



Grant Moir, of the R&A Rules Team, explains some of the finer points of the rules to the team flanked to his right by Colin Irvine, Muirfield's Course Manager



Craig Gilholm, Muirfield's Deputy Course Manager explains to the team how the bunkers should be raked

Rough Justice

Ernie Els was the man who coped best with the rough weather and the penal Muirfield rough and fought off three play-off rivals who had progressed up the leaderboard in easier conditions on the Saturday

Few people could possibly have felt that Ernie Els' victory in the Open Championship at Muirfield was not deserved. The big, likeable South African coped with the roughest of the weather on the Saturday better than anyone and, although he wobbled on the Sunday, he had the wherewithal to survive the wonderful devil-may-care approach of Thomas Levet with whom he eventually went head-to-head in the sudden death element of the play-off.

The final day produced excitement of the highest order, even if everyone's pre-match favourite, Tiger Woods, wasn't in the shake-up. He suffered an off day in conditions which amplified every mistake and he endured his worst round as a professional - an 81 which put pay to his genuinely realistic hopes of a Grand Slam.

That a player of Ernie's quality - he has been a top ten in the

world player for most of the last 10 years - did finally lift the Claret Jug is a tribute to the test that was set the players.

Colin Irvine and his team presented the course to perfection, despite rainfall totals in the lead up to the event which would not look out of place in Equatorial forests. The rain meant that the course may have been a little greener than he would have liked but Colin must have been delighted that the only comments that came from the players were positive... even considering the fact that the rough was of man-eating scale!

As ever the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team was in attendance, providing invaluable support to Colin's own team as well as enjoying the great privilege of seeing the world's greatest players from inside the ropes.



The 2002 BIGGA Open Support Team

The Great BIGGA Bunker Competition entered its eighth year and to celebrate Kim Macfie put up an extra Hayter Harrier mower - a rear roller rotary - for the Support Team member whose estimate was closest to the actual number of bunkers found during the week.

The Media mower was won by Chris Smart, of the Mid Glamorgan Press Agency, whose wife, Kay, won it three years ago. The Support Team Mower was won by Steve Oultram, of Wilmslow GC. Steve also won a bottle of whisky.

Among the entrants in the Media Competition was Peter Allen, of the Drivetime Show on BBC Radio Five Live, who entered the competition live on air at the end of an interview with Greenkeeper International Editor, Scott MacCallum, on the Wednesday

afternoon. Unfortunately Peter's estimate, of 990, was just a little shy of the total, which probably could be put down to the large number of people who made the cut.

Another man to be interviewed by Five Live during the week was Bert Cross, who, along with Peter Boyd, manned the BIGGA Cabin. Bert explained the role the Support Team did and this assisted with the smooth running of the Championship.

* The BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team has provided support to the resident greenkeeping team at every Open Championship since St Andrews in 1984.

Bunker History

Year	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02
	St A's	Ly'm	Troon	B'dale	C'stie	St A's	Ly'm	Muirfield
Bunkers	112	185	84	117	115	112	197	148
Rd 1	214	501	344	355	539	148	557	359
Rd 2	201	577	272	406	468	164	547	372
Rd 3	130	269	107	226	202	65	224	175
Rd 4	156	271	136	153	265	71	257	169
Total	701	1618	859	1140	1474	448	1585	1078



Chairman Richard Barker congratulates fellow Beedles Lakes man Matthew Cort on his fine performance in the Championship



Tiger Woods comes off the final green on the Sunday



Tiger's caddie Steve Williams hands a ball to Iain Gunn



Iain walks off with the ball tucked away in his pocket



The BIGGA Marquee got particularly busy on the Saturday afternoon



The Muirfield team switch the first fairway prior to play



Peter Boyd completes some paperwork while Richard Saunders relaxes



John Deere is the official supplier to Muirfield and the green and yellow machinery was visible throughout the week

Quote of the Week

"There's Ellis in Bunkerland". Support Team Member, Scott Reeves, on seeing colleague Mark Ellis, on TV in the final day working on the Thomas Levet match.

News Snippets

- Every BIGGA member who worked on the Tiger Woods' match was greeted by the great man himself with a shake of the hand and a, "Hello, I'm Tiger Woods." They were Gavin Robson, Steve Oultram, Fred Deamen and Iain Gunn. Each was also given a ball with "Tiger" embossed upon it.
- Gavin Robson, Course Manager at Lingdale Golf Club, is owed £1 by Justin Rose who borrowed the coin to act as a ball marker on the opening round and then forgot to return it at the end of the round.
- Another man who lost out financially was David Beardwood, of Kingsbarns GC, who lent a penny to Warren Bennett to act as a ball marker. He promised to return it later but that was the last David saw of his money. Information supplied by David Beardwood, of the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team.
- A Referee was red faced in a match accompanied by Support Team member Stuart Hogg, of Fortrose and Rossmarkie GC, when his mobile went off as they were walking down the 3rd fairway. Information supplied by Stuart Hogg, of the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team.

- Pierre Fulke got the knack of Muirfield's four par-3s by the final round making 2 at each of them. Information supplied by Bill Merritt, of the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team.
- Paul Lawrie let his temper get the better of him during the final round. After finding a bunker on the 5th he smashed his 4-wood into the ground snapping the head clean off. Information supplied by Paul Neve, of the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team
- Tom Watson was discussing popular music with eventual runner-up Steve Elkington, during the second round. "Why is it always 'Raining Men' that is mostly listened to with the youth?" asked Tom. "Something to do with the weather," came the reply. Information supplied by Anthony Davies, of the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team.
- It was a really Welsh reunion during one match on the second day. Player Bradley Dredge was Welsh; the Scoreboard carrier was Welsh (and the son of Walker Cup Captain Clive Brown), and the Support Team member was Welsh. Information supplied by Welshman Peter Lacey, of the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team.
- Open Hero Gary Evans' caddie was adamant that he wasn't going to wear the red bib allocated to him on the second day as it was Manchester United colours. He was given a white one instead. Information supplied by Kevin Hodges, of the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team.
- A bees' nest appeared on the tee at the 14th during the first round and bees were emerging from it as the players hit their shots. Information supplied by Kevin Hodges, of the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team.



The Open's equivalent of Henman Hill



The Support Team divoted the course every evening



Craig Gilholm cuts the 17th green on the Wednesday evening



Saturday wasn't a good day to be outside