Fred Hawtree comments on the discussion document from the R & A’s Greenkeeping Panel

THE WAY FORWARD

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not surprise us) or is a joke (which is
doubtful). Fortunately they are
dropped in the text, but there is a
denser forest of
capital letters, not always consistent. One
reads .

Choose Courses, types of Courses,
financing of the Course, golf Course, a
good Course, and British Golf Courses.
Course Management is doubly upgrad-
aced though ‘greenkeeping’ is not. (The
two terms are not defined or contrasted but
Course Management seems to have
higher authorities in charge while
‘greenkeeping’ is the job. On the other
hand, the authors are described as the
‘Greenkeeping Panel’ although there ap-
tains to be only one member who has
ever turned a hole-cutter in earnest).
Likewise, every golf club is a ‘Golf Club’ or
‘Club’, used, of course, by Club
golfers’. If the Prince of Wales is unhap-
ny with recent editions of the Bible, he
would despair over this one. ‘Problems’
and ‘areas’ abound, backed up by
disparate; ‘viable’; ‘realistically viable’;
‘parameters’; ‘profile’; ‘scenario’; ‘mean-
ingful contribution’; and, of course, ‘the
bottom line’. This terminology tends to
make an honest message appear preten-
dious and leads to indigestion.

Panel-talk
‘The area of the
Rules’
‘Add to the overall
picture’
‘On an annual
basis’
‘On a nationwide
basis’
‘An improved fun-
ding situation’
‘Alistair Mackenzie’

Green-speak
The Rules
Play a part
Yearly
Nationally
More money
Alister MacKenzie

The reader is advised to ignore these
superficialities and remember the noble,
pitiful, punchy aspiration on the last page.
‘Year-round courses with firm, fast, true
greens and firm, mud-free fairways’.

The way to this goal is seen as:-
1. Defining standards
2. Money
3. Education.

One can foresee difficulties over stan-
dards. The SSS scheme used to define
five groups of golf courses, according to
the run of the ball after a drive of
stipulated length. CONGU gave that up
and nobody was bothered. But there are
other approaches.

The Henley must surely be easier now
than it was in the early days when loud
protest met the English Golf Union’s
‘bobby-nob’ scheme. If the Panel puts
greenkeeping well into the forefront of the
suppliants, that will be another feather
in its cap.

Education is proposed on all fronts.
After reorganising committee structure
with the Green Committee consisting of
Chairmen. Greenkeepers must help
visage its own demise once its job is
done.

It wisely points out meanwhile, the need
to respect the environmental aspects of
building and maintaining courses.
‘Courses will be less green and soft
whether golfers like it or not . . . the in-
fluence of the Augusta dream could easily
lead golf courses into conflict with the
community.’ Well said!

Can we throw in any suggestions? The
The Course Notes issued to those atten-
ding the STRI instructional courses would
provide an excellent basis (I still have
mine from 1939 but one got far less in
those days.) The Panel is also worried
about the quality of new golf courses. The
STRI, the British Associations of Golf
Course Architects and of Golf Course
Contractors could sit down and thrash out
a standard specification up to the point
where local factors take charge. Even
some special cases might be included as
options. Any other ideas? The Panel has
purged the Politouro. Now it’s up to us
to help rewrite the Constitution.

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