

'Killer' weed warning from Country Landowner's Association

A warning has been issued advising people to sharpen up their ragwort control this year. Increased populations of the noxious yellow weed mean disused ground and grass verges acting as a source of infection for agricultural land could be served with clearance orders by the government.

This caution comes hot on the heels of an on-going campaign by the Country Landowners Association to implement an effective eradication programme which encourages all landowners and property managers to attack ragwort when the weed is at its vulnerable rosette stage.

The Association's Ginnie Bealby says: "This killer weed contains pyrrolizidine alkaloids whose toxic effects are most apparent in the liver, causing progressive and irreversible damage. An animal has to eat less than one kilogramme fresh weight of the weed for death to occur."

"Control is best carried out from April to early June, using a translocated product applied with a knapsack sprayer.

Alisdair Mason, of Nomix Chipman, says it is important to catch the weed when it is still young and growing actively. Once ragwort flowers, hand roguing is the only effective option.

Ragwort is deemed an injurious weed under the 1959 Weed Act and allegations of it spreading to agricultural land from nearby verges and parkland can be fully investigated. However, notice for clearance on non-agricultural land can also be served by local authorities under the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act.

TEXTRON DONATE MOWER TO ST. ELIZABETH'S HOSPICE

Textron Turf Care and Specialty Products has responded to an appeal from St. Elizabeth Hospice after thieves stole their lawnmower earlier this year.

Ray Kidd-Stanton, a member of staff at Textron's manufacturing division, noticed a report in the local newspaper and contacted Caroline Gumble, the company's Human Resources Director. She sourced a rotary mower from Textron's Jacobsen range and contacted the hospice who were delighted to accept the offer.

Caroline Gumble and Ray Kidd-Stanton presented the Jacobsen Commercial 20" motor mower to hospice staff recently.

"It's amazing how low some people will stoop", said Mrs Gumble, "but we are delighted that we have been able to help. I'm sure the grounds will look immaculate throughout the coming months thanks to the many volunteer gardeners that lend their support to the St. Elizabeth Hospice."

Rain Bird run training day at Gleneagles

Rain Bird held a training day at Gleneagles attended by Course Managers and staff from golf courses across Scotland and Northern England.

The event was organised by Mark Ganning, Rain Bird's Field Service Manager for the UK and Ireland, to provide an introduction for new users to the company's computerised control systems and as a refresher for those already familiar with the systems offered by the company.

"Irrigation technology has made massive advances in the last decade, especially with the introduction of ever more powerful personal computers that have enabled sophisticated systems to be managed from a desktop environment. Effective water resource management, with its associated environmental implications is vitally important, therefore it is imperative that users of any one of our control systems knows how to operate them in the most appropriate manner," explained Mark Ganning.

"The duties of the golf course manager are becoming more diverse and lifetime learning is now part of the culture. That's why this training session, demonstrating the simple and effective use of the Windows-based new technology, has proved to be such a success with the delegates who attended."

The format of the Training Day was



to provide delegates with an overview of Cirrus, Nimbus II, and Stratus II, the three central control systems from Rain Bird's software portfolio. Each delegate was set various tasks to ensure that they fully understood each application before progressing to the next level.

"We have invested over £500,000 in our Rain Bird system and it has proved a most worthwhile investment. I thought it was a fascinating learning

experience and provided an excellent insight into the software options available. Irrigation and its effect on our environment is an important issue and these control systems enable course managers to act responsibly when it comes to water conservation," said Scott Fenwick, Golf Maintenance Co-ordinator for Gleneagles King's and Queen's courses.

Ecology on agenda at STRI conference

A European line up of top ecology officers attended a technical working meeting at STRI in Bingley in last month.

Officers from all over Europe including representatives from Austria, Belgium, Finland, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Scotland and England took part in discussions seeking to develop a standard for golf courses throughout Europe in line with Committed to Green.

Also present were Dean Cleaver representing FEGGA, Susan Moorgenroth from LGA, an environmental auditing institute working with the German Golf Federation and Alex Dyke

from Green Globe, a leading environmental initiative in the tourism industry.

Bob Taylor, Senior Ecologist and STRI representative on the Technical Working Panel, opened the programme with a technical presentation. Further presentations were provided by STRI staff including Kate Entwistle, Plant Pathologist, David Lawson, Research Chemist and Jeff Perris, Head of Advisory and Construction Services.

Across Europe there are now almost 200 golf clubs joining the programme.

Don't try this at home Mike! ...too late he's done it

Mike Cheers, Head Greenkeeper at Haigh Golf Club, in Wigan, will be seen across the nation's television screens later this month swinging from the end of a rope over the Arkansas River in Colorado.

An unlikely situation in which to find oneself you might think but Mike was collared by Davina McCall, of popular Saturday evening show "Don't Try this At Home" on the 7th green at Mere Golf and Country Club when was still working at the club last year, having been set up by his wife, Tracy, and two sons, Christopher and Joseph.

"Tracy and I were then whisked off to Colorado to be confronted by the Royal Gorge Suspension Bridge which hangs 1053 feet above the Arkansas River. My "Challenge of a Lifetime" was to swing from a very long rope under this bridge," explained Mike.

The programme will be broadcast on Saturday, June 24 when we will all find out how he got on.

"It was all very exciting and certainly a challenge of a lifetime," is the only clue Mike would give.

Canadian Dates Confirmed

The Canadian Golf Superintendent Association's major events for 2000-2001 are as follows.

September 18, 2000 CGSA Annual Fall Field Day, The Niakwa Country Club, Winnipeg, MB

February 24-27, 2001, 52nd Canadian International Turfgrass Conference & Trade Show, Vancouver Convention & Exhibition Centre, Vancouver, BC (In association with WCTA)

Contact: CGSA Office Tel: (905) 602-8873 or 1-800-387-1056
Web Site: www.golfsupers.com

Textron support for Matt's Lotus season



Matt Bartram, a Director at Textron Dealer Bartram Mowers, has secured a drive in this season's Autobyte Lotus Championship, a one-make series featuring the new Lotus Sport Elise.

Textron has committed its support to the event by providing four E-Z-GO XI -875 industrial vehicles for use by the pit crew.

Matt, who last year competed in the Formula Renault single-seater championship, is one of the two drivers racing for Team Norfolk, a consortium of sponsoring companies

headed by Roger Bennington of Stratton Motor Company.

This year's championship is a support event for the British Touring Car Championship (BTCC) and involves 21 cars that are all operated and maintained by Lotus Motorsport to ensure that they remain identical from the beginning to the end of the series. This provides a completely level playing field for all the drivers.

After the first race at Brands Hatch recently where he finished a very creditable 12th.

"It was an intensive and interesting

weekend, what with testing on Friday, qualifying on Saturday and the actual race on Sunday. I'm particularly looking forward to the races on the Continent at Spa in Belgium, Nurburgring in Germany and Magny-Cours in France. The E-Z-GO vehicles in their new Lotus livery looked really smart and I know from talking to the pit crews that they were very impressed with their performance over the three days," said Matt.

Congratulations to Emma



Emma Duggleby, who worked in BIGGA's administration department two years ago will be a part of the Great Britain and Ireland Curtis Cup team which plays the Americans at Ganton later this month.

Emma, a former British Ladies Champion and English Stroke-Play Champion, will enjoy a lot of home support as her own club is Malton and Norton, a near neighbour of Ganton.

Everyone at BIGGA wishes Emma and the rest of the team every success in their efforts to secure the Cup.

Indeed we also wish Head Greenkeeper Phil Baldock and his team every success in preparation of the course before and during the matches.

Thanks from Seve



Current Toro Excellence in Greenkeeping Champion, Brian Turner of Sunningdale, received praise for his work at the inaugural Eurobet Seve Ballesteros Trophy from the great man himself.

Writing in European Tour News Seve thanked everyone involved in making the event – won by the European team he captained – such a success and he singled out Brian and his team for special mention.

"I was particularly delighted that at the prize giving Brian Turner, the Head Greenkeeper at Sunningdale Golf Club, properly received a standing ovation for the work he and his team put in throughout the week and, especially on the Saturday when torrential rain made conditions so difficult in which to work," wrote Seve.

Flooding tip from Bob

Like many of his colleagues, Bob Bean, Head Greenkeeper of Humberston Park Golf Club, in Grimsby, had to cope with the horrendous flooding the wettest April for many years brought. However Bob is not so sure all his problems were caused by the April Showers.

"My message to all Head Greenkeepers is this – If senior members are causing this sort of damage by using on-course toilet facilities insist that all senior sections must use changing room toilets before commencing play," joked Bob.



Humberston Park's flooding



Bob Bean

Tree Information Day

An Information Day under the heading Trees and Golf will be held at North Wilts Golf club, Devizes, on Wednesday June 28.

The day, organised by John Nicholson of John Nicholson Associates, will look at Ecology; Constraints of planting on a golf course; Golf strategy and the role that trees play; Principles of course

design and the benefits that trees have; Grant availability; Successful tree establishment; Management of new and existing woodland; Golf ball damage to trees and Examples of good and bad practices.

The cost of the day is £35 inc VAT and further information can be obtained from John Nicholson Associates Tel: 0191 384 2556.

New Textron deal for PGA Tour

PGA European Tour Courses PLC, owners of flagship golf courses in the UK and Europe, have signed an exclusive three-year agreement with Textron, the Ipswich-based manufacturer of turf care equipment. The agreement was signed at Stockley Park Golf Course recently.

Textron Specialty Products will be the official golf car supplier to PGA European Tour Courses, which specialise in the ownership and management of tournament courses that host professional golf events under the auspices of the European Tour.

"I am delighted that we have renewed this agreement for a further three years. We have received excellent service from Textron over the last three years and that has been a major factor in renewing this contract. E-Z-GO golf cars will be supplied on a pan-European basis and will be used in Portugal, Spain, and the UK, and also at our new German resort," said Paul Kimberley, Sales and Marketing Manager for PGA European Tour Courses.

Apart from the Victor Chandler British Masters, which is held at Woburn, PGA European Tour



Above: Paul Kimberley (centre) Sales & Marketing Manager from PGA European Tour Courses PLC signs an exclusive three-year agreement with Richard Bishop (left), National Accounts Manager and Peter Bell (right), Sales Director from Textron.

Courses PLC will also be hosting a number of other events in Europe this year. The PGA Golf de Catalunya, just north of Barcelona and which opened

in June 1999, hosted the Spanish Open. The Volvo Scandinavian Masters will be held at the Kungsängen Golf Club in Stockholm.

SW & SW Course Management Trophies

South Wales and South West Region Course Management Trophies will this year be held at Salisbury and South Wilts Golf Club, on August 2; Celtic Manor, on August 15 and Manor House, Castle Coombe, on August 22. If you have not received an invitation and would like one please contact Paula Humphries Tel: 01288 352194. The tournaments are team events, comprising the Captain, Secretary, Head Greenkeeper and Chairman of Green.

Once again they are being sponsored by Scotts Professional UK.

Rickerby on call

Rickerby Ltd, the Textron dealer for Northern England, South West Scotland and the Borders has unveiled its new Direct Line Service Centre at Hexham in Northumberland.

The new facility will be manned by experienced grounds care parts experts to ensure that customers within this important sector of the Rickerby business receive an efficient response to parts and service enquiries.

"We receive a wide range of enquiries from across an extensive customer base. In the past enquiries relating to our grounds care business may have been handled by staff based more on the agricultural side of the business and vice-versa. Now, our grounds care customers only need to pick up the phone, dial our dedicated number and talk direct to a grounds care expert," said Alistair



Above: David Withers (left) Sales Manager and Alistair McRobert (right) open the new direct Line Service Centre

McRobert, Grounds care Divisional Manager.

All enquiries throughout Rickerby's territory, will be routed to the Direct Line Service Centre, all for the cost of a local call.

The new number for grounds care enquiries is 01434 600777.

Royal Inverdivot GC...

by Tony Husband



Grand Tour 2000 Scholarship announces winners

The Grand Tour Scholarship committee, comprised of golf course design and maintenance officials from around the world, selected four students to participate in the first professional development tour sponsored by Rain Bird International and organised by Bettina Schrickel, design associate with GOLFPLAN/The Ronald Fream Design Group Ltd.

The inaugural Grand Tour, based on a prior tour of American golf courses taken by Ms. Schrickel, is designed to offer students of golf course design, development and maintenance from all over the world an opportunity to tour and study elite golf courses in the United States. The tour is divided into an eastern and western route with two students selected to follow each one.

The committee chose Jose Makk, turfgrass management student at Michigan State University and a native of Argentina, and William Bowden, turfgrass management student from England, for the tour's eastern route. The western route winners were Paul Mogford, golf course architecture student from Australia, and Colin Mumford, turfgrass management student from England.

The tour's eastern leg started in Orlando, at the beginning of April and concluded in Boston, in early May. The western route kicked off from San Francisco also at the beginning of April and ended up in Fort Worth, Texas. The scholarship winners visited legendary courses including Pebble Beach Golf Links, Augusta National and Pinehurst No. 2.

"Rain Bird was proud to be able to sponsor the first Grand Tour Scholarships," said Jack Buzzard, Vice President of Rain Bird International.

"Ms. Schrickel worked hard to organise a prestigious opportunity for students from around the world to study some of the finest courses in the United States. We believe this programme fitted well with our commitment to education."

Application forms and detailed information for the 2001 Grand Tour Scholarship will be available from Bettina Schrickel in August 2000. Contact Ms. Schrickel at schwanenhof@hof.de.

Green Releaf win a Mean deal at Greenwich

Green Releaf has won the contract to supply spraying services to all the major turf areas on the Greenwich Peninsula including the areas around the millennium Dome, following a recent successful weed and feed application to the project's Central Park and Millennium Boulevard.