Professional concern

I would like to thank Duncan for having the guts to stand up and say what he believes and to air his views in public.

I have spent most of my greenkeeping career working on the continent except for three years when I returned to work in the UK at one of Duncan's average members' clubs. All I will say is that the politics at this club caused a constant fight between me, trying to do my job as a professional, and amateurs trying to tell me what to do. We had four Club Secretaries in two years! I am not saying that all members' clubs are like this but I believe that, after talking with many colleagues, the majority are.

I talked with a leading consultant who advised me to return to the continent except for three years to gain some working on the continent. His reasons were quite clear. The greenkeeping profession has come so far in the last 15 years but how far it has still to go. My job as a professional, and amateur, was unfulfilled. I then helped create the Swiss Greenkeepers' Association and set up the first ever greenkeeper education programme in Switzerland with David Golding. I organised courses and seminars with the Level 2 Training log book that we had translated into French and German. I did all this without any help from golf professionals or club managers. I did all this for the love of my profession and to help my fellow colleagues and the end result is better maintained golf courses for the Swiss golfers and a greenkeeping profession that is now recognised by the Swiss Golf Association, with a far higher profile for greenkeepers in their country.

So after 15 years of going forward do we now need amateurs telling us what to do? Do these people not realise that if there is a problem committees constantly change and by doing so they don't have the knowledge to do the work. They would not tell an electrician how to wire a house nor would they tell a mechanic how to fit a new engine. Greenkeeping is a very professional job with lots of skills. I hope a lot of other greenkeepers write in.

We must lead. Not be led. Well done, Duncan.

Harold Blackshaw, Assistant Greenkeeper
Onneley GC, Staffs

Run by committee

With reference to Duncan McGilvray's article in last month's magazine.

I feel that the issue is a very complicated one. As a greenkeeper of nearly 20 years I think that while we still have an industry that is run by mainly well meaning amateurs we have got a problem. Committees change too often and they don't have the right credentials to do the work that they put themselves up for, and there's the problem.

However I feel that will change as they become aware of their responsibilities in law. We are already seeing the shift in secretaries from the retired RAF types to the ex banking men and even women.

Only when the present private members' club structure changes will any of us be allowed to take on the responsibilities that we crave and know we can do.

It will happen but it will be legislation that will force the issue in the average members' golf club.

Dave Goodridge, Head Greenkeeper
Denbigh GC

Leave it to us

Re: Duncan McGilvray's article in the November issue.

I could not agree more with Duncan's article. After being a Chairman of Green for 10 years at my own golf club and now working on another I have first hand knowledge. Chairmen of Green and Green Committees interfere far too much with greenkeepers.

They would not tell an electrician how to wire a house nor would they tell a mechanic how to fit a new engine. Greenkeeping is a very professional job with lots of skills.

I hope a lot of other greenkeepers write in.

We must lead. Not be led.

Duncan.

Redexim clarification

I enjoyed the piece in the September issue about the Barged Golf Club, but I think the writer must have had trouble reading his shorthand.

I was somewhat bemused by the statement "the course uses a Wiedemann verti-drainer" as there being no such animal. VertiDrain is a Redexim Trademark and while it has been used as a verb over the years the name cannot be used in conjunction with Wiedemann.

The piece of equipment used at the

Barged Golf Club is indeed a Redexim VertiDrain, and is verified by turning the page and finding a picture of our machine in storage on a pallet!

While pleased to see our machine featured, I wonder if there is some way you could clarify the situation regarding the VertiDrain name and the correct company that manufactures it.

David Jenkins, Managing Director
Charterhouse Turf Machinery Limited

You've got m@il!

If you've got an email account why not send an email to us here at BIGGA, where we can place you into our exclusive email address book. We can then keep you up-to-date with news and event information as soon as it happens.

Send an email to: reception@bigga.co.uk

Remember to include the word 'updates' in your subject field

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