



## Welcome

### RID THE GAME OF THIS MONKEY ON OUR BACK

When I wrote about the drought issues in last month's column one of the scenarios I certainly didn't envisage was the one which has affected five golf clubs in the Bath area.

An unnamed militant group has vandalised one of them and sent letters to four others demanding they carry out specified action with the threat of more vandalism if ignored.

Among the list of demands are a 25% reduction in water usage; that 10% of each hole be returned to nature and that anti wildlife policies be reversed.

In this country freedom of speech is encouraged and everyone has a right to have their views heard, but when it comes to criminal vandalism a line has been crossed.

What concerns me, however, is that people who obviously feel so passionately about a cause can be so ignorant of the facts before they set out on a course of drastic action.

The cliché is that golf is a serial abuser of resource, and unfortunately some people react on the back of that hackneyed old cliché with nothing more than that to do on

To highlight this point, ironically, one of the clubs targeted by this group is a multiple prize winner in BIGGA's Golf Environment Competition. I'm sure that if the members of this group were to have the courage of their convictions and make themselves known, their minds would be put at rest with a visit to the golf club, not under cover of darkness wielding the tools of vandalism, but during the day carrying nothing more than an open mind. They wouldn't fail to be impressed by the knowledge, skill and dedication of the people who are the custodians of the land in their care.

It is up to all of us to sell the positive message of the game of golf and rid the game of this monkey on our back.

People working on the country's golf courses do some great work to enhance the environment, not drain it of valuable resources and it should be known about. That way we might prevent the faceless few picking up on the prejudices and baggage which is attached to golf and going on to carry out the mindless acts that these clubs are having to cope with.

Our best wishes go to the staff and members of the clubs involved and in particular Park Golf Club where I hope the damage done can be rectified fairly quickly.

This magazine is the last one to which Assistant Editor, Gareth Jones, has contributed. Gareth has been with BIGGA since 2004 and has decided to flex his vocal cords with a career in radio. He has done an excellent job in the time he has been with us and his contribution has certainly enhanced the magazine. My thanks and good wishes go with him and I look forward to hearing his dulcet tones coming at me from across the airwaves.

Scott MacCallum, Editor

### SCOTTISH NATIONAL TOURNAMENT

The 2006 Scottish National Tournament will be held at Leven Links, Leven, Fife on Thursday June 22 2006 by kind permission of the Leven Links Joint Committee. The cost of the event will be £22.00, which includes coffee/tea, filled roll, evening meal and prizes. Apprentice fee will be £12.00.

Entry forms are available at all Section Spring Outings and from the Regional Administrator.

All entries with remittance must be sent to the Regional Administrator, Peter J.Boyd, 10 Meadowburn Avenue, Newton Mearns, Glasgow G77 6TA by Tuesday 13 June 2006. Cheques made payable to BIGGA Scottish Region.

### ALLISS IN SHEFFIELD

The Sheffield Section welcomed special guest Peter Alliss to Rotherham Golf Club at a recent event.

Sporting a cast on his right ankle having broken it in Scotland the previous month, Peter was accompanied by his daughter Sara, who acted as chauffeuse and general chaperone for the trip. He spoke of his association with greenkeepers during his time as a PGA Professional, attached to various clubs in the UK and his admiration and respect he had for the work that they achieved and for the progress that has been made by the profession.

He then answered questions from the floor, which included his favourite course - Ferndown - and best ever shot - a 4-wood to the 18th in the 1965 Ryder Cup at Royal Birkdale which clinched a victory for he and Christy O'Connor over Arnold Palmer and Dave Marr.

The day was sponsored by Bernhard and Co, who were represented by UK Sales Manager, Steve Nixon, himself a former greenkeeper member of the Sheffield Section, and Marketing and Communications Manager, Gina Putnam.



Peter Alliss with daughter Sara, Sheffield Section President Neil Maltby, far left, with Richard Kerrigan and Gordon Brammah, right, with Gina Putnam and Steve Nixon of Bernhard

### ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY SERVICE

Continued funding from English Nature, the English Golf Union and the R&A means that the English Golf Environmental Advisory Service, created in 2002, can be extended for a fifth year.

All EGU affiliated golf clubs that have not taken part in the scheme, will be contacted with details of the project, which is being administered by STRI.

So far 180 golf clubs have benefited from the scheme over the last four years and over 100 clubs have received a framed certificate, acknowledging their commitment to ecological good practice.

Successful applicants will receive two ecological advisory visits with follow up reports. Clubs which successfully implement agreed environmental targets will receive a framed certificate to recognize their efforts. In addition all affiliated clubs will continue to have access to the free golf environmental support service run by STRI, including telephone contact and written advice in the form of leaflets providing conservation information on issues ranging from pesticides to management of the rough.