment of glory: the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team with this year's Open champion, John Daly



BIGGA President Viscount Whitelaw made his traditional visit to the BIGGA Open Headquarters, this year in the Madras College FPs Rugby Clubhouse close to the 17th green, on the Friday of the Championship.

He chatted with BIGGA Chairman Barry Heaney, Vice Chairman Dean Cleaver and Executive Director Neil Thomas as well as a number of the members who were enjoying a break between their matches.



John Daly receives the trophy – and applause. Also at the top table is Walter Woods, Links Superintendent at St Andrews