

## 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.

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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.

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