

Feedback event helps to maintain standards

A party of 11 Course Managers from some of the UK's top golf courses took part in this year's Toro Turf Professionals Club visit to the United States as guests of The Toro Company and distributor Lely UK.

The visit was designed to provide a forum for a two-way exchange of ideas and opinions about existing and future Toro professional turf products covering both equipment and irrigation systems.

On the first part of its eight-day tour, the party visited The Toro Company's corporate headquarters in Minneapolis, Minnesota, where the Course Managers met and heard from senior management including Toro group Vice President Chuck Lounsbury, as well as other members of the team from engineering, manufacturing and product testing. They then toured the engineering and test facilities and were shown Toro's new state-of-the-art training centre.

This was followed by a round table forum led by Vana Lonn, Toro's Manager of Advanced Engineering who, with his team, is responsible for developing many of the new concepts in technology and design for future Toro products.

The next day the party visited Toro's main commercial products manufacturing facility in Tomah, Wisconsin, where there was an opportunity to discuss product related issues with senior production management and to tour the factory to see products being assembled as well as Toro's impressive component-testing facilities.

Toro's Worldwide Marketing Manager in Minneapolis, Barry Beckett, who was responsible for the visit and hosted this first stage of the programme, said: "Toro is a great believer in listening to what our customers have to say about how our products perform in the field, in their own conditions, and how in the future



Keeping Toro in the picture: Barry Beckett, front left, Toro's Worldwide Marketing Manager, in Minneapolis with UK Course Managers and others

we can help them meet the challenges they face in their everyday working lives with innovative new developments.

"These UK Course Managers are responsible for some of the world's best-known or up-and-coming golf courses. The heavy demand that places on them to achieve excellence in what they do makes their opinions and ideas invaluable to us in maintaining Toro as a world-leading maker of turfcare products."

On the second stage of its visit the party flew on to Riverside, California, the home of Toro's headquarters for the design and manufacture of its irrigation systems. Here again the visitors met senior management and went on a conducted tour of the irrigation manufacturing facility where they saw products being assembled as well as the extensive test facilities. This was followed by a round table forum to discuss and hear about current and future golf course irrigation products and issues.

Speaking about the importance of such feedback, Toro's European Sales Manager Bob Buckingham said: "Toro is committed to looking at customer requirements on a world-wide basis, not just from a US standpoint. This

visit provided an ideal forum for listening to what our UK customers had to say about our products and the key turfcare issues that affect them in their daily work, so that Toro can ensure that it meets all their current and future needs."

The UK course managers who attended the Toro Turf Professionals Club Visit were: Walter Woods; George Brown, Turnberry; Chris Kennedy, Wentworth; John Philp, Carnoustie; Alan Purdie, Crail; Jim McKenzie, Celtic Manor; Rob Brewer, St. Mellion; Phil Chiverton, Buckinghamshire; Brian Turner, Sunningdale; Steve Jones, The London; Jim Cassidy, Ashridge.

Course first for college

Myerscough College has launched Europe's first degree course in Turfgrass Science, commencing in September 1997. This unique four-year programme will take turfgrass education to a new level in Britain. The course is specially designed for students who wish to gain a thorough technical understanding of turfgrass growth and development, the ecology of turfgrass environments and construction systems.

Myerscough College runs the programme in conjunction with the University of Central Lancashire, to provide students with a comprehensive knowledge of turfgrass management, rootzone technology, golf course and sports ground drainage, irrigation design and installation, and research methodology.

Formal links with American Universities will enable students to take a 12 month work placement in the United States and gain practical experience on some of the world's finest golf courses.

"It has taken five years of extensive discussions with a range of industry representatives to develop this unique learning experience," said Martyn Jones, Head of Turfgrass Science.

Distributor appointed

Avoncrop Amenity Products has been appointed as a main distributor for Green Releaf Biotech Inc, to cover the South of England and South Wales. Green Releaf, based at Jacksonville, Florida, is the

leading US manufacturer of soil management and plant nutrient products.

The company specialises in microbial soil inoculants developed to enhance turfgrass quality.

(mis)adventures of Gordon the Greenkeeper



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