Trust the talents of the greenkeeper

At this time of seasonal goodwill GTC Chairman Donald Steel appeals to all golf course owners, Secretary Managers and Chair of Greens to trust the talents of their Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper

I believe the GTC employer-employee partnership is important of the employer-to “educate” the golfer on the importance of the employer's contribution. It is also sobering to look back on the quaint make-up of Green Committees with the Head Greenkeeper nowhere to be seen. He had to obey committee members’ instructions that were often based on the craziest notions. There were inevitably muddle-ups under the breath but only the strongest could mount much of a protest. Education of young greenkeepers has undoubtedly led the surge for knowledge that is impossible to oppose.

At the same time, it has prompted better communications, resulting in Secretaries, committees and members learning as well.

GTC seminars and roadshows have proved immensely popular in bringing together Green Committee Chairmen, Secretary-Managers and Head Greenkeepers, the prime figures in ensuring the best possible results without interference from golfers themselves.

Nevertheless, the ideal situation would be one, fast approaching, where all golfers are educated enough to appreciate the role of the head greenkeeper.

If a Club has a Green Chairman who is really effective, and works well with the head greenkeeper, he should be kept in his post as long as he is willing.

The same arrangement should also exist at public and daily-fare courses. It might even be more important at such courses.

A green fee-paying golfer is just as interested in the condition of courses as a private member paying a hefty subscription.

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He plays wherever he likes. In that case, the owners of courses need to work closely with their greenkeepers if they want to attract and retain business.

If golfers enjoy what they find, they will return, and enjoyment is usually governed by condition.

It is in the greenkeeper’s best interests to encourage such a relationship and for the Green Chairman to be knowledgeable enough to understand what may be explained to him.

It always amuses me that golfers rarely offer hints to the chef at their Clubs on how to concoct their culinary delights, but they feel an entitlement to dabble in technical matters as to how greens are cut or bunkers raked.

As more and more greenkeepers attain technical excellence, it makes no sense that their every move has to be scrutinised.

They are appointed on account of their experience and technical qualifications and it is their course. They are perfectly prepared to be judged on results over a reasonable period but, like the members in their own workplace, they should be allowed to get on with their day job without somebody constantly looking over their shoulder.

Across
1 Collectively, the provisions of welfare payments (9)
2 Symbolic device (6)
3 Sacred object revered by Hindus (5)
4 Tree genus which is fast-growing (9)
5 Loose Arabian long-sleeved attire worn by men and women (8,7)
6 Strong adhesive - generally, cyanoacrylate (9)
7 The first music video image aired on MTV (5,3,7)
8 Very briefly or very soon (11)
9 2012 football club which won two Premier League titles, based in Bonn, Germany (3)

Down
1 To sponge or cadge (3)
2 Certain atoms or elements, basic or metallic (7)
3 A novel set during World War II (5)
4 Small version of larger image (9)
5 ‘bunny boiler’ to dictionaries (5,10)
6 Tree genus which includes maple and sycamore (8,7)
7 1987 film which added ‘bunny boiler’ to dictionaries (5,10)
8 Very briefly or very soon (11)
9 22 Old Testament book of the Bible (11)
10 2012 film set in Paris, starring Gerard Depardieu (9)
11 The Prime Minister may not have had greenkeepers in mind when he said in a recent speech “aspiration is the engine of progress”. He had to obey committee members’ instructions that were often based on the craziest notions.
12 Man (4,7)
13 Woman (5,10)
14 Very briefly or very soon (11)
15 Loose Arabian long-sleeved attire worn by men and women (8,7)
16 Sporadic provision of a service (5)
17 Loose Arabian long-sleeved attire worn by men and women (8,7)
18 Sporadic provision of a service (5)
19 Sporadic provision of a service (5)
20 Sporadic provision of a service (5)
21 A monster hunt that every rack - (20,9)