



from the far - east

Now that the Ryder Cup is in full swing at the Valhalla Golf Club in Kentucky, I thought it would be appropriate to offer a unique insight into Pittodrie's finest, and not so finest, golf players. Footballers and golf go hand in hand these days, with many players enjoying the thrill of striking a ball instead of kicking one.

There are many footballers who are fine golfers. The obvious candidates include Michael Owen, who is a single handicap player, as is former Chelsea striker Andrei Shevchenko. Some have even tried their hand professionally after retiring from football including Julian Dicks, John Moncur and Roy Wegerle. Kenny Dalglish recently visited Singapore and took in a round or two during his brief stay and he showed he is a fine player who made easy work of one of the most challenging courses out here. Gary Lineker and Alan Hansen are known for their fine swing as is former Newcastle United striker Alan Shearer. The list is almost endless.



After some intensive research and many phone calls back and forward, my sources reliably inform me that Darren Mackie is the Club's outstanding player.



So, who in the current squad at Pittodrie could maybe one day swap the ball for the club? After some intensive research and many phone calls back and forward, my sources reliably inform me that Darren Mackie is the Club's outstanding player. Scott Severin, Richard Foster and Lee Mair may beg to differ as on any given day they may catapult themselves to the giddy heights at the top of the leader board but until that day, Mr Mackie remains number one in Pittodrie's order of merit. I don't think it will be too long though before Richard Foster is in prime position to steal Darren's thunder, but his anger management skills will have to improve on the course if he is to convert those niggling bogeys into pars!

Who among the first team players is the snappiest dresser on the course? Again after much debate the swashbuckling style of Lee Miller appeared to be the winner by general consensus even though some may argue that the Dons striker is comparing notes with a certain Rio Ferdinand, whose dress sense at times

leaves much to be desired. I have seen the evidence with my own eyes and as a connoisseur of golf fashion myself, I tend to side with Lee and endorse his voguish look.

Now, in fear of receiving my period of notice from the Club's elite, I will dare to tell you about the management team. As is only fair, I will not name names but a former colleague and team mate of Jimmy Nicholl informed me that during a round he takes a practice swing WITHOUT a club! Jimmy has been playing the game for over 30 years and has managed to get his handicap down to 14. Just think what it could be, if he practiced WITH a club. Is that not on a par with practicing a penalty without a ball?

This leads me nicely to the gaffer. A first team player, who on condition of anonymity gave me permission to quote him, said in a text message I received, "Please slaughter the boss as he's useless!" Now Mr Calderwood, please understand I am merely the messenger so please, do not shoot!

Deliberately I have left the accolade of the Club's worst player to last. Young Chris Maguire is safe for now, so as I'm tucked up safely in the Far East, out of harm's way I have no fear in declaring that the person with that most of unwanted titles is Malcolm Panton, Aberdeen Football Club's Red Matchday Editor. It's a case of battoe down the hatches, dive for cover and do not allow the children outside for fear of their own safety. I for one am thoroughly looking forward to a round with Malcolm upon my return to the UK in October, it could be an excellent adventure.

Ally Begg is a presenter for ESPN Star Sports in Asia and also writes for the regions "Golf Punk" magazine.

