

Press release

Stockholm, 6 March, 2026



Royal Porthcawl course manager Ian Kinley (centre), who passed away earlier this year, with Husqvarna's Jonathan Snowball and the robotic mower fleet used at the AIG Women's Open.

Husqvarna and The R&A shortlisted for major industry awards following landmark AIG Women's Open activation

Husqvarna, the world leader in robotic mowers, and The R&A, golf's global governing body outside of the USA and Mexico, have been shortlisted in two of the sports industry's most respected awards programmes following their pioneering autonomous mowing activation at the AIG Women's Open at Royal Porthcawl.

The collaboration between The R&A and Husqvarna has been named a finalist in the Best Use of Cutting-edge Technology category at the 2026 European Sponsorship Association Awards and the Tech in Sport Award at the Sport Industry Awards. Both nominations recognise the groundbreaking deployment of Husqvarna's robotic mowing technology across all 18 fairways during a major championship, marking the first time The R&A entrusted an entire fairway operation to autonomous machines.

The project was delivered in close collaboration with the late Royal Porthcawl course manager, Ian Kinley, and his greenkeeping team. Ian, who passed away earlier this year, was instrumental in championing the integration of autonomous mowing at championship level. A widely respected figure within the profession, he led the preparation of the course with characteristic vision, humility and attention to detail.

At Royal Porthcawl, a fleet of 15 robotic mowers, including Husqvarna CEORA units and Automower 580L EPOS models, worked overnight in the build up to and throughout championship week. Monitored via Husqvarna



Fleet Services and supported daily by technicians, the machines delivered consistent, championship-standard conditions while enabling the greenkeeping team to focus on detailed presentation work across greens, tees, and approaches.

Jonathan Snowball, Head of Professional Development at Husqvarna, said: “To be recognised by both the European Sponsorship Association and the Sport Industry Awards is a powerful endorsement of what was achieved at the AIG Women’s Open. This was live championship delivery at the highest level of professional sport, demonstrating how autonomous technology can support elite performance while respecting the craft and expertise of greenkeepers.”

Daniel Lightfoot, Director – Sustainable Golf at The R&A, said: “At the AIG Women's Open, The R&A's collaboration with Husqvarna and the integration of its robotic mower portfolio enabled us to deliver high performance surfaces in a sustainable way through improved resource management, consistent lightweight mowing, and reduced carbon usage. We are proud that this innovative initiative has been recognised through these award nominations, reflecting our shared commitment to sustainability and performance excellence.”

The ESA Awards celebrate best-in-class sponsorship campaigns across Europe, while the Sport Industry Awards recognise excellence across brands, rights holders, and suppliers. Together, the dual nominations reinforce Husqvarna’s position at the forefront of autonomous innovation within global sport.

The winners of the 2026 ESA Awards will be announced on Thursday 12 March, with the Sport Industry Awards ceremony taking place later in the year.

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Husqvarna Group

Husqvarna Group is a global leader in innovative solutions for managing forests, parks, and gardens, as well as equipment and diamond tools for the construction industry. With an innovative mindset, we are dedicated to delivering high-quality solutions ranging from robotic mowers to chainsaws, watering systems and power cutters, with a strong focus on our customers and future generations. Founded in the Swedish town Huskvarna in 1689, we have been pioneers in our business for more than three centuries. Today, we are mainly operating under the global Husqvarna and Gardena brands, serving consumers and professionals in over 100 countries through

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