

and Course Maintenance

The Official Magazine of the British Golf Greenkeepers' Association

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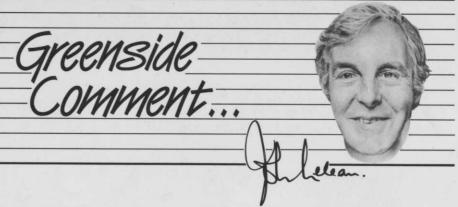
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Another generation - A brighter future

Looking around the golf scene, many of the Head Greenkeepers who returned from serving their country to fight another battle reclaiming their derelict courses from the ravages of sheep, potato fields and the training exploits of the 'Home Guard', will soon be gently moving into retirement.

They are part of the old school of greenkeeping, men who were denied the educational opportunities the youth of today claim as their right. Their 'know-how' came from discussing problems with neighbouring greenkeepers, reading every book and magazine on matters of agronomy and through visits from salesmen picking up the latest information on mechanical equipment.

Not only have they maintained and developed their courses for the past forty years, but latterly have seen a massive increase in play with the accumulative problems that has brought. Compaction, thatch, disease, drainage, are all conditions exacerbated by the increased wear caused by seven days a week golf, even during the winter months.

Their successors, who do not remember the days when golf was played mainly at weekends, will now need to strive for better management of their resources.

The opportunities for business education are available, both through Polytechnics, Evening Institutes and the local library. In time it is to be hoped the Greenkeeper Training Committee will encourage one of the Universities to produce a syllabus for a degree course in amenity turf management, but until that day arrives, the present generation of greenkeepers will need to follow in the footsteps of their predecessors and seek out every opportunity to improve both their 'on course' knowledge and organisational abilities.

A change in government planning policy whereby poor agricultural land previously regarded as sacrosanct 'green belt' can now be released for development could encourage a number of private golf course constructions, particularly if they are linked with a hotel complex and residential housing.

Such a move could only be a step in the right direction for greenkeepers as events have shown it is the commercial undertaking in golf that recognises the worth of the man who manages the course and rewards him accordingly.

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