

The Muirfield Champion? Let me guess!

We are halfway through the "Major" season and, what do you know, Tiger Woods is halfway to the Grand Slam. It used to be considered all but an impossibility. The original Grand Slam, as completed by Bobby Jones, in 1930, comprised the US Amateur, US Open, British Amateur and Open Championship, but only Ben Hogan had previously got close to the modern day slam of Masters, US Open, The Open Championship and USPGA Championship winning three and, in those days, not being able to get back to the States in time to play in the USPGA. Tiger has made the impossible, seem possible, even probable.

He became the only man to hold all four at the same time when he won the 2000 US Open, Open Championship and USPGA then won the Masters in 2001 but some, not me I hasten to add, considered this to be an "imperfect" Slam as they hadn't been won in the same calendar year.

This year, having perhaps suffered a mental reaction to that imperfect Slam and gone a few Majors without winning, he is back on form and has already clinched the Masters and the US Open and he will tee up at Muirfield as overwhelming favourite.

That is not just because of his phenomenal ability but the fact that, even those who would consider themselves to be closest to him in terms of talent - Duval, Mickelson, Garcia and Els - seem to capitulate when they go head to head against the Tiger in a Major.

So is he a guaranteed winner at Muirfield, a course where the cream has invariably risen to the top? Well no, golf is probably the only sport where the top player in the world loses far more tournaments than he wins - a wonderful season, even for the likes of Jack Nicklaus, would always have been regarded as five wins out of probably around 22 events - although Tiger's strike rate is significantly higher than that.

It only takes one hole to dent severely an Major Championship challenge - do you recall Tiger's bunker problems at Royal Birkdale in '98 and gorse problems at Carnoustie in '99 which cost him probable victories. Even then he came within a couple of shots of Mark O'Meara and Paul Lawrie. Since then, however, Tiger has developed the knack of keeping the ball in play and not having to play outrageous shots to make a score. He can have an off week when the ball doesn't run for him and the putts don't disappear, as at Royal Lytham last year, but his "average" is better than most rivals' "brilliant" and if he is within striking range by Sunday he doesn't often fail...

if he's atop the leaderboard at any stage of the week, forget it, he's already home and dry.

So a win at Muirfield would complete three legs of the 'perfect' Slam and who would then bet against him at the USPGA?

**Scott
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Editor

A unique treble for Kingsdown GC

Members, staff, family and friends gathered recently at Kingsdown Golf Club to celebrate a unique treble. The Club, which was founded in 1881 and is the second oldest club in the West of England, was celebrating yet another ground breaking record.

Two of the Green staff have already served over 25 years, and Mark Ford, appointed Head Greenkeeper in 1989, was celebrating the completion of his 25 years service. Led by Club Captain, David Rawstrone, tributes were paid to Mark and his staff and it was clear that such collective loyalty has played a major part in ensuring the reputation of Kingsdown as one of the premier courses in Wiltshire.

Mark, who joined Kingsdown when he left school in Corsham,



Head Greenkeeper Mark Ford (centre) with his staff, Phil Jones (26 years service) and Dave Seabright who has completed 27 years service at Kingsdown

trained at Lackham and Cannington Colleges and is a fully Qualified Greenkeeper and NVQ Assessor for the Institute

of Greenkeeping.

He was runner-up in the national Greenkeeper of the Year competition in 1997.

BIGGA looks to the Future

The first meeting of BIGGA's Futures Sub-Committee took place at BIGGA HOUSE in May. As its name suggests the future for both the individual greenkeeper and the profession will be the theme for the Sub-Committee.

In setting it up, BIGGA's Board of Management is looking to generate fresh ideas and proposals on the way forward for both the Association and the profession and to secure greater member input. The Sub-Committee is set to meet twice a year under the chairmanship of Elliott Small and its members will embrace modern technology to work as groups between meetings on agreed topics. The first topics being considered are the Development of the



Profession, Education and Training and Communication with the Industry and the Game. Recommendations from the Sub-Committee will be subject to Board of Management consideration and approval.

Members are welcome to convey their individual views to members of the Sub-Committee on the above or any other relevant topics. Members of the Sub-Committee are Elliott Small, Chairman - Tulliallan Golf Club, Richard Andrews -

Highgate Golf Club, James Braithwaite - Long Ashton Golf Club, Andy Campbell MG CGCS- De Vere Carden Park, Jonathan Cleland - Helensburgh Golf Club, Euan Grant - St Andrews, Duncan McGilvray - Potters Bar Golf Club, Billy McMillan - Mannings Heath Golf Club, Huw Morgan MG- Wildernesse Golf Club, Andrew Pledger - The Hertfordshire Golf Club, John Ross - Laleham Golf Club, Peter Wisbey - Woodhall Spa Golf Club.

Charterhouse maps out its future in detail

Philip Threadgold, a founding Director of Charterhouse Turf Machinery, has announced plans for the company's future development and expansion.

Philip, who for the last five years has been working for the company's parent, Redexim Charterhouse, setting up the North American operation, took over at the helm of Charterhouse this January.

Speaking at a press lunch in The Reform Club, London Philip said, "Charterhouse Turf Machinery should be seen as a group of four mini-companies operating within the grounds

care and landscaping sphere. As with any diverse operation, some people only know us for one of our ranges or products. We are strongly associated with the Verti-Drain, which has become a generic term for deep aeration, but in fact we have no less than 60 other products in the Professional Turf Machinery Division! We aim to project an image that better reflects our breadth and depth, which means significant, positive changes. That's why we feel as if we're looking far ahead to the 22nd Century."

He has already implemented plans to move Charterhouse forward, while maintaining operational control of Redexim Charterhouse USA.

"My job, aided by my dedicated staff, is to integrate and maximise our resources, and exceed customer expectations. I



Above: Philip Threadgold

have modified our field staff operation, so that sales people are now responsible for all products within their regions, rather than covering the whole country with just one line, as before. This means dealers see only one representative instead of three, and maximises efficiency. Our staff also relish their additional responsibilities."