



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!

