

Every (rain) cloud has a silver lining

The Masters is now behind us and thoughts can turn to the traditional start to the British and European golf season and what 2001 might have in store for everyone.

Before moving on though we must pay tribute to the stupendous achievement of Tiger Woods. Sure, people have quibbled about it not being a Grand Slam as the four Majors he now holds were gathered over two seasons and not one, but let's face it, did anyone ever think they'd see the day when one person could display all four trophies on his own mantelpiece? I'll answer that one for you. No. Standards in golf have risen so dramatically over the last 30 years that many people are now capable of low sustained scoring and for Tiger to come out on top in the four weeks when everyone is aiming to peak is truly remarkable. Sure, it might not be a true Grand Slam but it's the next best thing and far exceeds any other achievement in golf... including, and this may be a tad contentious, Bobby Jones's original Grand Slam back in 1930.

Incidentally, it would be asking a lot, but could it be a sign that this year's USPGA Championship is being played at the Atlanta Athletic Club, Bobby Jones's home club?

The good news is that Tiger's achievements will guarantee golf a place at sport's top table for quite some time and hopefully the increased profile will rub off on the game at grass roots level. I say this because it is perhaps the one positive aspect the UK golf industry has to hang on to at the moment.

Our report into the problems brought about by the Foot and Mouth Outbreak will give those of you lucky enough to have avoided the problem a feel for the anguish some of your colleagues are going through at the moment.

For some there is little prospect of their courses even opening until the end of the summer - some are only allowed to cut greens every ten days - and with annual subscriptions currently due, the disincentive for many golf club members to renew will be great.

Of course, compensation packages are in place for the agriculture industry as well as tourism but I'm sure I won't be far off the case if I say we'll be waiting a mighty long time until any of the money reaches the more badly affected golf clubs.

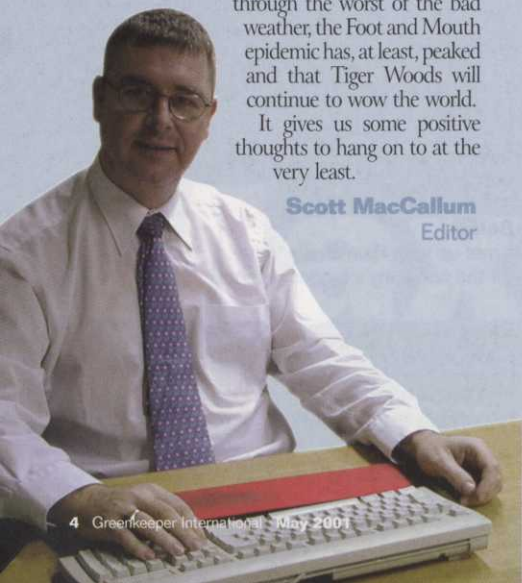
Golf, I predict, will be left to pick up its own pieces and the repercussions will be deep and long lasting for many.

With such grave issues afflicting us as an industry it would be nice to think that we would at least have a warm, sunny summer to make up for it. The signs are there. Apparently the Met Office has promised us a decent few months, those seaweed watchers are spotting all the right signs and, let's face it, by the law of averages we must be due one.

So let us hope that we are now through the worst of the bad weather, the Foot and Mouth epidemic has, at least, peaked and that Tiger Woods will continue to wow the world.

It gives us some positive thoughts to hang on to at the very least.

Scott MacCallum
Editor



BIGGA Student Chapter launched at Gleneagles

The first BIGGA Student Chapter was inaugurated at a meeting at Gleneagles Hotel last month when the students on the Gleneagles Excellence in Golf Award scheme were welcomed into the Association.

The Chapter which is designed to encourage student greenkeepers to become involved with the Association, and, as well as utilising the many opportunities available to them through the Association, gain experience from organising and running their own meetings, seminars and golf days.

The Chapter will work closely with the Scottish Central Section, and its Secretary, Past



Above: Scott MacCallum, Jimmy Kidd, Jenny Morgan, Scott Fenwick, David McInroy with six of the eight inaugural members of the Gleneagles Student Chapter

BIGGA National Chairman, John Crawford, and Scottish Regional Administrator, Peter Boyd. The first Chapter notes,

containing more information on the Gleneagles Chapter, appear in *Around the Green* on page 46 this month.

John Deere commercial & consumer equipment dealer Parks & Grounds Machinery has officially opened its new premises in Bidford-on-Avon, Warwickshire.

In addition to John Deere's full line of domestic, golf & turf and professional ranges of equipment, including Roberine and Sabo machines, Parks & Grounds Machinery is now an official supplier of John Deere 5000 Series tractors from 55 to 80hp. These are particularly suitable for use with heavy duty aerators and trailed gang mowers on large areas of amenity and sports turf.

Parks & Grounds Machinery was one of John Deere's earliest grounds care dealers when directors Andy Perkins and David Tullett originally signed up in 1989, operating out of a garden centre near Bromsgrove. The business then moved to Redditch in 1993, and finally to Bidford last September. The dealership has a full time staff of 10, including four mechanics.

New premises for Deere



FEGGA joins Excellence Scheme

FEGGA has joined the Gleneagles Excellence in Golf Award Scheme (GEGAS), a 12-month educational and practical training programme for young greenkeepers from around the globe.

Sponsored by Textron Golf, Turf and Specialty Products, the course is based at Gleneagles Hotel and runs from 1 September until 31 August. It is open to highly motivated students who are looking beyond a basic greenkeeping career and wish to develop their skills to become golf course managers or superintendents.

The scheme can accommodate a maximum of eight students, who will be selected from colleges and educational facilities in the UK and now, with FEGGA as a partner, from across Europe.

The scheme was established in 1994 and has grown year on year providing students with all the

necessary greenkeeping skills together with a unique opportunity for personal development during the year-long work placement.

"One of the main objectives for the students during the year at Gleneagles is to experience the alternative styles of maintenance required for soil and sand based greens".

"Every student will work on the three courses at Gleneagles for eight months of the placement and then decide which style of maintenance they wish to develop further and join their preferred greenkeeping team for the remaining four months. This is a wonderful opportunity to bring together students from all over Europe to train and gain experience at one of Europe's finest golfing resorts," said Dean Cleaver, FEGGA Secretary.

"I am particularly delighted that FEGGA have joined us and added their support for this scheme. Over

the coming year we will be hosting three national and European Tour events and the successful applicants will have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to experience the many different aspects of course maintenance and preparation at the highest level," added Jimmy Kidd, Director of Turfgrass Management at Gleneagles.

Applications are invited from students in greenkeeping and related subjects and should include a typed CV with personal details, experience, qualifications and other interests, together with a covering letter from their head tutor.

They should be sent to: Jimmy Kidd at Gleneagles - see www.gleneagles.com for details - or Dean Cleaver, Secretary, FEGGA, 3 Riddell Close, Alcester, Warks B49 6QP.

The closing date for applications is Monday, May 28, 2001.