

An Extraordinary Tournament



Castle Stuart Course Manager, Chris Haspell, describes the extraordinary events surrounding the Barclays Scottish Open, last month.

Seldom in professional golf do you encounter the type of weather we had for this year's Barclays Scottish Open, and I now know how Jim Mackenzie and his Team must have felt at last year's Ryder Cup.

We had a good start on Thursday and Friday, but the players were delayed on Friday afternoon for lightning.

However, looking at the weather system for the following day, nothing was going to prepare us for what was about to happen.

On Friday evening I saw the localised flooding in Edinburgh on the TV, but, not giving it a second thought, I went to bed, while my two boys camped in the garden.

About 2.30am I was awoken by thunder in the distance and I heard some rain, so I got up and made a brew, before going to work, as we were meeting at 3.30am anyway. The guys were all there ready to go, so I went on a quick run around the course. With 10mm in the rain gauge we were still looking good for a 7am start.

When I got to the 12th, that's when it started, with a lightning strike just off the 12th green. Then the rain arrived in earnest and my windscreen wipers would not keep up, it was relentless. It was too risky for the guys to go on the course so I held them back.

At 4.30am I emptied the gauge and it showed 37mm on top of the original 10mm. One hour later we were up to 87mm.

It was around 6am when we had the first landslip, with the second following shortly afterwards. A bank, which has lain untouched for thousands of years, had yielded in two places, on the 1st and 12th. We were up to 97mm around 10am.

I tried to keep the lads away while I formulated a plan, as that kind of thing can quickly drag down morale, especially if you do not have a construction background.

It was then announced that play would be delayed until 2pm. My local contractor arrived on site around 9am so I knew I had a few hours before we were due to tee off.

That's when the guys who had been



invited as hospitality guests turned up, including Gordon Moir and Gordon McKie, from St Andrews, and Euan Grant, from Turnberry - who were pictured on TV working on the course.

They joined the guys from local courses with shovels, forks and squeegees. I cannot thank them enough. It just shows what a great industry we work in.

During the day every time we got the course ready for play more rain would fall very quickly, undoing what we had done, and we toiled until the very last minute, at 7.30pm, when the play was finally cancelled for the day.

It is with this in mind that I would like to name the guys who worked so hard to get the play finished and those who just turned up on spec. The hardest part was keeping them off the course in such violent weather conditions, such was their enthusiasm and tenacity to get things moving.

The team for the week was: James, Alan, Kev, James, Hexley, Andrew, Daz, Gok, Graham, Roy, Ewen, John, Ray, George, Gary, Lee, Matt, Justin, Andy, Chris, David, Martin, Davie, Gordon, Graeme, Mike, Sean, Rob, Jesper, Anders, Craig, Alexander, Simon, Bob, Tony, Alistair, James and Nick, who all did a first class job

The clubs and helpers who turned up on

spec included, Sandy Kineard, Carrbridge GK, Ballindalloch GK, St Andrews Links, Royal Dornoch, Turnberry, Loch Lomond, Moray GK, John Milne Landscapes, Las Plant Pump hire, Fairways GM plus the many marshals and others who helped.

There were many others and I apologise if I have left anyone out. To all, a personal thank you from all of the team here at Castle Stuart. Without your help we could not have finished the Tournament.

Now we are in the process of clearing up. Two landslips also occurred just along the coast from us so we were not isolated. It was just pure weight of water,

Now we are planning some emergency storm drainage to cope should it ever happen again.





The Course Care Cup 2011: Wessex Secretaries v South Coast Greenkeepers

Now in its 14th year and sponsored by Course Care, this popular event took place recently at Knighton Heath Golf Club, in Bournemouth.

The Greenkeepers, having won last year, were determined to consolidate their position and win again, while the Secretaries were keen to take the cup this year.

Much was at stake and it was close run but, in the end, the match was halved with the trophy being retained by last year's winners; the Greenkeepers!

However, consolation was found in a superb meal which followed and after which the trophy was presented by Highspeed Group's joint Managing Director, David Mears. David (centre) is shown with Eddie Robertson, Captain of the Secretaries team (left) and Tony Gadd, Chairman of BIGGA South Coast Section and Greenkeeper's Captain (right).



UP FOR A CHALLENGE

A Golf Day Challenge hosted by Sherriff Amenity and Everris (formerly Scotts) was recently held at De Vere Oulton Hall.

The event, held over two days was a huge success. Fourteen four ball groups played on the day with representation from BIGGA, including the new CEO, Jim Croxton; Geoff Webb, the CEO of IOG, also played along with other guests including teams from the STRI, Crown Golf, De Vere, Leaderboard, Glendale, The Belfry and London Golf Club as well as Course Directors from Scotland.

After a great day of golf first prize was eventually won by the Burhill Golf and Leisure team, second went to Crown Golf, with the BIGGA team in third.

The following day saw presentations made by both Sherriff Amenity and Everris to the group on their respective businesses.

A prize draw held in the evening raised £400 for Sherriff Amenity's nominated charity of the year "Help For Heroes".

A team from Sherriffs also cycled over 180 miles last month, travelling from Lymm to Cambridge: sponsorship details can be found at www.sherriffamenity.com.

Pictured, Mark Pyrah of Sherriff Amenity (second left) with Steve Wragg (left), Jim Croxton (second right) and Tracey Maddison (right).

Tacit Golf Management Trophy Competitions 2011

New sponsors Tacit have given the event a slightly new format. Together with team prizes to be won on the day teams are competing for places in a National Final to be held later in the year.

Two of the South West and South Wales Region's Tacit Golf Management Competitions have taken place and four clubs have secured their places in the finals of the event.

The South Coast Section event was recently held at Liphook Golf Club with the home team winning the event with 85 points, just one point ahead of the second placed team Test Valley.

In the South Wales Section event the winners were Newport Golf Club with 78 points and the runners up were the home team of Morrision Golf Club with 76 points. All four teams will now go through to the final.

The last of this Region's competitions took place in the South West Section at The Players Golf Club on July 21 with 23 clubs taking part.

Forthcoming Regional Golf Management Trophy competitions sponsored by TACIT are: BIGGA Midland, Brickendon Grange Golf Club on Tuesday, August 2, 2011; BIGGA South East, Upminster Golf Club on Thursday, August 11, 2011; BIGGA Northern, Cookridge Hall Golf Club on Thursday, August 18, 2011, BIGGA Midland, Market Harborough Golf Club on September 1, 2011.



BSH Visit is a Big Hit



British Seed Houses hosted a press visit to IBERS - The Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences, at the University of Aberystwyth – where the research and development work into new cultivars is carried out.

The event was introduced by BSH Managing Director, William Gilbert, and there were talks from Sheena Duller, who is in charge of the Amenity Breeding programme at Aberystwyth; and Ian Thomas, who maintains the Institute's enormous store of grass seed from around the world and who travels the world adding to it.

The seed with specific qualities is then used for breeding purposes with a view to producing new varieties with improved benefits.

Danny Thorogood and PhD student, Chloe Manzanares, then explained the work and science being carried out with molecular markers, which identify genetic traits within grass species at an early stage and so can cut down the number of years it takes for a new variety to reach production stage.

Danny explained the work of 19th century monk, Gregor Mendel, who did some ground breaking work on genetics involving peas which was subsequently developed by scientists, William Bateson, Reginald Punnett and Thomas Morgan.

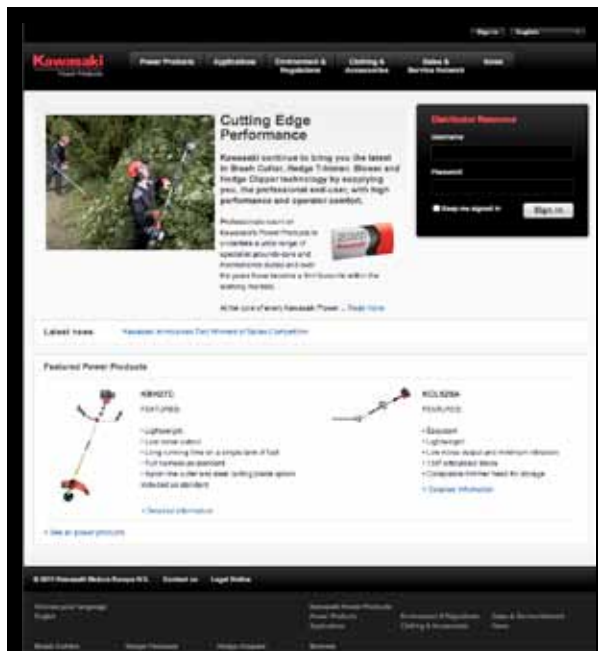
Also interesting was the emerging fact that the perfect grass – one which performs well under all conditions – may be unsuccessful if it doesn't produce sufficient yield to make it viable.

It has to be worthwhile financially for farmers to give their fields over to grass seed production.

The following morning BSH's Richard Brown carried out a de-brief of the previous day's talks explaining how all new varieties must conform to rigorous testing while at the same time the uniformity must be robust enough to cope with production on a commercial scale and withstand thorough crop inspection.

He revealed that slender creeping red fescue, AberCharm, which will supercede AberFlight, will become commercially available next year and which has demonstrated excellent winter and summer colour while in 2013 AberRegal, a browntop bent, is scheduled to become available and it is showing firmness of leaf and high shoot density plus good resistance to fusarium.

There followed a session of clay pigeon shooting at the Mid Wales Shooting Centre which identified Jonathan Tilley, of Horticulture Week, as the least blunt among the assembled group of sharp shooters.



NEW DEDICATED WEBSITES FOR KAWASAKI'S ENGINES & POWER PRODUCTS

Kawasaki, has launched two new websites to provide information and support that is specifically tailored to their Engines and Power Products markets.

Speaking about the launch, Kawasaki's Sales & Marketing Co-ordinator, Louise Topp, said "We took the decision to create two separate sites as we wanted to emphasise how our products relate to very different market needs and requirements as well as providing websites that are easy to navigate and user friendly, to make sure visitors can find relevant information quickly and easily. They will be an invaluable resource for our dealers, distributors and customers."

An important consideration was to have product specifications and dealer and distributor network information readily to hand for visitors to the sites. With this in mind, they have been designed with a comprehensive search facility, with distributor and dealer information only a click away.

A major new feature of both sites is the dedicated Distributor Resource Area where dealers and distributors will have a central source of support material.

The latest technical bulletins, parts catalogues, owner manuals and marketing material will all be available for download.

Kawasaki is committed to long term investment in their websites, with further phased developments being planned for launch throughout the year. There is a rolling programme scheduled to make the Engine website available in additional EU Languages, while the Power Products website will eventually be available in the language of every country within Kawasaki's trading area.

To have a look at the new sites and to keep up to date with Kawasaki's latest information please visit www.kawasaki-powerproducts.eu and www.kawasaki-engines.eu

Backing for New Initiative



The PGA and BIGGA are backing an American initiative aimed at making golf more enjoyable.

Golfers in USA are taking part in the Tee it Forward scheme which encourages clubs to set tee boxes forward to match the ability of amateurs.

PGA Chief Executive, Sandy Jones, has welcomed the idea, which is being piloted by the PGA of America and the USGA.

He sees it as a means of improving the game, speeding up pace of play and

attracting new enthusiasts to the sport.

BIGGA Chief Executive, Jim Croxton, also backs the initiative.

“BIGGA is fundamentally in favour of any initiative which serves to make the game of golf more accessible and enjoyable for all. The Tee it Forward programme will serve to fulfil those ambitions particularly on courses that currently have the flexibility to vary course length. Enjoyment of a golf course is also intrinsically linked to the condition in which it is presented and that

includes ensuring that teeing grounds are suitable for purpose,” said Jim.

“We applaud the PGA of America and the USGA for their initiative and would welcome the opportunity to work with the governing bodies of golf in the UK to form and manage similarly innovative initiatives to help grow the game,” he added.

Sandy Jones also sees wider benefits of the Tee it Forward programme

“It will not just boost many golfers’ enjoyment of the game but also addresses two of the bugbears frequently cited as problems in the game - time taken to play a round of golf and the pace of play.

“I think realistically, the average club player should be thinking about playing courses in the region of 6,000-6,200 yards. It doesn’t make sense to have higher handicap players tackling 450-yard par fours when they’ve got no chance of reaching them in two.”

The move would see courses set up in line with the average driving distance for amateurs, meaning they would be 6,000-6,200 yards long.

Courses in the region of 6,700-yards would be proportionate to Tour players playing 8,100-yard courses, at least 700-yards longer than those Tour players play on. This stems from a report that found the average drive for a mid to high handicapper male is 192 yards while the distance for women, is 145 yards.

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BIGGA SCOTTISH NATIONAL TOURNAMENT THE DUKES COURSE, ST.ANDREWS



This year's Scottish National Tournament was held over the Dukes Course, St.Andrews.

Overhead conditions were fine, a slight breeze but dry. The course at its longest can be played at 7,500 yards which makes it one of the longest inland courses in Europe, but we settled for a reasonable yardage at 6,500 yards.

This still proved a difficult test which was reflected in the scoring. Derek Robson, Course Manager and his staff, had obviously worked extremely hard to produce an outstanding course which rightly received plaudits from the players for its superb condition.

Four players, Kenny Stirling, Kingsbarns; Alistair Read, Williamwood; David Grant, Newmachar GC, and Paul Teviotdale, Montrose Links, all returned gross 77. With a better inward half, Paul was the winner of the SGGA Challenge Cup for 2011. After his win last year of the Pattison Trophy (Second Class), Richard Pirie, of Newmachar, went one better and won the Friendship Trophy and Handicap Champion for 2011 with a score of 84-11-73.

Our Chairman, Stuart Taylor, thanked David Scott, General Manager at the Dukes, for the assistance and help given to the Association prior to and during the tournament by his staff.

PRIZE LIST

SGGA Challenge Cup - Scratch Champion

Paul Teviotdale, Montrose Links, 77

Friendship Trophy - Handicap Champion

Richard Pirie, Newmachar GC, 84-11-73

Ransomes Trophy - First Class

1. George Brown, Retired, 81-7-74 (BIH)
2. David Grant, Newmachar GC, 77-2-75 (BIH)
3. Kenny Stirling, Kingsbarns, 77-2-75
4. Patrick Wood, Newmachar GC, 81-5-76 (BIH)

Pattison Trophy - Second Class

1. Gordon McKie, St Andrews, 87-11-76
2. Stuart Brown, Royal Aberdeen, 87-10-77
3. Alan Russell, Archerfield, 90-12-78 (BIH)
4. Billy Craig, Kirriemuir GC, 90-12-78

STRI Trophy - Third Class

1. Euan Grant, Turnberry Hotel, 98-14-84

Dick Aitken Trophy - Best Head Greenkeeper

Paul Murphy, Downfield GC, 80-5-75

M&M Trophy - Best Assistant

Kenny Mitchell, St.Andrews, 79-5-74

SIGGA Trophy - Best Veteran

Derek Scott, Scoonie GC, 88-11-77

St Mungo Trophy - Team Trophy (Best 4 net scores) Section; Central

Kenny Mitchell, St Andrews, 74; Paul Murphy, Downfield GC, 75; Kenny Stirling, Kingsbarns, 75; Gordon McKie, St Andrews, 76. Total - 300

Patron/Trade Trophy

Kenny Turnbull, Vermigrand, 80-5-75

Qualifiers National Championship;

Paul Teviotdale, Montrose Links
Richard Pirie, Newmachar GC

Peter J.Boyd, Regional Administrator

Scottish Region v GCMA

This year's match against the GCMA was held at Glasgow Gables Golf Club.

GCMA were the hosts and had high hopes of winning after their victory in the previous visit to Gables in 1998.

The match, played in windy but dry conditions, was very close with the GCMA leading by a point with two matches to go. Both games, however, went the way of BIGGA and we emerged the winners by 5 matches to 4. The Vice Chairman, Andy O'Hara, accepted the trophy on behalf of BIGGA and gave the apologies on behalf of the Chairman who had to leave early.

Winners for the Association were: Derek Wilson & Iain MacDonald, Derek Scott & Stuart Brown, Scott Ballantyne & Brian Hillen, Colin McArthur & Shaun Cunningham. Halved matches for Iain MacLeod & Archie Dunn plus Andy Peace & Blair Somerville. The defeated pairings were Stuart Taylor & Andy O'Hara, Iain Barr & Duncan Gray and David McBride & John Brown.

Our thanks to the Captain and Committee of Glasgow GC for the courtesy and facilities afforded to us. The course was in superb condition and congratulations go to Brian Dickson and his staff for all their hard work in preparing the course for our visit.

Details of the rematch in 2012 details will follow soon.

Peter J. Boyd, RA