



## Welcome

### WATER, WATER NOWHERE

June and July were dry months for a great many parts of the country and inevitably it resulted in the usual headlines about drought, hosepipe bans and water conservation.

Following on from that I received a call at BIGGA HOUSE from the BBC Radio 4 programme You and Yours wanting information on the amount of water used by the average golf course and asking about the reasons why golf courses used water. Reading between the lines I could tell that golf was being seen as an abuser of H2O and one of the main villains of the peace.

I explained how irrigation systems were so much more sophisticated now than ever before; how "over watering" was just that and that Course Managers were aiming to produce as healthy a grass plant as was possible, which didn't mean giving it a right good soaking on a regular basis.

I also pointed out that it was often golfers who put pressure on greenkeepers to water courses in a bid to stop their expensive watering systems lying idle and making the grass a darker shade of green. That was fine and the point was reinforced by Euan Grant, who took time out of his arduous Open schedule to be interviewed for the programme and did a fine job in putting over some pertinent points to balance the argument. However, it still doesn't get away from the fact that as soon as the chips were down golf emerged as Public Enemy Number 1.

As much as anything it is a problem of perception. Non golfers, even some club golfers, believe that golf is a widespread abuser of water and we have got to get the message across that, as in every other aspect of course management, we are responsible.

You do however get some very green, soft, golf courses, so perhaps we can use the fact that the spotlight is currently on the game to our advantage. Those clubs with memberships keen to get as much use out of their irrigation systems as possible and play on lush green Augusta-like courses might now be in a position to be persuaded that less is better when it comes to watering.

I don't personally believe that golf is as big a culprit as the general public is being led to believe but if we can encourage golfers that irrigation systems are superb tools and great safety nets and not daily workhorses it will make the job of defending the game that much easier.

I can't leave my column this month without paying tribute to the aforementioned Euan Grant, Gordon Moir and their superb team at St Andrews. The Old Course looked fabulous and played as well as any links course could - the fairways were stimping faster than the greens on the Sunday - and the leader board on the final day reflected the fact that the examination that had been set had identified the finest golfers. Sure, due to the fast running nature, there were many drivable par-4s but even in the perfect weather with wonderfully smooth putting surfaces the low score of the week was a respectable 65.

Well done to all.

Scott MacCallum, Editor

### THE AFRICAN WAY

Stefan Antolik has ended 35 years as a British Greenkeeper as he jets off for a new challenge in South Africa.

A former Sussex Secretary, Stefan will move to warmer climes with his wife, Sue, and daughter, Samantha, to Aberdeen, where they will set up and run a Bed & Breakfast and self catering apartments. Bitten by the bug of greenkeeping at the age of 15, Stefan will continue



to work in the industry as a Golf Course Consultant.

Stefan will leave Cooden Beach Golf Club after 15 years' service, a period that has witnessed much personal success for the Africa bounded greenkeeper. In his time he hosted the BIGGA National Tournament, won the Essay Writing Competition, claimed the Greenkeeper of the Year trophy in 1994 and was declared Sussex Greenkeeper of the Year in 2003.

"I'm looking forward to the move. It will be different other there with oil based greens but greenkeepers adapt, that's what they do best, and I'll do the same. I have had some great times in greenkeeping in Britain and I will miss it. What I wouldn't miss is the traffic congestion and weather," joked Stefan.

### OLD COURSE FACES NEW TRIAL



The Open may well be over for another year, but this month the St Andrews Links courses will be the location for a very different set of trials. The prestigious Open Championship course will be working with WRAP (the Waste & Resources Action Programme) to test a novel use for recycled glass that literally turns bottles into bunker sand.

Processed sand, the product on test, is made

from recycled green glass and it will be used in practice bunkers as part of a three month trial, during which players will be encouraged to provide feedback. If successful, the trials could be extended in the future to one of the club's courses to assess its use in 'real play' situations.

The processed sand is also being trialled as a path material. Being a links course, sand is used for many of the paths at St Andrews and performance benefits, including better drainage, mean that the processed sand is likely to provide firmer underfoot conditions.

"We are delighted to be working with WRAP on these trials to assess the performance of processed sand. St Andrews is committed to protecting and enhancing the environment and using recycled materials clearly offers us the opportunity to reduce our environmental impact," said Gordon Moir, Links Superintendent.

### BSG'S NEW DEALER

BSG Tractors and Machinery Ltd have appointed R.C. Setchfield Ltd of Grantham, Lincolnshire, as a dealer for its complete range of products, with R.C. Setchfield opening a new depot in Staverley, near Chesterfield, shortly.

Richard Setchfield is Managing Director of RC Setchfield and heads a team of 17 staff. Established in 1982 as an agricultural machinery dealership, Richard moved into equipment for land management and in 2001 was awarded the JCB Land Power Machinery franchise for materials handling equipment. He also handles the JCB FastTrak range of tractors.

"We are very pleased to be appointed a dealer for BSG. R.C. Setchfield will now be able to offer its customers a 'one stop shop' for all their equipment needs," said Richard.

Graham Godward, Managing Director of BSG, is also very enthusiastic about the new arrangement. "Working together with R. C. Setchfield will be a very positive development for both our companies," he said.

