It's good to talk

I returned home at the end of July after two weeks away. It started with a very pleasant visit to Formby Golf Club for The World Junior Championships, where I made a presentation on behalf of BIGGA for the Best Nordic Winner. At the Presentation Lunch I sat next to the Guest Speaker, Cliff Morgan, which for the Best Nordic Winner. At the Presentation Lunch I sat next to the Guest Speaker, Cliff Morgan, which was more welcome than I expected.

In the evening there was a range of papers from construction to environmental issues, including management, pesticides, thatch development and marketing. There were some high profile speakers too, including Dr J. Beard and M. Mocioni on Grasses and S. W Baker. I did take time out to enjoy meeting everyone, I would like to say a big thank you to all who took part. We are proud of all the links courses and venues.

In the marquee we had many visitors, but none was more welcome than Viscount and Lady Whitelaw, accompanied by their grand-daughter. How nice it was to see them taking the time to interest and see this. So obviously have in BIGGA and its members, to visit us.

I left Royal Birkdale with many fond memories and headed north to St Andrews for the World Scientific Congress of Golf. I sat in on a range of papers from construction to environmental issues, including management, pesticides, thatch development and marketing. There were some high profile speakers too, including Dr J. Beard and M. Mocioni on Grasses and S. J. Sifers and Beard on Grasses for Putting Greens, W. Uhllein on Tradition and Technology, and a very interesting paper on Passion for Green by Dr J. R. Hansen. The STRI had talks from Amanda Cook and S. W. Baker. I did take time out from greenkeeping matters to enjoy a talk for the Ageing Golfer (no comments please).

In the evening there was a range of things to do, one was a visit to St Andrews, a new links course in which Walter Woods has an input. Walter had told me much about St Andrews the week before, so I was looking forward with interest to the visit. I was not disappointed, it is an exciting project. One very interesting and unusual find made during the landscaping, was the discovery of an old kundit a channel or passage for conveying water - which had been buried for more than one hundred years, several metres underground. This has been uncovered with care and turned into a feature using two original bridges in remarkable condition, which span the kundit as walkways. They remind you very much of the famous bridge over the Swallow Burn on the 18th at St Andrews. Kingsbarns is a links I look forward to playing on completion.

I would like to thank Walter who one evening picked me up and took me on a tour of the city and his club before returning to his home for a bite of supper and to meet his good lady. The week ended with a game of golf on the Old Course and dinner before the long drive home. It had been a very enjoyable time meeting a lot of very nice people from all over the world.

It should have been back in Scotland the following week for the National Tournament which unfortunately had to be cancelled due to lack of support. It does, however, give us the opportunity to update and hopefully improve the event next year. One thing is certain, it will take place, that you can rest assured. Marion and I were going to take a holiday in Scotland including the tournament, so we lost out on that, but not to be out done, Marion booked a second holiday for us in Chester, and it made a very nice break.

At the time of writing the hot weather has arrived at last to test out the watering systems, and slow down the growth, but do beware of using too much water at this late stage in the season. It can be very dangerous and leave us with soggy greens to go into winter, exactly the opposite condition we would like. The more experienced greenkeepers will have gone through this sort of weather pattern before, but for some it will be new. So, if you are unsure, pick up the phone and talk to someone local, and remember the advert - It's good to talk.