Where has all the rain gone?

Since writing my October article and commenting on the dreadful weather, I haven’t seen a drop of rain for nearly six weeks now and the golf course is beginning to look quite dry. But after our experience this time last year I am not complaining and the course will at least go into winter fairly dry. I think you will agree with me that this makes planning extremely difficult. Last year it was too wet and now we are too dry for some jobs, but then that is the challenge of greenkeeping.

The past four weeks have been a busy time for me and the Association. Back in September I was a guest of the Swedish Greenkeepers Association and presented a paper at their education conference in Västerås, just north of Stockholm. Fortunately for me the vast majority of them could understand and speak English so, not unlike Harrogate, I could socialise with them after the conference. Unfortunately though, not being able to understand or speak Swedish I relied on my problems into perspective. I thought golfers started to play early over here but can you imagine people playing 24 hours a day certainly in the north of the country where greens had to be cut twice a day due to the light and amount of growth, and also not being able to see your course for several months due to a covering of snow or indeed total darkness! This was in total contrast to that of Bruce Williams, their principal speaker, who presented two superb papers. Bruce works at the Los Angeles Country Club and has a reasonably nice climate year round although still encounters many problems.

Regrettably while I was away it was the Toro Student Of The Year awards at Headquarters which my Vice-Chairman, George Brown attended. I understand all finalists were of an extremely high standard and congratulations must go to you all, in particular Murray Long who came out on top. I know he is in for a super prize and one that can only benefit his future.

Thanks again to Toro for their continued support of the Association. Back in September I was a guest of the Swedish Greenkeepers Association and presented a paper at their education conference in Västerås, just north of Stockholm. Fortunately for me the vast majority of them could understand and speak English so, not unlike Harrogate, I could socialise with them after the conference. Unfortunately though, not being able to understand or speak Swedish I relied on my problems into perspective. I thought golfers started to play early over here but can you imagine people playing 24 hours a day certainly in the north of the country where greens had to be cut twice a day due to the light and amount of growth, and also not being able to see your course for several months due to a covering of snow or indeed total darkness! This was in total contrast to that of Bruce Williams, their principal speaker, who presented two superb papers. Bruce works at the Los Angeles Country Club and has a reasonably nice climate year round although still encounters many problems.

Regrettably while I was away it was the Toro Student Of The Year awards at Headquarters which my Vice-Chairman, George Brown attended. I understand all finalists were of an extremely high standard and congratulations must go to you all, in particular Murray Long who came out on top. I know he is in for a super prize and one that can only benefit his future. Thanks again to Toro for their continued support of this event.

On my return from Sweden I picked up a quick change of clothes and headed off up to the National Championship. I am sure most of you will have heard or read in other reports I did not have one of my better days on the course. Hillside was truly magnificent and it was a good walk spoiled for me as I could only manage one over (level fives that is not level par) but like a true professional I bettered that score by 12 at Hesketh the following day, but had to take some ribbing in between times.

Congratulations to Ian Semple the overall winner and all other prize winners and a big thank you to both greenkeeping teams and sponsors for helping to make our championships such a success. It was much appreciated by all who took part.

And finally, to conclude this busy period, we have had a board meeting and I have attended a golf day and AGM of the Mid Anglia Section. This was held at Stocks Hotel & Golf Club in Aldbury. Thanks must go to that familiar face and BIGGA supporter, Mark Ellis, and his team for a super golf course and the Section committee for all their hard work. This section like many others spoke of what they had accomplished within the year with regards to tournaments and education but weren’t supported as well as they would have liked! Come on guys. Let your Section committees know what you want.

With regard to the rest of the month I have a couple of Sections to visit and an invitation to speak in Denmark at their annual conference and on my return I will be at Scotsturf for two days where I look forward to seeing you on the BIGGA stand. I will be reporting on these in my next article.

And finally, you should have received your forms for BTME/Clubhouse. Get them back to Headquarters early to secure the course you want.

It’s going to be a busy week!