

NOTABLE QUOTES

Some of the voices heard in the pages of GCN over the past 10 years.

On the boom in 1989: "It's just sensational, what's happening in golf, and the kinds of golf courses and products being done. The competition level in golf is so high. The desire for quality, dramatics, sensational, tremendous golf is out there and it's an exciting time." — **Tom Fazio**

On the rise of the upscale golf course in 1991: "I don't believe in the type of golf courses many are building today. After playing some of the courses out there today, they have to go back to the office for a vacation." — **Gary Player**

On wetlands in 1991: "It's been ridiculous. We've had a 10-by 30-foot piece of land in the middle of a fairway on top of a hill declared a wetland." — **Bill Kubly**

On environmental regulations in 1991: "Getting a permit [in Calif.] is like climbing Mt. Everest with tennis shoes." — **Robert Trent Jones, Jr.**

On design in 1992: "Ten years from now we'll look back on a lot of courses built in the 1970s and 1980s and we'll view them like we do Nehru jackets, big-fin Cadillacs and art deco. I like to build the golf course that's more like the traditional home in the old neighborhood with the steep roof and classic crown molding." — **Mark McCumber**

Speed kills: "The crash dummies in the automobile safety ads on television ought to hire out on golf greens. When Tour pros preparing for the Masters at Augusta National practice putting on their cement garage floors, perhaps we've gone too far." — **Jack Nicklaus**

Profit, Products and Pie: A Decade of Change

By **ROGER MAXWELL**
• *President, In Celebration of Golf*

Three years ago, I had the privilege to help establish the Golf Industry Association (GIA) in Arizona. This is a group of golf course owners, managers and associate businesses who make their living in the golf business. The mere existence of this group is a demonstration of the changes we've seen in golf in the past decade.

While the game of golf has been popular for quite some time, golf as an industry is a relatively new concept. The proliferation of management and development groups has increased the competition, spurred the need for more efficient operational practices and placed the focus on profitability of golf facilities. Additionally, Wall Street has entered the fray with real estate investment trusts (REITs), manufacturers and management companies finding the public eager to invest in everything from golf gadgets to golf resorts.

As healthy competition always does, this activity has generally increased the

service levels and product quality for the consumer. At In Celebration of Golf Management, we follow a clustering model where we manage facilities that are close in geographic and economic proximity. By doing so, we can take advantage of

certain economies of scale, decrease redundant layers of management, and provide a better product and a better value for the golfer.

We have also seen a dramatic change in the area of golf retail. The casual atmosphere in today's society has essentially erased the line between golf

clothes and business dress. Consequently, golf apparel manufacturers have spread into department stores and traditional retail apparel companies — such as Polo, Tommy Hilfiger and Eddie Bauer — have invested heavily in the golf business. Golf shops have become retail shops and vice versa. Specialty golf shops like In Celebration of Golf and PGA Tour shops thrive in non-traditional golf locations. Again, the increased competition offers the consumer more choices and better



Roger Maxwell

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Renzetti

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ruption to play.

The second is alternative spikes. I recall bringing the literature home from a trade show and offering anyone a free change-over just to try them. Now you can hardly buy a pair of shoes without them.

Irrigation systems are much better. More efficient pump sta-

tions and control systems have dramatically improved water usage and playability.

This overlaps with what is the most significant change in the industry—computerization. Ten years ago, I was explaining to my chairman the need to computerize the department. Today, ironically, my chairman is an executive with Sun Microsoft. My office has two desktop computers, one DTN weather moni-

tor with satellite dish, a laptop computer, facsimile machine, copier, Hewlett Packard scanner, cellular telephone, television/VCR and a Bose radio.

I know a superintendent who, just a few years ago, scoffed at the idea of using a computer. Now he is a regular on the Internet, and is spearheading an association Web page. This new equipment gives us the ability to document and professionally

prepare reports and proposals.

I find a greater need to promote what superintendents have done for decades. The Audubon International program has given credibility to what is second nature to us—conservation and preservation.

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—Steve Renzetti

I interpret the new generation of regulations to be good and bad. Some force us to tighten our belts up a little, while others just don't make sense at all.

I hear a lot of talk about how television golf has put undo pressure on the day-to-day conditioning of golf courses. But what I see is superintendents answering the call, stepping up to the plate and performing.

I play courses all over the country and time after time find myself saying at the end of my round, 'Boy, is this place in great shape.' I think television has put superintendents in the spotlight, both in recognition and compensation.

The golfing public has fully recognized superintendents are the most influential people at their facilities in terms of the total golfing experience. This is where the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America's board and staff has come into play. GCSAA has come full circle. It is an organization that works diligently and tirelessly in supporting and promoting endeavors we feel are important. I trust the management and direction our national association is heading.

Just a few years ago, I wrote in my club's newsletter that it is an exciting time to be a member at Wykagyl. It was then, and still is today, a very progressive club, making positive changes that benefit everyone.

It is also an exciting time to be superintendents, as we lead the golf community into the next millennium.

All in a Day's Work.

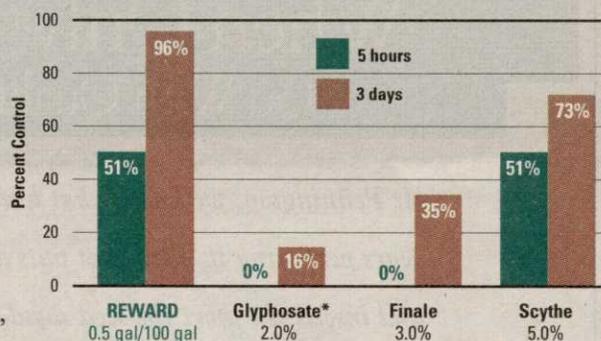


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Maxwell

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product selection.

However, all of this increased competition will be of no value if we don't create new golfers. The change that we need to see that hasn't happened in the past 10 years is a significant growth in the number of golfers. The increased supply of courses, apparel and equipment has far exceeded the demand for these goods and services. In simple terms, we're all fighting for bigger pieces of the same pie. As an industry we need to focus on increasing the pie.

When golf was merely a game we didn't worry about market share, return on investment and such. If we're going to be an industry, we have to act like one.