

Welcome



Golf Gets It In The Neck Again

The world has seen a real change since I last penned an editorial. Mr Obama is reprogramming his Sat Nav so "Home" will take him to Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington and Labour won a by-election.

One thing has stubbornly stayed the same, however – the absolute pelting that golf has been taking in the media. I had a go at Miranda Richardson

a couple of months ago, and I have it on good authority that she's barely left her darkened room since, but Terence Blacker, who writes a column in The Independent, and Jeremy Clarkson, who, well, you know who he is, have now taken up the Richardson cause.

Both have climbed aboard their respective high horses in response to the Scottish Government's decision to grant Donald Trump outline planning approval for his billion pound development in Aberdeenshire.

"The majority of people do not visit the country (Scotland) in order to see a string of dreary, identical, environmentally dead golf courses, but to enjoy one of the most interesting and beautiful landscapes in Europe," spouted Terence, while Jeremy inserted his tu'pence worth in his Sunday Times column.

"As far as I'm concerned, a golf course with its random splashes of unnatural emerald green and its Rupert Bear trimmings is more of a blot on the landscape than a pig farm or a power station," said the well known eco-warrior.

While admitting that he hated to be grouped with environmentalists he did pin his colours firmly to the mast.

"... get off our bottoms and fight the good fight - not because of a butterfly or a polar bear or because we stand to make billions, but because golf courses are awful and anything Donald Trump does sits like a golden bogey on the unsullied face of a newborn child."

Savour the magnificent prose, delivered by a man who spends much of his professional life smelling petrol fumes and burning rubber on a motor racing track outside his converted aircraft hanger of a television studio.

Now, I do have some sympathy for those who believe Donald, with his army of high powered lawyers, achieved something that might be beyond the reach of lesser mortals, but I do believe that the game of golf, once again, has been left to take the rap.

As far as I'm aware much of the concern is not the golf courses but the housing and hotel development which will accompany them. However, it's not the bricks and mortar that commentators are striking out at but the much easier target of golf.

I would defy anyone not to visit Loch Lomond or Kingsbarns, or the Castle Course, or Castle Stuart, near Inverness, and not be overwhelmed by the sheer beauty of what they see. All are new, or relatively new, to the Scottish landscape and all have added so much to Scotland in so many ways. They are certainly not "dreary, identical or environmentally dead".

I would be pretty sure that whatever the concerns regarding Donald Trump's new Scottish venture, the golf courses will be one area where every possible care is taken to ensure that the natural surroundings are considered and protected and that in time the course will become an established, and much loved feature on the north east coast of the country.

Scott MacCallum
Editor

SUCCESSFUL CLUB MANAGERS AWARDED IMPORTANT NEW QUALIFICATION

Eight leading club managers have been awarded a new internationally recognised professional qualification, the Club Managers Association of Europe (CMAE) has announced.

The new European version of the Certified Club Manager (CCM) qualification, for more than 40 years the most important benchmark for senior club managers in North America, was awarded to senior managers from England, Scotland, Ireland and Sweden, following two days of rigorous examinations at The Lansdowne Club in London in October.

The successful candidates – John McCormack, Castle Golf Club, Dublin, Ireland; Patrick Bradshaw, Blainroe Golf Club, Wicklow, Ireland; Donal Flinn, Druids Glen Golf Resort, Wicklow, Ireland; Kevin Fish, Edinburgh Leisure, Edinburgh, Scotland; David Balden, Caledonian Club, London; Alasdair Curbbun, Brooks's Club, London; Jerry Kilby, CEO, Club Managers Association of Europe, and Jimmy Grön, Kalmar Golf Club, Kalmar, Sweden – are the first in Europe to benefit from the CCM qualification, designed to recognise the highest levels of professional competency, enabling managers to develop their careers at home and abroad. Three further candidates failed the exam, but will have the opportunity to re-sit the 200-question multiple choice and case study papers in March 2009.

"This is a tough examination," said Nigel Cartwright, CMAE Education Policy Board Chairman.

"Club Managers who gain CCM status set themselves apart as the best in the business so we congratulate these eight individuals on their outstanding achievement."

CCM examinations will take place twice a year, with March 30 and October 15 already announced as the two exam dates for 2009. CCM is open to all experienced managers with specified levels of professional experience. Candidates undertake a two-day review and examination that focuses on ten key club management disciplines, including financial, leadership, facility, and food and beverage management.

For more information about CCM and to download the registration form, visit: www.cmaeurope.org

L to R: Nigel Cartwright, CMAE Education Policy Board Chairman, with successful candidates, Donal Flinn, John McCormack, Alasdair Curbbun, Jimmy Grön, David Balden and Jerry Kilby.

