

## Welcome



### Miranda – The Truth Seeking Missile

What do, “The state of the planet”; “Boys with status dogs”; “Roadkill” and “Reality TV” have in common? Not an easy one, not for people who don’t read the Saturday Guardian magazine at any rate.

Well, they are four out of the five items which depress actress, Miranda Richardson – she of “Queenie” in Blackadder fame - as quoted in the regular Q&A feature. The other thing that gets Miranda depressed? “Golf Courses”!

Yes. Miranda has lumped golf courses in with four other items, which, if a little obscure, could easily be on the short list for Room 101.

Given that she has already expressed her concerns about the state of the planet I think we can safely assume that Miranda thinks golf courses are a haven for chemical abuse.

What we do learn is that her opinion must be formed from some sound investigation on her part because under the question “What is your most unappealing habit?” she told us that, “I am a truth-seeking missile. A lot of people find that unappealing.”

So I don’t know which courses Miranda must have visited to come to the conclusion that golf courses make her depressed but I’m fairly sure they wouldn’t have included many of our top ones. For example had she popped into Hollinwell, current holder of the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition, sponsored by Ransomes Jacobsen, Scotts, Syngenta and Golf Monthly, she would have been elated, not depressed, to see some of the wonderful environmental work that has been, and is being, carried out.

The vision of golf courses as chemical dumps is one still accepted by a great many people, perhaps seduced by an ill informed and biased green lobby, without actually looking at the facts.

The truth is that the vast majority of golf courses are maintained by highly skilled professionals who genuinely care for the land in their custodianship. Also, who could possibly deny that some of the most beautiful spots in this country are found on golf courses? In itself that’s great, but the added bonus is that often the green belt created by golf courses is keeping developers away from building more flats and factory outlets.

I don’t doubt that, along with The Stage, Miranda is an avid reader of Greenkeeper International, so I would encourage her, as a genuine “truth seeking missile” to pop into her local golf club, with an open mind, take time to learn what goes on and witness the high level of responsible stewardship first hand. She was born in Southport so she could do worse than visit Royal Birkdale, which Chris Whittle and his team have in stunning condition for this month’s Open, Seeing how the golf course meanders through the dunes, and the flora and fauna it sustains, would gladden the heart of any blue thespian.

Before I finish I’ll tell you what depresses me. It’s all that bright light and neon in London’s theatre land, which leaves a much larger carbon footprint than you’ll find on any golf course.

But were it removed how would Miranda Richardson’s name stay up in lights?

Scott MacCallum  
Editor

## CELTIC MANOR RESORT UNVEILS TWENTY TEN COURSE

The only golf course in history to be purpose built for The Ryder Cup was officially opened on the eve of its first professional tournament recently.

The new Twenty Ten course and clubhouse were launched by the Rt Hon Rhodri Morgan AM,

First Minister for Wales, on Wednesday May 28 in the company of Sir Terry Matthews, Chairman of The Celtic Manor Resort, and George O’Grady, Chief Executive of The European Tour.

The Twenty Ten course, clubhouse and surrounding infrastructure have been built at a total cost of £16 million to meet commitments made by The Celtic Manor Resort as part of its successful bid to stage The Ryder Cup in 2010.

At a press conference prior to the plaque unveiling, Sir Terry Matthews said: “This is a very significant day in the history of The Celtic Manor Resort as we officially open this new golf course and clubhouse.

“We pledged to make the developments necessary to ensure we have the very best facilities for hosting The Ryder Cup in 2010 and we’re proud of what we have achieved with the Twenty Ten.”

The course has also been built with spectators in mind and the steep hillside which rises above the three closing holes offers unparalleled viewing of not only the decisive action at the end of the round, but also over many more holes in the valley below.



## GOLDEN AND SILVER KEY SPONSORS

A recent meeting at BIGGA HOUSE gave BIGGA the opportunity to inform members of the Golden and Silver Key Supporters Programme what the Fund has enabled the Association to produce, on behalf of its membership.

Chief Executive, John Pemberton was also able to thank all the companies and present them with their annual badges for their Golden and Silver Key plaques and, in the case of newest Golden Key company, Syngenta, the plaque itself which John presented to Simon Elsworth, Head of Professional Products for UK and Ireland.

