



Welcome

## A TRUE "SPORTING" EVENT

It has been said, and I have no reason to doubt the truth of the statement, that the Ryder Cup is the third biggest event on the world's sporting calendar, collecting a bronze medal behind the FIFA World Cup and the Olympics. I'm not sure which of the others picks up the gold, or even how it is judged. That's beside the point, however. What it means is that the biannual match, which pitches the best golfers America has to offer against Europe's finest is larger, more prestigious and produces more newspaper and magazine column inches than any of golf's four Majors.

Having been to three of them, the last in '93, I can vouch for the intensity of the competition. During the three days, and five series of games, it sometimes appears as if a point - and 14 and a half of them are needed to win the Ryder Cup - is of more value than Colin Montgomerie's weight in gold. Anyone who wins a point, or even halves his match, immediately achieves God-like status and doesn't have to buy a drink for the rest of his life!

This year may be slightly different.

No-one can surely argue with the reasons behind postponing the match last September, but it has meant that this year the build up has lacked the usual interest and speculation. That is partly down to the decision to retain last year's selected teams - another I agree with. Some players may be struggling for form 12 months on but it is the same for both sides.

What it must be hoped, and this year it must be said that the chances of it happening are greater than at any of the recent matches, is that everything is kept in perspective and the fact that, bottom line, it is just a sporting event is not lost. Not only that it is a sporting event played by the most sporting game of all.

Recently passions have run uncomfortably high to the extent that three years ago a stampede of players, wives and caddies invaded the 17th green at Brookline before the hole had even been decided. The quality of the American fight back that day was outstanding but the antics surrounding the match left a sour taste and the respective Captains, Curtis Strange and Sam Torrance, have worked hard subsequently to repair the damage inflicted upon the game that day.

Let's hope this month's Ryder Cup is a true sporting event remembered for all the right reasons, including the quality of the Brabazon course.

One man who will be hoping so is Bevan Tattersall, Course Manager at the De Vere Belfry. Bevan and his team have worked extremely hard to ensure that the Brabazon Course, which has improved as a layout almost out of all recognition, is in tip top condition and we must all hope that the Weather Gods are smiling on the event so it is seen at its best by the enormous television audience.

Good luck Bevan. I hope it all goes well for you.

Scott MacCallum, Editor

## DOUG BELL

Members will be saddened to learn of the passing of Doug Bell who died in hospital on 2 August following a short illness. Doug had served as Regional Administrator for the Northern Region since September 1997. Before joining BIGGA he had been Secretary at the West Lancashire Golf Club and prior to that at Woolton Golf Club. These appointments followed 25 years spent in public administration.

During the last five years Doug had become a much respected figure in the Northern Region as well as more widely within BIGGA. Many members have benefited from his golf club visits whilst he proved a great friend and adviser to those experiencing difficulties in their lives or careers. Doug was quiet and reserved, in many ways a private man, but blessed with a dry sense of humour. His passions in life were golf and football. In the football world he served for many years as Treasurer of the Liverpool County FA while in golf his extensive knowledge of the game was there for all to witness at BIGGA events. Doug was an excellent Administrator for the Northern Region and BIGGA has lost a much valued member of staff.

"Doug Bell was a huge asset to the Northern Region and he worked extremely hard on behalf of its members. His untimely death was a great shock to everyone who knew him and he will be greatly missed," said Bert Cross, Northern Region Chairman.



## HARRY DIAMOND MEMORIAL QUAICH

The Harry Diamond Memorial Quaich was played over The Belleisle Golf Course, Ayr, on Sunday, July 14. The tournament was inaugurated last July as a memorial to Harry. His wife, Jessie, and his close family, Ann, Linda and Rosemary, have been deeply involved in the organisation, together with members of the Belleisle Golf Club.

The format is a Stableford Competition of foursomes with the two best scores counting at each hole. The shotgun start enhances the whole day and enables the participants to finish at the same time thereby allowing everyone to be at the presentation. The family, together with sponsors, put up the prizes for the day. The Quaich which was purchased by the family is large Scottish drinking vessel presented to the winners whereon they have their names engraved. Seven greenkeepers were invited to take part in this unique competition, three from the West Section and four from the Ayrshire Section. Unfortunately, none of us got our name on the Quaich!

The Harry Diamond Memorial Quaich is a reminder of

the esteem and high regard the Club and his friends still hold to the memory of Harry. I know of no other Club who have respected the memory of their Greenkeeper in the setting up of an annual competition such as this. The attendance alone of some 130 golfers speaks for itself.

The Course was in excellent condition and the presentation was second to none. The Head Greenkeeper and his staff were greatly praised for the amount of effort they put in getting the course up to scratch for the Competition. The greens, in particular, were excellent and taking into consideration the weather we in the West of Scotland have suffered this summer, it is no less than a miracle that regular golf has been played. The seven greenkeepers who took part were invited back to the Market Inn to a buffet and to meet the Diamond family, from the very young to the more mature. The whole day was a pleasant affair and, as we said to Jessie and the girls, we greenkeepers would consider it an honour to be invited back next year.

Cecil George

## PASSES ALL ROUND!

BIGGA Staff members Sami Collins (right), Education and Training Administrator and Sarah Sowerby (left), PA to Neil Thomas, have both recently passed their European Computer Driving Licence. The ECDL is a Europe-recognised qualification, comprising seven modules, which demonstrates a holder's ability to operate a computer and various software programmes. Sami and Sarah now join Brad Anderson, BIGGA's Administrative Assistant, who passed his ECDL at college earlier in the year.



## NEAREST THE PIN...

Rob Gee, of Crow Nest Park Golf Club, Brighouse, West Yorkshire and part of the British Seed Houses team in the BIGGA Golf Day was the Nearest the Pin winner on the 18th hole. Congratulations Rob and sorry for missing out your name last month.

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