

# Next stop America

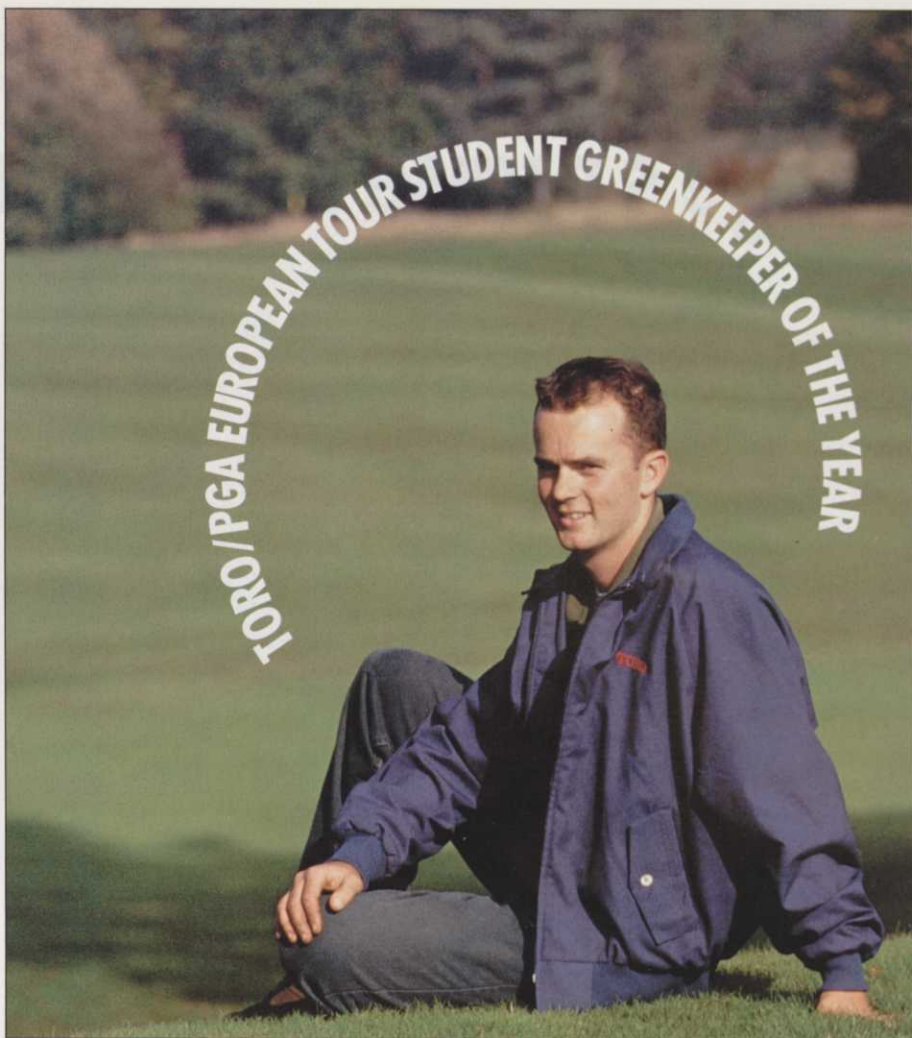
Originally Euan Grant went to university because he wanted to manage a gym or leisure centre. He could end up managing something much more impressive – a championship golf course.

Euan, 24, pictured right, is currently working at Effingham Golf Club, Surrey. He has been there two years and says he is very lucky: "They are a very forward thinking club regarding education, sending me to Plumpton College to study City and Guilds phase II greenkeeping and sports turf management, PA1 and PA2, plus basic health and safety seminars, and an irrigation course at Water-mation."

His parents and friends were surprised, to say the least, when Euan, who has a honours degree in sport and leisure management from the University of Leeds, said he wanted to be a greenkeeper.

But it's a job he loves. "I look forward to each day and each new challenge," he says. And he has big ambitions. "I want to manage a championship course or become an agronomist to the European Tour."

He is definitely on the right tracks and his



GREENS TURF, GLENEAGLES MONARCH'S GOLF COURSE. "THE FINEST TURF IN SCOTLAND." (Pic. courtesy Gleneagles Golf Developments)



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# Judge's praise for tomorrow's course

career has just received a major shot in the arm. He has been named as the Toro/PGA European Tour Student Greenkeeper of the Year. His prize is a Toro scholarship – a six-week residential turf management study course at the University of Massachusetts in the USA this winter, plus visits to Toro's headquarters in Minneapolis and the Toro Irrigation Division in California, plus, if there is time, a trip to the GCSAA's show in San Francisco.

Euan is very excited about his prize, but is quick to praise his club. "They have been brilliant," he says. Brilliant is an understatement. Effingham Golf Club have promoted Euan to first assistant and will pay him this increased wage for the two months he is away, even though they know they may lose him next summer when he seeks to move up the ladder to a deputy's post.

His course manager, Peter Broadbent, says Effingham GC believes in education and is very proud of Euan's success.

## Hard decision

Judging panels always say choosing a winner was difficult because of the high calibre of the

## THE FIVE JUDGES

Graham Dale, managing director of Lely (UK) Ltd

Ted Riley, Toro sales and marketing director for Europe

Bruce Jamieson, PGA European Tour's director of agronomy

Neil Thomas, executive director of BIGGA

Dean Cleaver, chairman of BIGGA's education sub-committee

## THE OTHER REGIONAL WINNERS

Simon Heppenstall, from the Outlane Golf Club, Huddersfield

Vincent Lee from the Great Barr Golf Club, Birmingham

Ken Moore from Shandon Park, Northern Ireland

Stephen Pellatt from Lee-on-Solent Golf Club, Hampshire

candidates. Having sat in on some of the interviews at Aldwark Manor, I know how difficult a decision the five judges had.

Graham Dale, managing director of Toro

distributors Lely (UK) Ltd, believes all seven of the regional winners who were invited to the national final will one day go on to make excellent course managers or head greenkeepers.

But, in the end, they had to pick an overall winner and two runners-up. The runners-up were Margeir Vilhjalmsson, who is currently working at Gleneagles on their Excellence in Golf Award Scheme (see page 3), and Byron Thomas, the first assistant at Morlais Castle Golf Club near Merthyr Tydfil.

Their prize is provided by the PGA European Tour. Margeir and Byron will attend the Tour's greenkeeping conference in La Manga in January and then help out at two PGA events, one in the UK and one on the Continent. "They will help with the preparation of the course each morning and evening," said Bruce Jamieson, the PGA European Tour's director of agronomy.

They are both delighted with their prize. "I'm looking forward to working with the European Tour, it's going to be a good experience," said Byron, who completed City and Guilds phases I and II in greenkeeping and sports turf management at Pencoed while



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**CONGRATULATIONS TO EUAN GRANT, EFFINGHAM GOLF CLUB, WINNER OF THIS YEAR'S TORO/LELY (UK) LTD/PGA EUROPEAN TOUR STUDENT GREENKEEPER AWARD**



# managers

working at the mountainside course which has just spent £550,000 on a new clubhouse but still has no irrigation system.

When the results were announced, he said: "I was shocked but I thought I deserved it. It's a shame there weren't enough prizes for all the finalists. They've all done well to get here."

Margeir, a 22-year-old Icelander who's been studying at Elmwood College in Scotland, says he was just pleased to make the final. "I really didn't believe I would get through the regional finals," he said. But winning the tough Scottish final and winning the PGA prize vindicates his costly decision to become a greenkeeper.

Margeir and his fiance came to Scotland so he could achieve his dream of not only being a good greenkeeper, but one of the best. To pursue this dream they had to take out a bank loan which grew to about £10,000 before Margeir went back to Iceland last summer and worked hard at the Homsvollur course, reducing the loan to about £3,500 before he returned to Scotland.

"I've invested a lot of money in myself but it's been worth it, definitely, I don't really



**Happy with the result: from left, Bruce Jamieson, Margeir Vilhjalmsen, Graham Dale, Euan Grant, Ted Riley and Byron Thomas**

worry about the money because it shouldn't be a problem. I know I'm in debt now back home but when I went home at the summer to work for seven weeks I made quite a lot of money because I was working all the time," he told us.

When he finishes his placement at Glenea-

gles he wants to get a job in Europe or America. "I want to get there at some point because it's so different. I've seen the top here at Glenea, I would like to see the same in America. If I can combine the two it will be good for me, and I want to be good at my job."

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