



## Welcome

### NO MORE INTIMIDATION

There can only be one way to start this month's column. Let's hear it for Billy McLachlan and his team at Royal Troon! I can't recall another Open Championship where the course has come in for no criticism whatsoever.

It provided a fair but demanding test of golf and the set-up was just what was required.

Let's face it the pressure was on with The Open, coming so soon after the US Open at Shinnecock Hills, for which the USGA was vilified for demanding a course which ended up so tricked up that greens had to be watered to slow them down on the final day... after the first few groups had already proved that they were all but unplayable. How can that be fair?

So we needed a sensible Major Championship and Royal Troon provided it.

Of course there will be those who look at the record books in a few years time and say Todd Hamilton succeeding Ben Curtis as Champion doesn't exactly smack of identifying true Champions.

However, in each case many of the top names were there or thereabouts and had their own chances to win.

If you look back through the ages there are very few Opens which have produced unheralded Champions. More often than not it has been those regarded as the superstars, who have prevailed.

The argument is that the strength in depth is now so great it just needs one of the superstars to be slightly out of sorts on one round and his chance has all but gone. I've got a different theory and, if you'll permit me, I'll bore you with it.

It used to be all but about 10 players teed up knowing they were never going to win, not The Open Championship.

Now, many more go in with a winning mentality. If they play their best why can't they be Open Champion? I think The Open may have lost its ability to intimidate the field.

I've watched many Opens in my time and seen unheralded – it would be unfair to call them run-of-the-mill - players play out of their skin only to come a cropper on Sunday's back nine.

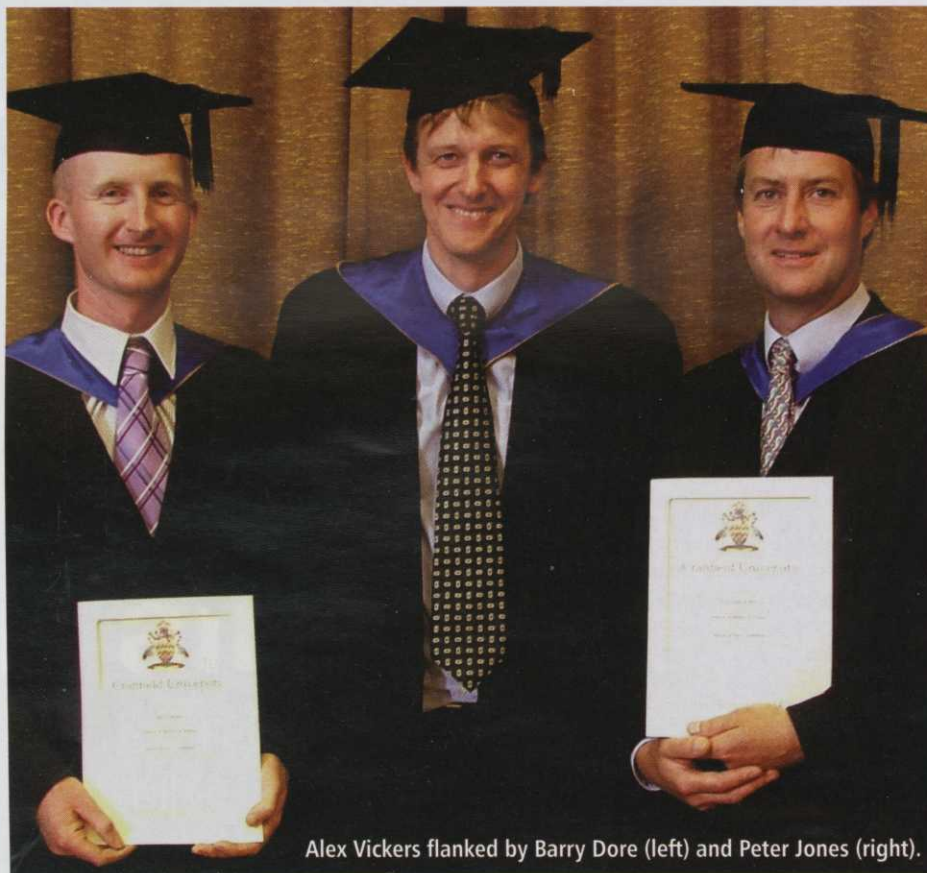
And it wasn't necessarily the big name player sitting just below them on the leaderboard but the sheer enormity of what they were about to do that caused the stumble.

There are several which spring to mind. New Zealander, Simon Owen, looked set to win the 1978 Open at St Andrews only to let Jack Nicklaus in.

You could add Doug Sanders to that list from eight years before that. The most famous missed putt in history, but since then he's recovered from the disappointment. He can now go five minutes without thinking about it.

Nowadays the fear of winning The Open is not as great for some reason - perhaps the sports psychologists can take some of the credit - and you get Ben Curtis and Todd Hamilton able to play their best golf without the intimidation factor that existed within their older colleagues.

Scott MacCallum, Editor



Alex Vickers flanked by Barry Dore (left) and Peter Jones (right).

### QUALIFIED SUCCESSES

The first of the BIGGA Higher Education Scholars, sponsored by Ransomes Jacobsen Ltd were presented with their degrees at a graduation ceremony at Cranfield University in July.

Barry Dore and Peter Jones donned gown and mortar board and received the applause of a large audience as they were presented with their Msc degrees from the Chancellor of the College.

An additional BIGGA Scholarship graduate, Eoghan Buckley could not attend as he was undertaking an internship in the USA.

Both were given substantial financial support in achieving their qualification through the scholarship scheme which was set up by BIGGA two years ago.

Barry was the first to mount the stage and spoke later of the pride he felt in his achievement.

"The graduation seals the completion of the MSc course and is very satisfying indeed. Receiving this qualification means a great deal to me. The training I have received has greatly improved my knowledge of sports turf science. It will also allow me to consider employment options in the future that I would never have been in a position to consider before," said Barry.

"I can't thank BIGGA and Ransomes Jacobsen enough for the support they have given me during the course."

Peter Jones, who runs Peter Jones Associates Ltd, was equally delighted.

"It was a proud moment for me to appear on stage at Cranfield University, complete with gown and mortar board to receive my degree. It more than justifies the many, many hours spent studying and writing assignments. I am greatly indebted to BIGGA and Ransomes Jacobsen for the wonderful support they have given me and my fellow scholarship winners and I would encourage others to take advantage of the generous support there is out there for people attempting to better themselves through education," said Peter.

Accompanying Barry and Peter at the ceremony was a very proud Tutor, Alex Vickers who had guided each of them through their course.

Among those receiving Honorary Degrees at the same time as Barry and Peter was Sir Donald Curry, Chairman of the Food and Farming Strategy, DEFRA, who had been charged with developing a policy to minimise the damage of the Foot and Mouth Epidemic two years ago.

"The scholarship scheme has enabled 48 greenkeeper members of BIGGA to enrol onto Higher Education courses including the Masters Degree at Cranfield University. Greenkeepers now have access to a full range of qualifications enabling them to move their careers to an even higher level and compete for better salaries," said Ken Richardson, BIGGA's Education and Training Manager.

## AWARD FOR PARKSTONE

Parkstone Golf Club has received further recognition for their commitment to environmental management.

The golf course, which is covered by an S.S.S.I., was recognised at the prestigious annual English nature S.S.S.I. awards ceremony at The Royal Show in Warwick.

Course Manager Bill Garner and Deputy Alex McCombie picked up an award for the club's commitment and work, and also flew the flag for golf clubs in UK. They stressed that hundreds of golf clubs the length and breadth of the country are carrying out some excellent environmental work and that golf has a substantial and important role to play in protecting and developing the environment.

Parkstone has been highly committed in its heathland restoration work. Thousands of trees have been removed along with an intensive scrub removal programme and the results have been encouraging.

This has been coupled with a return to traditional greenkeeping practices aimed at encouraging native grasses to the course, and in particular the greens.

The course is beginning to return to its original character and much of the original views and vistas have been reinstated. Heather is flourishing, as is the numbers of fauna that depend on this habitat.

"The team at Parkstone feel very proud of the contribution they are making to both the golf course and the environment," commented Bill. "The recognition for the work we have carried out ensures that momentum is carried forward. The programme will continue and we look forward to achieving more success in the future."

## ON A NEW COURSE

Dave Austin has joined Rigby Taylor as Area Representative for the South Manchester and Cheshire area.

He joins after eight years as Course Manager at Sandiway Golf Club and was previously Course Manager at Knutsford Golf Club and The Tytherington Club.

## THE 19TH BECKONS

After 50 years of service, Hawkstone Park's longest serving employee, Estate and Golf Course Manager Frank Tong is leaving behind the bunkers, fairways and greens to retire to the 19th hole.

Frank originally joined the Shropshire club in 1954 to work on the farm and shortly after transferred to the golf course, working as Assistant Greenkeeper to Alex Lyle, father of Sandy Lyle.

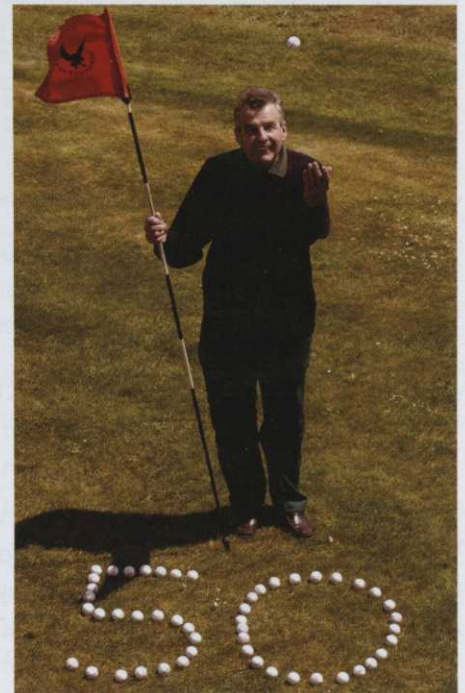
Frank's long and distinguished career at Hawkstone Park was only interrupted by National Service and short spells as Greenkeeper and Head Greenkeeper at Leamington and County Golf Club.

As Estate and Golf Course Manager, Frank's main responsibilities are the management and upkeep of the championship Hawkstone and Windmill courses and the six-hole Academy course as well as 100 acres of wooded parkland.

Commenting on his retirement, Frank said, "Over the years I've met and worked with people from every walk of life and I've never tired of the Park's beautiful surroundings. The work has been varied, often challenging but always rewarding".

He added: "I'm looking forward to retirement, I plan to spend time travelling and I hope to go to Australia to visit family."

Mike Sheehan, Managing Director of Hawkstone Park, said: "Frank has shown many



years of dedication and on behalf of everyone at Hawkstone Park I would like to thank him for his unstinting loyalty and work and wish him a long and happy retirement."

## BIGGA DELEGATION COMPETITION

It's that time of a year again when BIGGA, in conjunction with Bernhard, gives the opportunity of a lifetime to 10 lucky Greenkeepers.

BIGGA members have the chance to win a trip to the first ever GCSAA & NGCOA Golf Industry Show, hosted in the USA. The 2005 event is to be held in Orlando at the Rosen Plaza on February 7 – 12.

The competition is open to all BIGGA members, and all you have to do to enter is complete the entry form attached to the outside of this month's Greenkeeper International issue and send it back to us. If for any reason this form is not attached, simply phone BIGGA HOUSE to request an entry form. The deadline for completed entry forms is September 3.

Previously known as the GCSAA Golf Course

Conference & Trade Show, the 2005 Golf Industry Show is a joint venture by the GCSAA – Golf Course Superintendents Association of America – and NGCOA – National Golf Course Owners Association – which puts together the key facility decision makers, the best golf course management solutions and the most recognisable companies in the industry all under one roof. In a 750,600 square foot facility the show will feature over 800 exhibitors.

The overall objective of the Golf Industry Show is to provide the golf industry with a dynamic, progressive trade show event that provides unparalleled networking opportunities and hands-on access to golf course and facility management solutions for the professional members that BIGGA, GCSAA and NGCOA serve.

Both the GCSAA Educational Conference and the NGCOA Solutions Summit will run during the show, providing visitors with the solutions they need for personal and professional success in the form of special events, seminars, sessions and workshops.

British greenkeepers who have attended the US event believe the benefit of their visit was invaluable. "I enjoyed the interaction with Superintendents from the US and learned new things about their practice which I can bring back to the UK," said Gordon McKie, Head Greenkeeper at St. Andrews Links Trust.

Previous BIGGA Delegate winner Jeremy Hughes, Course Manager at Vale of Llangollen commented, "From the whole experience I feel I should improve as a person and a Course Manager."

## Royal Inverdivot GC...

Strip Cartoonist of the Year [www.tonyhusband.co.uk](http://www.tonyhusband.co.uk)



## ON COURSE TO LEARN

A prestigious scholarship offering a grand tour of some of the world's top golf courses has been won by a sports turf student from Guildford College's Merrist Wood campus

The grass may not be greener on the other side of the Atlantic but student greenkeeper Richard Pennell, 29, will have the chance to find out when he takes up the Grand Tour Scholarship in August to visit leading courses on the US west coast and learn how they are managed. The 22 courses on the three week study tour include Pebble Beach Golf Links, Spyglass Hill Golf Course and Los Angeles Country Club in California and Southern Highlands Golf Club in Las Vegas.

Richard was selected for the scholarship from hundreds of other golf course design and management students from all over the world. The scholarship was founded by golf course architect and president of Lioness Golf LLC Bettina Schrickel and is sponsored by the TORO Company in the US.

Richard is a single figure handicap golfer who left the book retail trade two years ago to become a greenkeeper at Mitcham Golf Club and study for a first diploma in sports turf at the Merrist Wood campus.

"I haven't regretted it for a second, I love working at the club and I hope to

return after my trip to the states to start an HNC level course at Merrist Wood. I'm delighted to have been given such a unique opportunity as the Grand Tour Scholarship and am very grateful to my employers and my lecturers at Merrist Wood for their ongoing encouragement and support."

Tutor Phil Mayes said that Richard's application for the scholarship had been outstanding and that his passion for his work shone through.

"The tour will develop Richard's understanding of how top courses in the US are managed and will help to forge more international links in the industry."



## HEGGIE THE CHAMPION

The Scottish National Tournament took place over at Kilmacolm Golf Club, Renfrewshire on Tuesday 15 June 2004.

Kilmacolm Golf Club is an extremely attractive golf course with magnificent views over the Renfrewshire hills. With Course Manager, Ronnie Bunting at the helm they have a dedicated greenkeeper who has won various Environmental Awards and is a very committed BIGGA member. This was evident in his golf course, which drew praise from his fellow greenkeepers for its excellent condition.

Overhead conditions were sunny but with a strong breeze, which made things difficult for low scoring but never the less, there were some excellent scores returned, including a net 59.

The winner and National Champion for 2004 was Brian Heggie, Auchterarder GC, who returned a Scratch 73 winning the SGGG Challenge Cup. The Friendship Trophy for the best Nett went to Joe Bell, Millport, for the third time in four years with a score of 80-21-59, yes 59. Joe had local knowledge, as he was Deputy Head at Kilmacolm for several years. Needless to say Joe's handicap is under review.

Our thanks go to Captain Colin McGinn of Kilmacolm Golf Club and the committee of Kilmacolm GC for granting us the facilities and courtesy of the course. Our thanks also to Vic Weldin, Secretary, and the staff at Kilmacolm for their help and assistance throughout the day. Neil Mitchell and Robert T. Bruce from the trade who ably assisted the Administrator during the day.

The prizes were presented by Colin McGinn, Captain of Kilmacolm GC who welcomed everyone to Kilmacolm. Iain Barr, Scottish Chairman, on behalf of the competitors, thanked Colin for hosting the event.

### RESULTS:

SGGA Challenge Cup Scratch Scottish Champion, Brian Heggie, Auchterarder GC, 73.  
 Friendship Cup Best Nett. Joe Bell, Millport, 59.  
 Ransomes Trophy First Class.  
 1. Kenny Mitchell, St Andrews, 69  
 2. Douglas McIntosh, Cathkin Braes 72 (Best last 3 holes)  
 3. Denis Tweddell, Turnberry, 72  
 Pattison Trophy Second Class.  
 1. Mark Wilson, Douglas Park, 69 (BIH)  
 2. Sandy Brawley, East Kilbride, 72  
 3. Andrew Clark, Douglas Park, 74  
 STRI Trophy Third Class.  
 1. Hugh McLatchie, Peterhead, 74  
 2. Mike Horkan, St. Andrews, 80  
 3. Colin Scott, Glasgow, 85  
 Dick Aitken Trophy Best Head Greenkeeper.  
 Derek Scott, Scoonie, 69  
 M & M Trophy. Best Assistant.  
 Mike Lindsay, Scoonie, 72 (BIH)  
 Souter Trophy Best Apprentice  
 Gerard Broadley, 108  
 SIGGA Trophy. Best Veteran  
 Duncan Gray Pines, 75  
 St. Mungo Trophy Team Trophy (Best 4 nett scores)  
 Werst Section.  
 Joe Bell, Millport, 59  
 Mark Wilson, Douglas Park, 69  
 Douglas McIntosh, Cathkin Braes, 72  
 Sandy Brawley, East Kilbride, 72  
 Total 272  
 Patrons. Kevin Brunton, Greentech, 70  
 Qualifiers. National Championship sponsored by Ransomes Jacobsen.  
 Brian Heggie, Auchterarder and Joe Bell, Millport.  
**Peter Boyd**  
 Scottish Regional Administrator

## THE NEW RECRUIT JOINS THE MAGAZINE

BIGGA have appointed an Assistant Editor in the form of Gareth Jones, who will be responsible for aiding Editor Scott MacCallum in the production of Greenkeeper International.

Gareth, 22, joins the Association after graduating from the University of Leeds in 2003, gaining a degree in Media.

Previously he has worked in the sports department of both the Yorkshire Evening Post Newspaper and BBC Radio Leeds. Gareth begins life at BIGGA after a stint working for the NHS.

A sports enthusiast, Gareth plays flanker for Leeds' based

Rugby Union club Yarnbury, is a keen runner, footballer and squash player, and he is eager to improve on his current golf handicap.

"I am excited about my new role at BIGGA, and having already met a number of BIGGA members at the Open Championship at Troon I am looking forward to meeting more in the coming months," said Gareth.

"Having Gareth on board will enable us to move the magazine forward and to improve BIGGA's communication in the golfing world," said Scott.

