

## WELCOME FROM BIGGA

### BIGGA



**BIGGA President**  
Sir Michael Bonalack,  
OBE

**BIGGA Board of Management Chairman**  
Tony Smith  
**Vice Chairman**  
Chris Sealey

**BIGGA Past Chairman**

Andrew Mellon

**BIGGA Board Members**

Steve Mason, Stuart Greenwood, Arnold Phipps-Jones, Jeremy Hughes, Kenny MacKay, George Barr, John Keenaghan

**BIGGA Chief Executive Officer**

Jim Croxton

**BIGGA General Manager**

Tracey Maddison

traceymaddison@bigga.co.uk

**BIGGA Learning & Development Manager**

Sami Strutt

sami@bigga.co.uk

**Contact Us**

BIGGA House, Aldwark, Alne, York,  
YO61 1UF

info@bigga.co.uk

www.bigga.org.uk

Tel – 01347 833800 | Fax – 01347 833801

### GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

The official monthly magazine of the British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association Limited.



**Production**

**Design & Brand Executive**  
Tom Campbell

Tel – 01347 833800  
ext 513  
tom@bigga.co.uk



**Editorial**

**Communications Executive**  
Steve Castle

Tel – 01347 833800  
ext 510  
steve.castle@bigga.co.uk



**Advertising**

**Business Development Manager**  
Jill Rodham

Tel – 01347 833800  
ext 519  
Fax – 01347 833802  
jill@bigga.co.uk

**Printing**

Warners Midlands Plc, The Maltings, Manor Lane, Bourne, Lincolnshire PE10 9PH  
Tel – 01778 391000 | Fax – 01778 394269

Contents may not be reprinted or otherwise reproduced without written permission. Return postage must accompany all materials submitted if return is requested. No responsibility can be assumed for unsolicited materials. The right is reserved to edit submissions before publication. Although every care will be taken, no responsibility is accepted for loss of manuscripts, photographs or artwork. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Association, and no responsibility is accepted for such content, advertising or product information that may appear. Circulation is by subscription. Subscription rate: UK £50 per year, Europe and Eire £65, Rest of the World £95. The magazine is also distributed to BIGGA members, golf clubs, local authorities, the turf industry, libraries and central government.



ISSN: 0961-6977

© 2013 British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association Limited

Photograph by Richard Jenkinson



## A classic summer links test

**An extraordinary final round 66 by Phil Mickelson to clinch the 2013 Open Championship at a sun-drenched Muirfield will live long in the memory of all those who witnessed it.**

Great shot-making, ball striking, considerable patience and a quite brilliant putting display combined to produce a round that is already being talked about as one of the top ten major winning final day performances. It capped a superb Championship played on one of the world's greatest courses in absolutely immaculate condition. Course Manager Colin Irvine and his team presented a classic summer links test, the greens were firm and fast but utterly true, the rough was long but the test was fair.

Unfortunately, as is so often the case these days, there was a hint of controversy. Stronger than forecast winds on day one drew some of the moisture from the putting surfaces meaning that green speed increased as play went on. This led to some criticism of the pin positions but also to some of the players being asked to give their views on the actual condition of the course. Indeed the eventual champion opined after round one that some parts of the greens were actually dying! It is a concern that the watching public can take such comments at face value. But the following three days showed vividly that the course was in fact being beautifully managed by Colin and his team, with support from both the local support team and the additional greenkeepers that the R&A now bring in from fellow Open Championship venues. The loud cheers for the greenstaff at the final presentation spoke volumes for the overall presentation of the course.

For the 29th successive time the volunteer BIGGA Support Team played their part, and it was a great privilege to have the opportunity to spend the week with this year's selected few. The variety in age and experience is vast but the

enthusiasm levels are consistently high and I'm pleased to say that was true right up to the end - even though all four rounds were played out in energy sapping heat.

As always at this event there are a myriad of tales to tell, many of which are captured in the Review (pages 20-25) but one of the highlights for me was hearing of the generosity and welcome shown to our visitor from the US Sean Sullivan. After scheduling a few additional days in the area before the event, Sean utilised the BIGGA Bulletin Boards to contact greenkeepers in Scotland to possibly give a course tour or contribute a day or two's free labour. The response was extraordinary with BIGGA members offering him bed, board and travel. Part One of his two-part account of a memorable trip is on page 66.

The Open Championship also provides a fantastic platform for BIGGA to engage with the many golfing bodies that govern and support the game of golf in the UK and beyond. The Chairman and I took the opportunity to meet with the Home Unions, the R&A and numerous other golfing associations during the week and productive discussions were held on topics as diverse as golf management education pathways, sustainability and golf development.

I would like to publicly congratulate Colin Irvine and his team for a job well done and to thank the R&A for continuing to work with us to provide such a quality support team to the world's greatest golf tournament.

The Open is not the only show in town this month; hearty congratulations are due to Les Howkins and all at The Richmond Golf Club for winning Golf Inc's prestigious 'Renovation of the Year' title against a strong field of competitors sporting many times their budget. A profile of the work - which involved a major overhaul of the course - begins on page 34.

Enjoy the read.

**Jim Croxton, BIGGA CEO**