

Education tops agenda at European conference

The FEGGA European Conference draws near; Neil Thomas sets the scene...

The Federation of European Golf Greenkeepers Association (FEGGA) will hold its first European Conference for its member associations during the period 21-23 November in Fuengirola, Spain. Delegates will be based at the Hotel Mijas in the village of Mijas while the Conference will take place at the Spanish Toro dealers centre in Fuengirola. Toro's support for the Conference through General Sales Manager, Bob Buckingham is much appreciated by FEGGA's member associations, while the Company's backing for FEGGA since its inception in March 1996 has been instrumental in the establishment of the new Association. So, some 18 months on from the first gathering of associations in Amsterdam, the stage is set for a European Conference which will point the way forward for greenkeeper associations throughout Europe.

At present there are 16 member associations of FEGGA and it is anticipated that all will be represented at the Conference in Spain.

Two vital matters will be at the forefront during the Conference – education and the environment. FEGGA considers it very important that the greenkeeper associations throughout Europe can come together to discuss education within the greenkeeping profession and also discuss the situation in each country in respect of environmental issues. The Conference will also enable the member associations to become better acquainted with each other and thereby strengthen the new Association.

Each member association has been invited to send two delegates who will present papers respectively on the education programme and environmental issues within its country. These papers, together with the ensuing discussion, should enable FEGGA to develop a comprehensive overview of educational and environmental matters as they affect greenkeepers throughout Europe. FEGGA can then move on to establish its own programme of improving educational provision for greenkeepers throughout the countries of its member associations aiming to set common standards, while, through its place on

the EGA's Brussels based Ecology Unit, it can seek to ensure that greenkeepers' interests are protected and promoted within the environmental debate. This is therefore an important Conference.

At the Conference, BIGGA's papers will be presented by Chairman, Pat Murphy (Education) and David Roy of Linlithgow Golf Club (Environment). David's club has recently been selected as the Scottish Region winner in the BIGGA 1997 Golf Environment Competition in association with Amazone Ground Care and Rhône Poulenc Amenity. FEGGA's office base is currently in Sweden through the auspices of the Swedish Greenkeepers Association with administrative support being jointly provided by the SGA and BIGGA. The current member associations are Austria, Belgium, BIGGA, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, GCSAI, Holland, Iceland, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland. Anyone requiring information in relation to the Conference or concerning FEGGA generally should contact Tommy Lindelof at PO Box 42, S-139 21 Varmdo, Sweden – telephone 46 8 570 196 10/ fax 46 8 570 198 10.

FLYING DIVOTS

■ Martin Brothers (UK) has appointed Mike Crabtree as Regional Sales Manager North covering Scotland and the Northwest Region.



■ Eamonn Wall & Co has recruited Stuart Wilkie to open a second office in Scotland. Stuart will operate from Rothienorman in Aberdeenshire and cover the north of Scotland for the company.

■ Mark Pyrah has been promoted to Field Sales Manager for Kings Horticulture after seven years as Technical Sales Representative.

■ GCSAA President Paul McGinnis has been appointed Golf Course Superintendent at Alta Mesas Country Club in Arizona. He had previously been Superintendent at Moon Valley Country Club in Phoenix, Arizona.

■ We apologise for any confusion that may have arisen further to the article on page 33 of October's edition of Greenkeeper International regarding the new Northern Ireland Sections. The article should have stated, the North East Section will cover Counties Antrim and Londonderry, the South East Section Counties Armagh and Down. Members living in Counties Tyrone and Fermanagh will have the choice as to which section they wish to join. We hope this clarifies the situation.

Irrigation champion retires after 27 years

Bill Hawthorn has retired as Director of Watermatation after 27 years of service to the company which he founded jointly with Robin Sitwell in 1970.

In the last couple of years Bill has focused on improving standards within the industry and has given a series of nationwide lectures on irrigation, in associ-

ation with the EGU Golf Course Committee workshop programme.

He was also named BTLIA Personality of the Year last year.

"Bill has been a tremendous asset to our company and with his wealth of industry experience we are sure that he will be

a great success in his new role as an irrigation consultant. We would like to wish him well and look forward to working with him on projects in the future," said a spokesman for Watermatation.

Bill has joined Wardle Consulting Engineers as Technical Director.

A cut above...

Sally Abell, of the *Coventry Evening Telegraph*, was presented with the Hayter Harrier lawn mower she claimed as her own for winning the Great BIGGA Bunker Competition by Kim Macfie, Sales and Marketing Director of Hayter, at the Marriott Forest of Arden Hotel Golf and Country Club.

Sally's estimate of the number of bunkers which would be found during the course of The Open at Royal Troon was the closest of all the press and media who entered

the competition. It was the third year that the competition had been run and Sally gave her colleagues in the Media Centre very little chance by being only two out in her estimate of 857 – the actual figure being 859.

"I'm absolutely delighted to have won, and I thank BIGGA and Hayter for putting on such an interesting competition during Open week. It certainly does provide some interesting statistics and gives us a chance of winning a superb prize," said Sally.



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Huw Morgan, Wilderness Golf Club

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Forum discusses where industry will be in future

A need for slow growing, low maintenance grasses to be promoted on the STRI listings was just one of the discussion points which came out of a forum of architects, agronomists, constructors, greenkeepers and seedsmen organised by Barenbrug in Toulouse, France.

The forum was looking at where the industry might be in five or ten years time and the point which came through loud and clear was the need to find a way of minimising the use of water, fertiliser and fungicides on golf courses.

Among those involved were architects, Martin Ebert, Jeremy Pern and Jonathan Gaunt; agronomists, George Shiels and John Hacker; constructor, Graeme Webster, greenkeeper, Gordon Irvine and Michel Mulder, John Bradley, Gerard van t'Klooster, Nicolas van Hanja and Claudine Taillefer of Barenbrug.

Jeremy Pern, who is the European Architects' representative on the European Golf Ecology Unit, explained the aims of the Unit and highlighted the implications of some European legislation which was on the horizon.

Gerard van t'Klooster said that seed people were already looking into producing drought resistant seeds and those which have an ability to flourish in more salty water.

George Shiels commented that every one of the fungicides currently used will soon be removed from the lists. He added that grass selection in future would revolve around those grasses which cope with recycled water and that selection should be done by agronomists rather than architects or greenkeepers.

John Hacker advocated the production and promotion of ecologically sound grass mixtures but Gerard felt that they had to breed for the STRI list because they needed to be on the lists to sell.

Easier way to pay subscriptions

BIGGA, in conjunction with Premium Credit, is now able to offer members the opportunity to pay their subscription by direct debit in 10 equal monthly instalments.

All renewal forms will be accompanied by a bank/building society mandate authorising Premium Credit to collect the monthly instalment from the member's bank or building society.

Members wishing to take advantage of D/D will, however, need to return their completed mandate and renewal form BEFORE their membership expires. The first instalment will then be collected

one month after the membership is renewed. Therefore, members with an expiry date of 31 December will not have to make a payment until 1 February and their last payment will be 1 November. Please note that if forms are submitted late, that is to say after the expiry date, the first two or three instalments may well be collected together to bring the remaining payments into line.

Any new member wishing to pay by direct debit can contact headquarters for a direct debit mandate which should be returned with the application form.

There is a small service charge (7%) made by Premium Credit in order to offer this facility and so a typical membership subscription of £49.00 would, therefore, work out at: Subscription, £49.00, Service Charge of 7% + £3.43, Total payable = £52.43, making each monthly instalment £5.24.

This facility is available to all members and may be used by individuals, clubs and companies.

Anyone requiring further information before their renewal form arrives should contact John Pemberton or Janet Adamson on 01347 838581.

Euro campaign backs environment pioneers

On the final morning of the 1997 Ryder Cup, European golf was given top level backing for its environmental activities when European Commission President, Jacques Santer, launched the "Committed to Green" campaign.

This is a new initiative by the European Golf Association Ecology Unit, supported by the R&A and the PGA European Tour. The campaign aims to encourage everyone involved in golf to participate in improving the environmental quality of golf courses.

In welcoming this move by Europe's golfing bodies to address environmental issues, Mr Santer expressed the hope that "Committed to Green" will lead to golf courses being seen as role models for good environmental practice. He emphasised the need for Course Managers to work together with independent environmental specialists and local interest groups, to improve dialogue and to seek mutual solutions to environmental management questions.

Mr Santer congratulated the Ryder Cup organisers for their vision in incorporating a green dimension to the event. He also paid tribute to the example shown by Valderrama, in presenting a top championship golf course together with maintaining high standards of environmental care. The Commission President stressed the importance of long-term commitment to environmental care, and the need to encourage sustainable development through partnership and shared responsibility. The "Com-

mitted to Green" campaign will offer golf clubs the opportunity to demonstrate such an approach.

Speaking on behalf of the European Golf Association and the other golfing bodies present, Ecology Unit Executive Director, David Stubbs, thanked the European Commission for its encouragement and for recognising the role golf can play in fostering environmental awareness. He

'Golf courses can become role models'

went on to say that, "To be 'Committed to Green' is to demonstrate environmental awareness and responsibility. The aim is to increase awareness of the environmental attributes of golf courses, and to demonstrate how well-managed golf courses are of benefit to the environment and the community.

"The game still faces many environmental challenges - we have to be good conservationists; we need to address water resource and pest management issues; we want to ensure that greenkeepers receive appropriate training in ecological management; and we must communicate these points throughout the golf industry and to the golfing public. 'Committed to Green' will be a major

step forward in achieving this."

The campaign provides a structured programme through which golf clubs can demonstrate their environmental credentials. It is a fully inclusive campaign, open to all types of golf facility on a voluntary basis.

Emphasis is placed on continual improvement of environmental performance. For clubs which achieve high standards of environmental performance, there will be the opportunity of public recognition through the "Committed to Green" Award for Environmental Excellence. To ensure objectivity and credibility, the setting of environmental criteria and awarding of recognition will be subject to independent verification.

"Committed to Green" is coordinated at a European level by the EGA Ecology Unit. The campaign will be operated on the ground through a network of National Ecology Officers attached to their respective National Golf Federations.

THE FACTS
~
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David to take over BIGGA design role

BIGGA's latest recruit is Design and Production Editor, David Emery, whose arrival enables the Association to bring all of its publishing work in-house.

A native of Durham, 25 year-old David trained as a Graphic Designer in Durham and continued his training at York College prior to joining the local *Evening Press* as an Editorial Designer where he worked on a range of magazines and newspapers. He moves to BIGGA a short time after he had been promoted to the position of Deputy Studio Manager.

"I'm looking forward to the challenge that working at BIGGA will bring and it is particularly exciting to be in at the start of the Association's move to bring all of its publishing work to Aldwark Manor," explained David.

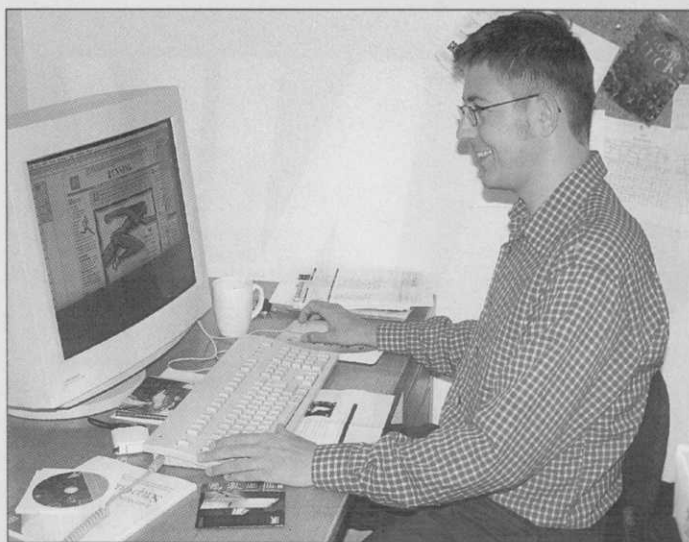
A sports fanatic, David, finds time – or he did before he joined the Association – for badminton, running, swimming and is a regular at a local gym. He recovers from his exertions by listening to music and relaxing at home with his girlfriend, Sarah.

Initially he will supervise the design and production of the Association's educational and promotional literature as well as its pages on the Internet, while he will begin working on *Greenkeeper International* in the February issue next year.

"We are all indebted to Tim Moat, of Headline Communications, for the wonderful design and production work he has done for the Association over the last seven years," said *Greenkeeper International* Editor, Scott MacCallum.

"In particular, the fact that *Greenkeeper International* has become the magazine it is today is due in large part to Tim Moat, who has worked on it since the first issue," he added.

"However, the continued growth of BIGGA meant that employing its own Design and Production Editor became a viable option and we are sure that David will enable the Association, and *Greenkeeper International* in particular, to maintain and improve on the already high standards."



BIGGA's new Design and Production Editor, David Emery

Lab's prestigious first

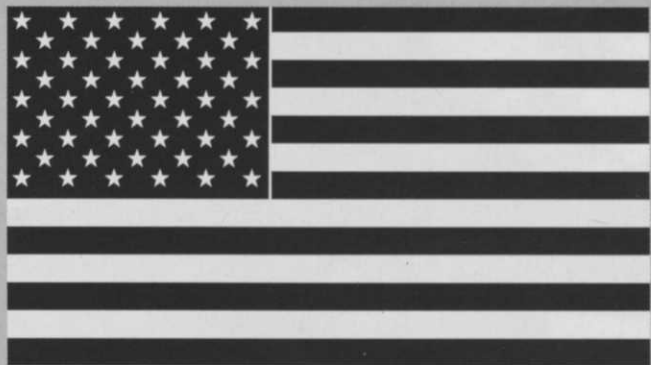
European Turfgrass Laboratories are the first European laboratory to be accredited by the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation, to undertake golf green materials testing to USGA standards.

There are five laboratories on the USGA list of accredited laboratories with ETL being the only one outside the USA.

USGA Golf Green Guidelines are very specific and require precise tests to determine particle size content, percolation rate, air and water filled porosities, along with a number of other tests to ensure that the rootzone drains properly and yet can sustain plant growth.

ETL also undertakes other testing procedures.

GCSAA CONFERENCE AND SHOW, ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA, FEBRUARY 2-8, 1998



Go Stateside!

GCSAA's 69th International Golf Course Conference and Show will be held in the Anaheim Convention Center. BIGGA will once again host a trip and the BIGGA party will meet at London Heathrow Airport on Sunday, February 1, for departure to Los Angeles at 3pm.

BIGGA will be able to arrange accommodation for any member wishing to stay overnight before the flight at competitive rates.

The Disneyland Hotel has been selected to accommodate our party and offers outstanding facilities. It is located near to the Convention Center and adjacent to Disneyland.

The GCSAA Conference and Show runs from February 2-8 with the trade show taking place from February 6-8. You will be able to attend the conference seminars and education programmes as well as take in the latest golf course equipment, products and services at the trade show.

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Sunday, February 1

All members will assemble at London Heathrow Airport and will take the 3pm Virgin Atlantic flight to Los Angeles with onward transfer to the Disneyland Hotel for an eight night stay on a room only basis inclusive of private facilities.

Monday, February 9

You will be transferred to the airport for your return overnight flight to London, departing Los Angeles at 5.30pm arriving at London

Heathrow at 11.45am on February 10.

PRICES

£845 per person based on a twin share

£1270 per person based on single occupancy

Plus comprehensive travel insurance for the duration at £30. Included are:

- Return Economy class flights London Heathrow/Los Angeles
- UK and US taxes
- Transfer to and from the airport to the Disneyland Hotel
- Eight nights accommodation on a room only basis and US accommodation taxes

Please note: Registration costs for the Pre-Conference seminars which run from February 2-5, the Educational Programmes which run from February 5-8 and the Trade Show are not included in the package and bookings will need to be made directly with the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. Details are available from BIGGA upon request.

Please forward full payment of £875 or £1300 (unless travel insurance is not required) to BIGGA, Aldwark Manor, Aldwark, Alne, York, YO6 2NF to arrive no later than Friday, November 28, together with name, address and contact telephone number. If accommodation is required for the night of January 31 please advise in order for the hotel rooms to be booked. Payment will be made on checking out of the hotel. N.B. Places on this trip are limited – book early!