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-focused workshops are helping to “educate” the golfer on the importance of the employer—Course Manager partnership.

The Prime Minister may not have had greenkeepers in mind when he said in a recent speech “aspiration is the engine of progress”. However, he might well have done.

One of the virtues of modern greenkeepers that impresses me is their ambition.

Ambition to forge a career on leaving school, ambition for qualifications, ambition to broaden horizons and ambition to seek top jobs.

It is no longer a retreat when all else fails.

In the past, greenkeepers learned largely as they went along.

Most operations had to be carried out by hand and they sweated blood.

It is easy to see now that modern greenkeeping has more appeal.

Most operations have fast-forwarded their remote controls to contemplate cutting 18 greens in two or three hours or the excess of half a million pounds.

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 muddlings 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 to be knowledgeable of their experience and technical matters as to how greens are cut or bunkers raked”

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.

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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 properly 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 and do their job without somebody constantly looking over their shoulder.
HEAD GREENKEEPER
Bicester Hotel Golf and Spa

We have an exciting opportunity for a Head Greenkeeper to manage the operation of our successful 18 hole Golf Course at Bicester Hotel Golf and Spa.

The ideal candidate will be highly motivated with a passion for the industry and will ensure the delivery of high standards with the attention to detail expected from our members and visitors. The individual will have a flexible approach along with the ability to motivate, lead and develop a team of six greenkeepers, which is integral to this role.

Educated to a minimum of NVQ level 3 or equivalent in Green Keeping, with relevant chainsaw & spraying licenses, the successful candidate will have experience in working in a similar role or as a deputy in a larger operation. Excellent working knowledge of Health & Safety regulations is also essential.

You must be able to prove financial management competency along with strong communication, time management, decision making and computer skills.

If you are interested in this role, please send a copy of your CV along with a covering letter to tracyhorns@bicesterhgs.com

Little Aston is a top 100 course and regularly hosts top national amateur events and will host Regional Qualifying for The Open Championship for 5 years from 2013.

The successful candidate will be highly motivated and will ensure the delivery of top quality standards with the attention to detail expected from our members and visitors. The individual will have a flexible approach along with the ability to motivate, lead and develop a team of six greenkeepers.

Suitably qualified, with relevant chainsaw & spraying licenses, the successful candidate will have experience in working in a similar role or as a deputy in a larger operation. Excellent working knowledge of Health & Safety regulations is also essential.

You must be able to demonstrate financial management competency along with strong communication, time management, decision making and computer skills.

A full driving licence is required.

A job description is available on our website, www.littleastongolf.co.uk, we would be pleased to receive a copy of your cv and a covering letter explaining how you fit the job requirements to:

Glyn Ridley, Club Manager, Little Aston Golf Club, Streetly, Sutton Coldfield B74 3AN
Or manager@littleastongolf.co.uk by 24th December 2012.

Quick 'nine hole' quiz answers:
1) Essex
2) Rowing
3) Rowan Atkinson
4) Three
5) Didier Drogba
6) Five – won one, lost four
7) 3-2
8) Bradley Wiggins
9) York City

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