A computer glitch meant that the final paragraphs of our Stockley Park feature last month were missing. Here’s a recap of course opening for this photograph.

Bridie Redican, the first woman greenkeeper to carry off the coveted Toro-PGA European Tour Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award, has returned to Ireland after her sponsored trip to the USA. And she has joined the newly-formed greenkeeping team at the Adare Golf Club, a new Robert Trent Jones 18-hole design being constructed close to Shannon Airport on the south-west coast.

Recalling her recent experiences in America, Bridie, pictured right, says she was “knocked for six” at the size of US greenkeeping budgets – and greenkeeper’s salaries. “They’re about double what they are here.”

Describing her six weeks turf management course studies at the University of Massachusetts as “brilliant”, Bridie teamed up with the only other female (an American) attending the residential course “to reduce the odds. There were two of us (women) and over 60 male greenkeepers”.

After completing her studies, Bridie visited the Toro Mower Division’s complex at snowbound Minneapolis, before flying to the Californian sunshine.

In addition to touring the Toro Irrigation Division’s offices and production lines at Riverside, south of Los Angeles, Bridie spent a day looking over golf courses in Palm Springs.

“The Toro-PGA scholarship was eliminated. Our man there, Eric Shiel of the Joint Golf Course Committee, says: “A lot of time has been taken up trying to get agreement among different nations on ‘standards for test methods’, therefore there has been no direct impact on the game of golf so far. But watch must be kept upon these non-golf boffins since, for example, when deciding a test method for ‘ball roll’ I had to tell them that the Stimpeter had been used in golf for over 40 years, something they knew nothing about. Otherwise they would have invented something else to be used for all sports.”

In addition to ball roll, imminent standard test methods being developed which will impact on golf include: organic matter, particle size, determination of thatch depth, sward height and ground cover, saturated hydraulic conductivity, water infiltration rates and angled ball behaviour. Thankfully it was decided that golf did not need a test method for a vertical ball bounce, so at least that was eliminated.

The European Golf Association Ecology Unit management committee, which met for the first time recently in Brussels, is putting together a document detailing the positive environmental attributes of golf courses. The director, David Stubbs of Environmental Golf Services, says it will be for distribution to the golfing community and will serve to counter opposing claims about the environmental impact of the game. A long-term scientific study is also to be undertaken comparing the impact of golf courses before and after construction and/or reconstruction.

The EGA EU is funded by the R&A, the PGA European Tour and the European Golf Association.