

# Irrigation expert expands his team

**W**hen Philip York first launched himself into the business of golf course and landscape irrigation consultancy in 1985, it was an act of optimism bolstered by his twenty-five years experience in the fine turf market-place.

"I realised it would not be easy", said Philip. "Even in '85, automatic irrigation was still a luxury of the future in many people's minds - especially in the UK landscape industry, but having been part of a gradual, but increasing development of the golf course market - especially in Europe - I concentrated my initial efforts in that direction".

With his mind made up, Philip set himself up in a small office and faced the fact that he had to handle the whole of the technical advisory side of his business alone. A part-time secretary, and Philip's wife helped with the administration!

That was four and a half years ago. Today, the depth of experience invested in Philip York and Partners has developed into a business acknowledged by many as probably being Europe's most experienced independent irrigation engineering design consultancy.

Back in 1986 the picture at Ringwood was a different one. Involved almost exclusively in golf course irrigation system designs - for both UK and European courses, Philip York became increasingly aware that like it or not, his professional activities were, by demand, forcing him to ignore opportunities emerging in the landscape markets.

This problem was solved in 1988 when Bruce Parker joined the Consultancy. A District Technical Advisory Officer for the Ministry of Agriculture, from 1973 to 1978, Bruce subsequently spent a number of years in the Middle East, working as a consultant Irrigation Engineer, mainly involved with landscaping projects.

"Bruce's knowledge and practical know-how relative to the landscaping industry (and horticulture) provided the perfect balance with my own sports turf irrigation experience".

Commuting regularly from Hampshire to visit customer's sites in Portugal, Sweden, Spain, Norway, Finland, France as well as around the UK, the two consultant engineers gradually realised that they needed yet another experienced 'head' to help them cope with steadily increasing market de-

mands.

So, in the Spring of 1989, Philip York invited Mike Martin to join the Consultancy. Specialising in agricultural irrigation system design, Mike also has extensive experience of pumping and water sourcing procedures. Like Philip, Mike gained his in-depth knowledge of large scale irrigation with Wright Rain Limited, the company who pioneered the use of sprinkler irrigation for UK farming and horticulture during the sixties.

"Between the three of us, we now have an integral mix of technical experience which enables us to cope professionally with just about any type of irrigation design concept thrown at us!", says Philip York.

**S**o how does all this experience benefit the average golf club? we asked.

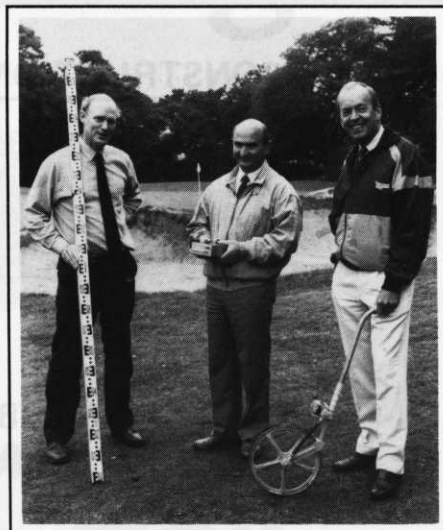
"First and foremost, we can, because we are completely independent of any trading company, offer clubs contemplating spending money on irrigation systems, an objective and unbiased opinion".

"This facility is available to clubs who have an existing system but who are unhappy with its performance - we are, for example, currently reviewing the system installed some years ago at the Aloha championship course, in Spain. Having assessed it, we shall put forward recommendations designed to up-date the system - and its performance".

"Equally, we are able to advise architects or developers responsible for building new courses. The recent 18 hole China Fleet development at Saltash, Cornwall, is just one of several UK golf courses where we are totally involved".

"Earlier this year, the local authority, which owns the 18 hole public Queens Park course in Bournemouth, retained us to prepare a feasibility study and design a viable pop-up system. Constructed back in the thirties, the course had traditionally been watered by ad-hoc methods - our design will not only automate it, it will provide regular, consistent water coverage far superior to anything ever achieved there before.

"Because there is now a proliferation of irrigation equipment and control systems available on the market, it is extremely difficult for a green committee, developer or purchasing authority to choose wisely and to invest many



*L to R: Bruce Parker, Mike Martin and Philip York probably Europe's most experienced team of golf course irrigation engineering design consultants.*

thousands of pounds effectively".

"We are totally conversant with the range of equipment available today and therefore we can recommend that which best suits a particular need.

"So far we've talked about irrigation system design - but our advisory services go much further than that. If requested, we will oversee the entire project. Having walked a course, we will produce a viable design, invite tenders - usually from three reputable companies - assess those tenders, evaluate the capabilities of the installation team, agree a contract, (that's most important) then visit the site to ensure that the work is being carried out to the correct standards, commission the completed system and then when we are satisfied, and only then, we hand it over to the club.

"In addition, we are able to provide practical - assistance with water sourcing and storage, the provision of power supplies and pumping methods. With Mike Martin's knowledge of drilling bore holes, we can help with water extraction!

**P**eter Beverly has now joined the team as Field Engineer to the Philip York Partnership. Peter, who has some fifteen years experience of UK and overseas irrigation systems, will be responsible for the important task of managing irrigation installation projects on site. His brief, to ensure that installation standards are met and maintained right through to the commissioning stage.