

A potential cast of thousands

In last year's June magazine we had a special report on the drought being experienced at the time and examined water conservation and what was being done by the irrigation companies to ensure that maximum use was made of the little water that was available to us.

Since then it has barely stopped raining and, outside of the south east, water levels are now back to where they should be.

While not expecting Greenkeeper International to be credited with another dramatic major success, this year's June magazine is taking an extended look at the earthworm problem. With the increasing likelihood of bans being imposed on the existing deterrents, earthworms could become the major headache for greenkeepers over the next few years.

The spur for this in-depth Greenkeeper International Investigation came from a meeting with Nick Park, Vice Chairman of the R&A's Advisory Panel and Chairman of its Research and Advisory Working Party, which has already directed substantial sums of money into researching the earthworm situation.

Nick, whose interview also appears in this issue, has singled out earthworms as an area which could have a catastrophic effect on the game of golf in this country.

"I have a horror that we could at some point head back to the sort of mayhem we saw in the 1920s when fairways became muddy footpaths for much of the year," said Nick, adding that as a consequence it could shut golf down for a substantial portion of the year.

With that in mind in this magazine Dr Stephen Baker gives an update on the work the STRI is doing into the problem while three of the big chemical companies, Rigby Taylor, Rhône-Poulenc and Scotts, have reported on what they plan to do to combat the problem, when at any given moment they know their best weaponry might just be taken away from them.

The R&A Advisory Panel, which incidentally includes Walter Woods and George Brown, must be applauded as it does a power of, often unheralded, work all for the good of the game.

With that in mind, please take a few minutes to assist the Panel by filling in the tear-off freepost card which appears in this magazine. By doing so you will be assisting in the formulation of a database which will give an invaluable insight into which problems cause you, the people who have to face them on a daily basis, the most grief. As a consequence the panel will be able to identify the areas which are in most need of research funding.

Only through research will solutions be found for some of the more common golf course problems and, although usually long term, the benefits are potentially significant.

Obviously the more people who fill in the card, which you can be assured protects the identity of the individual sender totally, the more accurate this database will be.

It is a great chance to assist the R&A and do some good for the industry.

Editor:
Scott MacCallum

Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

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