

# Daniel Zelazek: Portrait of a Master

BY DAVID BAILEY, CGCS

The hallmark of The Florida Green for years has been the cover photography. How can a small state magazine have the best covers in the golf business?

The source of this success is Daniel Zelazek. He is a professional industrial photographer for Pratt and Whitney, located in West Palm Beach. His assignments include jet engines, space shuttle fuel pumps and other high tech devices. For several years he has been working exclusively in digital photography. He is now using a camera valued at \$30,000.

Weekend golf photo sessions reveal the true Daniel Zelazek. His love for the outdoors and golf was established in his youth, as he followed his early sports heroes — Sam Snead, Gary Player and Ben Hogan. When his family moved from Connecticut to North Palm Beach in the mid 1960s, Zelazek started caddying at PGA National Golf Club. He enjoyed the courses so much he worked on the maintenance staff there for six summers during high school and college. Zelazek and Fred Klauk were high school golf teammates and college roommates. Upon graduation from the University of Florida, he took six months to travel the United States and determined photography would be his future career. Zelazek then attended the famous Brooks Institute of Photography in Santa Barbara, California. Influenced by his exposure to the American west landscape, he admired the art of Brett Weston and Ansel Adams. It was only natural that Zelazek's early efforts were black and white landscapes. His black and white prints have appeared in gallery and university museums from coast to coast and in Europe, winning

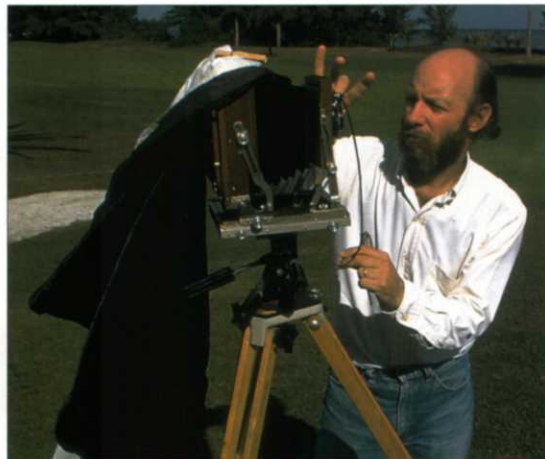
numerous awards. After three years in the West, Zelazek returned to Florida for his current position.

In 1981, after years of career commitment and not playing golf at all, the opportunity opened for a new cover photographer. Zelazek said, "This enabled me to return to golf, enjoy the sport and start playing again. It has always been a pleasure working with the superintendents."

Zelazek is an extreme perfectionist on any project in which he gets involved. The cover photography quality is a direct reflection of his lifelong commitment to excellence. Using only large format equipment, the 5" x 7" film sheet supplies the detail Zelazek demands for a two-page cover.

So always save your Florida Green magazines. Some day the covers will be collector's items!

*Editor's Note: Nothing gets me fired up more for a cover story visit than to hear the excitement in Daniel's voice when he describes his photo shoots. He brings an artist's eye, a craftsman's touch and a golfer's appreciation to each assignment. We are indeed fortunate to have such a fine talent working for the Florida Green. Thank you, Daniel!*



Nothing automatic about this camera! Daniel adjusts the settings on his 1979 custom made 5 x 7 Deardorff Wooden View Camera. Photo by David Bailey.



Daniel is used to working from loader buckets and forklifts, so this high reach at the Gasparilla Inn was an unexpected bonus. Photo by David Bailey.



All bundled up on a frosty morning, Daniel awaits the first rays of sunshine at Marsh Landing to capture what turned out to be a very dramatic cover shot for the Spring '96 issue. Photo by David Bailey.