

# Wonderful thing about Tiger...

**R**electing on Tiger Woods' wonderful victory in the US Masters it would hard to find any down side to what seems likely to be a significant piece of golfing history.

There was one thing which worried me though, and that was the general assumption that having reduced par fives to a mere drive and a flick some of Tiger's powers would be nullified by the powers-that-be at Augusta National next year.

Augusta National changes every year with slight amendments to the course to keep it fresh. Indeed one of the most significant, not to say clever, alterations, was the decision to mow the fairways from green to tee so that the nap of the grass would knock a few yards of the length of drives.

However, if there were to be more yards added to key holes or bunkers inserted with the sole aim of catching out Mr Woods I believe it would be a mighty shame and no real service to golf.

We saw it in a minor way over here when a few yards were added to the Old Course at St Andrews just a short time after John Daly won The Open there. Unfortunately what's seen as good enough for The Old Course and Augusta National will surely be good enough for many existing clubs and those still on the drawing boards.

Particularly as we will soon be seeing the adverts. "Drive like a Tiger", "Adds 50 yards to your game". Everyone who picks up a club, me included no doubt, will be taken in.

Looking at it simplistically, and perhaps selfishly, longer courses with more hazards give green staff more work.

There are ways to restrict the power of the modern sportsman. Tennis courts haven't become bigger to cope with the power

of a Greg or a Goran, the authorities made the balls a little softer. Surely a similar amendment could be done in golf to stop players over powering courses.

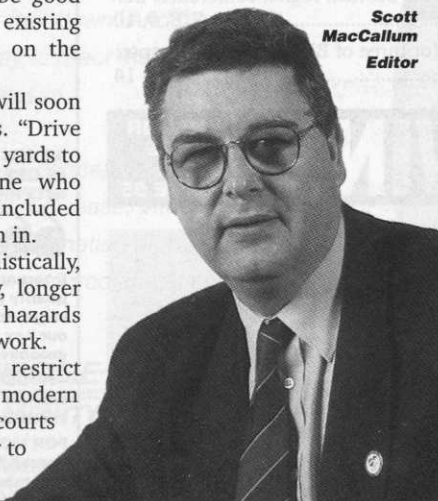
But do we need to stop them? For all his power John Daly's winning score at St Andrews was 282, only three better – less than a stroke a round – than Bobby Jones' when he won at St Andrews in 1927. Henry Cotton broke the Open record for a round with a 65 at Sandwich in 1934, Tiger's best round at Augusta this year was a 65.

I don't believe we should worry too much until The Open is won with four rounds in the 50s. Even then wouldn't it be great to watch?

I really think we should just stand back and admire the graceful power of the new Masters Champion rather than look for ways of stifling him, while at the same time making the game impossibly difficult for the rest of us. Not forgetting the extra work for greenkeepers.

Anyway Tiger Woods is a unique talent, a phenomenon.

As the song says "The wonderful thing about Tiger is... that he's the only one."



Scott MacCallum  
Editor

## As I see it...

BY PAT MURPHY  
BIGGA CHAIRMAN

**I**'ve had another busy month. It began with a visit to the South East Seminar at Brinsbury College. That doesn't sound too bad but it involved 14 hours travelling – seven each way – in the car to get there.

Having said that the Seminar was excellent. It was launched by the Vice Principal who said, as a lady golf it was nice to see the greenkeepers at the seminar on a Tuesday and not out on the golf course. I

replied by saying it was also nice to be at the Seminar because we didn't have to listen to the ladies!

Among the speakers was Billy McMillan, whom I'd heard speak at the Scottish Conference the previous month. He gives a superb talk and I agree with the person in the audience who said it was one of the best talks he'd ever heard. It was also my first chance to see the BIGGA Road Show and I thought it was first class.

The following week I was at Aldwark Manor, initially for the Working Party on Greenkeeper Salaries, and then a Board of Management meeting.

The aim of the working party is to have greenkeepers salaries agreed universally by all the golfing bodies and the working party will receive input from, among others, the R&A, the golf unions, the Golf Club Secretaries Association, the Golf Club Owners Association and the GTC.

The main news from the Board meeting was that we are still looking at our options with regard to headquarters accommodation. The meeting also saw the welcome attendance of the Deputy Board Members from each region. The idea was to let them see how the Board of Management operated and I believe it was appreciated by those who attended.

Iain Macleod, the Deputy for Scotland, told me that he had no water problems on his course in Tain. That contrasted with Billy McMillan in the south east who had told me he was having real problems. I'm about half way between the two at Shipley and I suppose we're not as good as Iain but better than Billy.

I've also been to the Savoy Hotel this month for the Agricultural Engineers Association Conference and Luncheon. It was also the occasion when Graham Dale, Managing Director of Lely, was appointed AEA President and the first person I met when I went in the door of the hotel was a familiar face, Graham's wife, Debbie, who used to be BIGGA's Education Officer.

I was seated next to Peter Mansfield, of Lely, whom I know from Toro Student of the Year judging, and I also chatted with Tony Bourke and Kim Macfie, of Hayter, and Peter Bell, of Jacobsen.

All in all a busy, enjoyable and productive month.

