



Welcome

A JOB WELL DONE

I'd like to start this month's column by paying tribute to Craig Gilholm and his team at Royal Liverpool Golf Club, who produced an Open venue in the true links traditional of the Championship.

What struck me when I arrived was the colour. The course was the colour of straw while the tightness of the fairways would have given handicap players nightmares. Obviously the weather has a huge part to play in producing this but it takes someone of genuine links pedigree to harness the conditions and produce the goods.

Craig only took over as Head man last June and it is a credit to him that he was able to carry on the work of Derek Green in such a seamless fashion. Sure, Craig did things his own way but he was only able to do so because of the foundations put in place during Derek's tenure.

The R&A were delighted with what was produced, as they were with the work of BIGGA's Greenkeeping Support Team, which had to work like never before. It was the first time that the team had prepared bunkers before the start of play as well as divoting at night and while it put everyone involved under additional pressure, the pleasure of seeing a job well done, was all the greater for everyone involved.

The Open now has a larger rota than even before with more recent venues like Turnberry now joining with the older venues like Carnoustie and Hoylake, which have returned after periods on the sidelines. These three have never all been on the rota at the same time.

It means that with St Andrews established with its five year cycle, we have Muirfield, Royal Troon, Carnoustie Turnberry, Royal Lytham and St Annes, Royal Birkdale, Hoylake and Royal St Georges likely to rotate on more or less a 10 yearly cycle.

That provides the variety golf supporters enjoy and also gives more Course Managers the opportunity to prepare a golf course for the greatest annual golf event on the worldwide calendar.

It would be nice to see that rota extended still further but the demands of an Open Championship grow and grow and certainly push quality golf courses like Royal Dornoch, Saunton, Royal Porthcawl and Royal County Down out of the reckoning. The compromises that would be involved in hosting an Open there would be too much for television, sponsors, players and spectators, never mind BIGGA's Support Team, and render then unsuitable.

Hoylake was certainly stretched by these demands, with the exhibition tent on two sites within the golf course and parking at a premium and it was only through the desire of Wirral Council and the local people who embraced the Championship like never before, that make it a success.

And with Tiger Woods emerging as the Champion the course can claim to have identified the best golfer and that is all you can ask of a golf course.

So well done Craig and the guys. You deserve all the praise that has come your way.

Scott MacCallum, Editor

BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

The second series of seminar/demonstration days organised by SISIS Equipment Ltd, takes place in September.

Best of Both Worlds, aims to consider the benefits of both natural and synthetic turf playing surfaces, and how to get the best from them.

An interesting day is guaranteed with keynote speakers Martyn Jones and David Rhodes talking about: Achieving Effective Soil Aeration and Planning and Maintaining Synthetic Sports Surfaces.

The programme also includes: Choosing the Right Grass Cultivars and Mixtures, Turfgrass

Nutrition, Artificial Turf – Another Option. Working demonstrations of the newest techniques in the mechanical maintenance of natural and synthetic turf surfaces will be presented by SISIS Equipment and TYM Tractors.

Dates and venues: September 19 - Radley College, Abingdon, Oxon; September 20 - St. Albans School, Herts and September 21 - HSBC Sports Club, Beckenham, Kent.

The day is free of charge with a light lunch provided. Details are available from Lynn Hilton: publicity@sisis.com or phone: 01625 503030.

DROUGHT STRICKEN GOLF CLUB

As have many golf clubs in south east England, Woodcote Park GC has been hit by a drought order. The club takes its environmental responsibilities seriously and has invested in a Course Care ClearWater washpad recycling system, a road tanker and extra water storage tanks.

Secretary Adrian Dawson, explained that water needed for the course is being brought in from an approved grey water source using the tanker. The washpad area was not a concern however as the Course Care ClearWater system, recycles water and can be used throughout the drought order to provide effective wash-off for all the greens machinery.



GOLF MANAGEMENT TROPHY

Northern Region Golf Management Trophy day was held at Sandiway GC on July 11.

26 golf clubs entered the competition, which was played in beautiful, sunny conditions, on a testing course, which had been superbly prepared by Course Manager Brian Taylor and his staff. The hospitality of the staff at Sandiway was excellent, and all had a very enjoyable day.

The format of four man teams, comprising of a greenkeeper - who is a member of BIGGA and three

golf club officials playing a Stableford, with the best two scores on each hole to count, has proved a popular event for many years. The winning team was Gay Hill GC with 82 points, led by Course Manager Paul Woodham. Close runners up were Fairhaven and Bury GC's with 80 points - with Fairhaven claiming second place on countback. Nearest the Pin was won by Mark Nelson, Course Manager at Renishaw Park GC and Longest drive by Bob Thompson, Secretary at Fairhaven.

TOP OF THE CLASS

Former Plumpton College students are to feature in an article for the Times Education Supplement after finding successful employment.

The students studied agriculture and are now employed within the farming industries, having gained relevant qualifications and work experience, while still at College.

For college enquiries call: 01273 890454 or visit: www.plumpton.ac.uk

