

HISTORIC CHANGE AT BRORA



Head Greenkeeper James Macbeath (second left) watches course record holder Jim Miller tee off at the 11th with Jim Casey from Clyneish Distillery and Club President Alistair Risk

A Head Greenkeeper's desire to modernise a historic course has led to a significant and historic change of yardage at Brora Golf Club.

James MacBeath, Head Greenkeeper at the club – which is situated some 50 miles north of Inverness - recognised that the back nine was more difficult than the front nine so recommended it be extended by 50 yards, to ensure it became a par five.

James said: "I play off quite a low handicap and I found that in the prevailing wind, the back nine and front nine were not balanced. Also, there are not many par 69s around these days. We get many American visitors who are looking for a par 70, so I really felt it was time to modernise.

"I brought my idea to our greens committee and it all went from there. Inevitably there were some objections at first, particularly as there have been very few changes since the course was laid out in 1924, but when it eventually went to a vote the members were in favour."

Over the winter James and his team worked to build the new tee on the James Braid designed course, and also extended the fairways to allow for the extra yardage.

To mark the occasion the club and Clynelish Distillery, the sponsor of the 11th hole, invited course record holder Jim Miller to hit the first drive from the new tee.



Chris Thomas, Mike Mayer, Alex Matthews, Craig Campbell

100-HOLE CHARITY CHALLENGE

BIGGA member Craig Campbell is joining forces with four pals this month to attempt the incredible charity challenge of playing 100 holes in a single day.

Former Celtic Manor greenkeeper Craig will head to Ridgeway Golf Club in Caerphilly on 21 June with club members Chris Thomas, Mike Mayer and Alex Matthews, and have worked out they have around 16 hours of daylight to succeed – all in aid of Cancer Research Wales.

Craig is now a groundsman at Cardiff's magnificent Millennium Stadium, but golf is very much in his blood.

He worked at several clubs including South Winchester and Stratford Oaks before

moving on to Celtic Manor. He has retained his BIGGA membership as he explains: "Everyone can benefit from what other turf guys are doing. The Millennium Stadium provides a unique working environment, which means we are always looking for ways to improve and take on board ideas from all areas of turf management.

"Regarding the challenge, if we can go round in 998 minutes and play to our handicaps for the whole day this would equate to a shot every 34 seconds!

"We're looking forward to raising significant funds for Cancer Research Wales."

Donations can be made at www.justgiving.com/RidgewayGolf2013-100HoleChallenge