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June 2000

Your next issue of Greenkeeper International will be with you by July 6, 2000

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WIN £50 WITH OUR BUYERS’ GUIDE QUIZ

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Win £50 with our Buyers’ Guide quiz

June 2000  Greenkeeper International  3
As I was lying on my sun lounger in the garden recently, enjoying the sun and admiring the sight of wife and lawn mower operating in perfect harmony, my mind wandered off into thinking about the industry we are all fortunate enough to call our own and in particular our Association.

I began musing that now, after five years in the job and having visited so many of golf clubs up and down the length and breadth of the country, if I were to be carried off in a spaceship and deposited anywhere within the United Kingdom that no matter where it was I would bump into someone I knew by walking only a matter of a few miles.

I know it does seem a bizarre thing to be thinking about as I was supposed to be brushing up on my tan but the sun does these things to you – particularly when you can overdose on its rays in our little piece of the Yorkshire Riviera.

But think about it. The beauty of this business is that it is small enough to know a large proportion of those people working within it but large enough to have many of those people spread all over the country.

I often play the game of hearing a place name on the television, or in the course of conversation, then working our who I knew in that place. I'm rarely stuck and normally the list can reach double figures. To make matters worse, I bore the pants off my aforementioned long suffering wire by providing her with the name of the Course Manager or Head Greenkeeper when we pass golf clubs in the car. She now knows quite a number of you by name, if not sight, as well as having a better than average knowledge of tractor makes and colours, again having benefited from my generosity in passing on such information.

As I said I'm lucky that I do travel around the country a lot but within your section or region area you can no doubt do the same while with people moving to new jobs and relocating your group of friends widens and you'd be surprised just how many places you could bump into a familiar face.

Now the great thing is not only do we know these people but we also know we can call on them in times of need. If we have a problem there will always be someone happy to lend a tow rope, money for a pint, a piece of kit, offer some useful advice or even just provide a shoulder to cry on.

That is the real value of BIGGA as an Association. Not only are there so many benefits to membership that can really help you – read Steve Dixon's letter about the insurance money he received after a recent accident – but the things we can't list in among membership packages such as lasting friendships and camaraderie, within the trade as well as fellow greenkeepers, are just as important, if not more so.
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2000-2001
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e-mail: education@bigga.co.uk
Rain Bird run training day at Gleneagles

Rain Bird held a training day at Gleneagles attended by Course Managers and staff from golf courses across Scotland and Northern England.

The event was organised by Mark Ganning, Rain Bird’s Field Service Manager for the UK and Ireland, to provide an introduction for new users to the company’s computerised control systems and as a refresher for those already familiar with the systems offered by the company.

"Irrigation technology has made massive advances in the last decade, especially with the introduction of ever more powerful personal computers that have enabled sophisticated systems to be managed from a desktop environment. Effective water resource management, with its associated environmental implications is vitally important, therefore it is imperative that users of any one of our control systems knows how to operate them in the most appropriate manner,” explained Mark Ganning.

“The duties of the golf course manager are becoming more diverse and lifetime learning is now part of the culture. That’s why this training session, demonstrating the simple and effective use of the Windows-based new technology, has proved to be such a success with the delegates who attended.”

The format of the Training Day was to provide delegates with an overview of Cirrus, Nimbus II, and Stratus II, the three central control systems from Rain Bird’s software portfolio. Each delegate was set various tasks to ensure that they fully understood each application before progressing to the next level.

“We have invested over £500,000 in our Rain Bird system and it has proved a most worthwhile investment. I thought it was a fascinating learning experience and provided an excellent insight into the software options available. Irrigation and its effect on our environment is an important issue and these control systems enable course managers to act responsibly when it comes to water conservation,” said Scott Fenwick, Golf Maintenance Co-ordinator for Gleneagles King’s and Queen’s courses.

Ecology on agenda at STRI conference

A European line up of top ecology officers attended a technical working meeting at STRI in Bingley in last month. Officers from all over Europe including representatives from Austria, Belgium, and Finland took part in discussions seeking to develop a standard for golf courses throughout Europe in line with Committed to Green.

Also present were Dean Cleaver representing FEGGA, Susan Mcgregor from LGA, an environmental auditing institute working with the German Golf Federation and Alex Dyke from Green Globe, a leading environmental initiative in the tourism industry.

Bob Taylor, Senior Ecologist and STRI representative on the Technical Working Panel, opened the programme with a technical presentation. Further presentations were provided by STRI staff including Kate Entwistle, Plant Pathologist, David Lawson, Research Chemist and Jeff Perris, Head of Advisory and Construction Services.

Across Europe there are now almost 200 golf clubs joining the programme.

Don't try this at home Mike! ...
...too late he's done it

Mike Cheers, Head Greenkeeper at Haigh Golf Club, in Wigan, will be seen this week on the nation’s television screens later this month swinging from the end of a rope over the Arkansas River in Colorado.

An unlikely situation in which to find oneself you might think, but Mike was collaborated by Davina McCall, of popular Saturday evening show “Don’t Try This At Home” on the 7th green at Mere Golf and Country Club when watching a popular TV quiz. Last year, having been set up by his wife, Tracy, and two sons, Christopher and Joseph.

"Tracy and I were then whisked off to Colorado to be confronted by the Royal Gorge Suspension Bridge which hangs 1053 feet above the Arkansas River. My "Challenge of a Lifetime" was to swing from a very long rope under this bridge," explained Mike.

The programme will be broadcast on Saturday June 24 when we will all find out how he got on.

"It was all very exciting and certainly a challenge of a lifetime," is the only clue Mike would give.

Canadian Dates Confirmed

The Canadian Golf Superintendent Association’s major events for 2000–2001 are as follows.

September 18, 2000 CGSA Annual Fall Field Day, The Niakwa Country Club, Winnipeg, MB
February 29-27, 2001 52nd Canadian International Turfgrass Conference & Trade Show, Vancouver Convention & Exhibition Centre, Vancouver, BC

Contact: CGSA Office Tel: (905) 602-8873 or 1-800-387-1056 Web Site: www.golfsupers.com
Textron support for Matt's Lotus season

Matt Bartram, a Director at Textron Dealer Bartram Mowers, has secured a drive in this season's Autobytel Lotus Championship, a one-make series featuring the new Lotus Sport Elise.

Textron has committed its support to the event by providing Four E-Z-GO XI-875 industrial vehicles for use by the pit crew.

Matt, who last year competed in the Formula Renault single-seater championship, is one of the two drivers racing for Team Norfolk, a consortium of sponsoring companies headed by Roger Bennington of Stratton Motor Company.

This year's championship is a support event for the British Touring Car Championship (BTCC) and involves 21 cars that are all operated and maintained by Lotus Motorsport to ensure that they remain identical from the beginning to the end of the series. This provides a completely level playing field for all the drivers.

Like many of his colleagues, Bob Bean, Head Greenkeeper of Humberston Park Golf Club, in Grimsby, had to cope with the horrendous flooding the wettest April for many years brought. However Bob is not so sure all his problems were caused by the April Showers.

"My message to all Head Greenkeepers is this - If senior members are causing this sort of damage by using on-course toilet facilities insist that all senior sections must use changing room toilets before commencing play," joked Bob.

Flooding tip from Bob

Tree Information Day

An Information Day under the heading Trees and Golf will be held at North Wilts Golf Club, Devizes, on Wednesday June 28.

The day, organised by John Nicholson of John Nicholson Associates, will look at Ecology; Constraints of planting on a golf course; Golf strategy and the role that trees play; Principles of course design and the benefits that trees have; Grant availability; Successful tree establishment; Management of new and existing woodland; Golf ball damage to trees and Examples of good and bad practices.

The cost of the day is £35 incl VAT and further information can be obtained from John Nicholson Associates Tel: 0191 384 2536.

Congratulations to Emma

Emma Duggleby, who worked in BIGGA's administration department two years ago will be a part of the Great Britain and Ireland Curtis Cup team which plays the Americans at Ganton later this month.

Emma, a former British Ladies Champion and English Stroke-Play Champion, will enjoy a lot of home support as her own club is Malton and Norton, a near neighbour of Ganton.

Everyone at BIGGA wishes Emma and the rest of the team every success in their efforts to secure the Cup. Indeed we also wish Head Greenkeeper Phil Baldock and his team every success in preparation of the course before and during the matches.

Thanks from Seve

Current Toro Excellence in Greenkeeping Champion, Brian Turner of Sunningdale, received praise for his work at the inaugural Eurobet Seve Ballesteros Trophy from the great man himself.

Writing in European Tour News Seve thanked everyone involved in making the event - won by the European team he captained - such a success and he singled out Brian and his team for special mention.

"I was particularly delighted that at the prize giving Brian Turner, the Head Greenkeeper at Sunningdale Golf Club, properly received a standing ovation for the work he and his team put in throughout the week and, especially on the Saturday when torrential rain made conditions so difficult in which to work," wrote Seve.
New Textron deal for PGA Tour

PGA European Tour Courses PLC, owners of flagship golf courses in the UK and Europe, have signed an exclusive three-year agreement with Textron, the Ipswich-based manufacturer of turf care equipment. The agreement was signed at Stockley Park Golf Course recently.

Textron Specialty Products will be the official golf car supplier to PGA European Tour Courses, which specialise in the ownership and management of tournament courses that host professional golf events under the auspices of the European Tour.

"I am delighted that we have renewed this agreement for a further three years. We have received excellent service from Textron over the last three years and that has been a major factor in renewing this contract. E-Z-GO golf cars will be supplied on a pan-European basis and will be used in Portugal, Spain, and the UK, and also at our new German resort," said Paul Kimberley, Sales and Marketing Manager for PGA European Tour Courses.

Apart from the Victor Chandler Trophies will this year be held on August 22. If you have not received an invitation and would like one please contact Paula Humphries Tel: 01288 322194. The tournaments are team events, comprising the Captain, Secretary, Head Greenkeeper and Chairman of Green. Once again they are being sponsored by Scotts Professional UK.

Grand Tour 2000 Scholarship announces winners

The Grand Tour Scholarship committee, comprised of golf course design and maintenance officials from around the world, selected four students to participate in the first professional development tour sponsored by Rain Bird International and organised by Bettina Schrickel, design associate with GOLFPLANT/The Ronald Frem Design Group Ltd. The inaugural Grand Tour, based on a prior tour of American golf courses taken by Ms. Schrickel, is designed to foster design, development and maintenance from all over the word an opportunity to tour and study elite golf courses in the United States. The tour is divided into an eastern and western route with two students selected to follow each one.

The committee chose Jose Makk, turfgrass management student at Michigan State University and a native of Argentina, and William Bowden, turfgrass management student from England, for the tour's eastern route. The western route winners were Paul McFadgen, golf course architecture student from Australia, and Colin Mumford, turfgrass management student from England.

The tour's eastern leg started in Orlando, at the beginning of April and concluded in Boston, in early May. The western route kicked off from Seattle to Portland at the beginning of April and ended up in Fort Worth, Texas. The scholarship winners visited legendary courses including Pebble Beach Golf Links, Augusta National and Pinehurst No. 2.

"Rain Bird was proud to be able to sponsor the first Grand Tour Scholarships," said Jack Buzzard, Vice President of Rain Bird International. "Ms. Schrickel worked hard with our directorate to organise a prestigious opportunity for students from around the world to study some of the finest courses in the United States. We believe this programme fitted well with our commitment to education."

Application forms and detailed information for the 2001 Grand Tour Scholarship will be available from Bettina Schrickel in August 2000. Contact Ms. Schrickel at schwabenh@hof.de.

Green Releaf win a Mean deal at Greenwich

Green Releaf has won the contract to supply spraying services to all the major turf areas on the Greenwich Peninsula including the areas around the millennium Dome, following a recent successful weed and feed application to the project's Central Park and Millennium Boulevard.
They've had a tough day at St. Andrews...

...and they've still got a fairway to go.

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Thanks 1
I would just like to express my thanks and gratitude to Rain bird International and the Grand Tour Scholarship Committee for awarding me one of the inaugural Grand Tour Scholarships (western route). I would also like to say a special thank you to Bettina Schrickel for organising such a wonderful trip, and to all the Superintendents and their assistants for sparing their valuable time to give a detailed tour of their courses and facilities.

The tour was an experience that I will never forget, and the knowledge that I have gained from the trip will be invaluable to me. I would urge anyone to apply for the scholarship as a great wealth of knowledge and exchange of ideas, as well as making new friends in the golf world is made possible by this opportunity.

Once again thank you to everyone involved in the Grand Tour Scholarship.

Colin Mumford
Via e-mail

Thanks 2
During my recent accident the help that I received from all concerned was excellent and much appreciated. A wee word to our members. Our insurance package works for all. Please use it.

The extra cash during my seven weeks off work gave me a big boost when I was feeling a bit sorry for myself while it also helps to pay a few bills if you get caught a bit short.

Once again thanks to all at BIGGA.

Stephen Dixon
Course Manager
Kingsknope GC, Edinburgh

Thanks 3
I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate William Bowden, a member of my greenkeeping team, on being awarded the Grand Tour Scholarship 2000. William is fully deserving of this Scholarship and will be given the opportunity to visit 22 of the top golfing venues on the East Coast of America.

I only wish that these types of Scholarship were available when I was an up and coming greenkeeper and for this reason I would like to take this opportunity to thank Rain Bird International and Bettina Schrickel for their investment into the industry.

Martin Hucklesey
Course Manager
Woodbury Park
Devon

Much Deserved Honour 1
In our May magazine you would have seen our Chairman making the presentation of the Day Honorary Membership to Jim Arthur.

I was very pleased to be asked to arrange a small dinner to tie in with Elliot and Neil's visit to Westurf in Exeter. At the same time I invited a few of Jim's oldest friends who have worked with and known him for a long time. This proved to be my only problem, because I could have invited so many greenkeepers who have great respect for him and his work and also cherish his friendship. So, I am sorry it was just not possible to ask everyone.

The night was a very enjoyable occasion, even though Jim's wife, Audrey, was unable to join us. It was very fitting that Walter Woods, George Brown, Bill Lawson and Derek Green could be with us to make the night so memorable for Jim.

Jim has been and still is a great friend, not just to greenkeepers, but also to the whole industry. He has given us so much and it was nice to see him honoured in this way. I know Jim has written to thank all who were there, but I would like to thank them all personally for making such long journeys to be with us. It just proves the respect we all have for him and his work over six decades.

Gordon F Child
Churston

Much Deserved Honour 2
A few months ago I was contacted by our Association Past Chairman, Gordon Child, to ask if I, along with George Brown, of Turnberry, could travel down to Exeter to an arranged dinner and presentation dedicated to Mr Jim Arthur, who recently was made an Honorary Member of BIGGA.

I have personally known Jim for over 25 years, most of it in my capacity as Links Supervisor at St Andrews, where Jim was Agronomist to the R&A. Throughout all of those years I have gained nothing but respect for this man's knowledge and contributions to greenkeeping, not only in Britain but throughout Europe.

What would we have done without his contribution. When he has stood up to be counted or criticised he has invariably always been correct.

Walter Woods
St Andrews

Well Done Brian!
Through the pages of our magazine, I should like to congratulate Brian Turner and his staff at Sunningdale on managing to put on the Seve Ballesteros Trophy in such adverse conditions. To be able to play any golf at all on the Saturday after all the overnight rain took a great effort and hard work by all his staff.

It does not end there, the pro's move on, with no thought of the mess and mud left to contend with. It is really silly to put on a tournament of this magnitude at this time of the year. April to Greenkeepers is still a month. April to Greenkeepers is still a

A E Watson
President BIGGA
Surrey Section
via e-mail

Ask Us Another
The company to contact is Eurocrats, The Tythe Barn Farm, Titnore Lane, Worthing, West Sussex BN12 6NZ Tel: +44 1903 700678 or Fax: +44 1903 700686.

Debbie Dale
Overseas Manager

Address your letters to the Editor, Greenkeeper International, BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Alne, York Y061 1UF. You can also fax them to 01347 833801, or email them to reception@bigga.co.uk

Top Issue
I write with congratulations for arguably the "best ever", certainly the most relevant ever, edition of the Greenkeeper International – the April issue. John Ross' sensible reply to the "Temple" article epitomised what this Association and its members stand for, and recognised the damage that an ill-advised article in a National Newspaper could do. (Of course, Temple Golf Club and Martin Gunn are to be congratulated for their stance; it would be interesting to hear their experiences)!

I remember winter golf in the 70's - waiting weeks on end for a game when snow and frost finally thawed. Then, when the course was open, chances were that the greens hadn't been cut or rolled, holes weren't changed, putting was a lottery etc, etc. wasn't a problem. (The only small problem was that the handful of players who were keen enough to go out didn't worry.)

Ten years later however, memberships started to boom - the demise of the greens was an out proportion - the course could be busier on Winter weekends than it was at times during the summers. Couple that with the distinct lack of snow or frost - my children have grown up almost without knowing snow - and you begin to see where problems have arisen.

The quality of the courses is far higher now than it was during the 70's and it is a disgrace to suggest otherwise.

Kerran Daly's witty essay touched on the subject of looming legislation within the industry. When oh when are we going to realise that we must take the lead now and not wait to be tamely led by "Eurocrats" from an ivory tower somewhere near Brussels?

Change is inevitable and continual - we often resist change because of the additional workload and stresses it brings but we must shape and influence the change. We certainly can't afford to bury our heads - after all, who knows what Brussels may do with the sand?

All power to the elbows of last months' authors. Let's have more of the same.

Paul Worster
Course Manager
Minchenhamton GC
Glos.