



The Secretaries' View

Keith Lloyd, National Secretary of the Association of Golf Club Secretaries, discusses the cooperation between BIGGA and the AGCS.

I was delighted to accept the invitation of making an editorial contribution to this publication, and am in no doubt that this will lead to another source of valuable interaction and sharing of knowledge between our two Associations.

Over many years, the AGCS and BIGGA have sat together as part of the independent Salaries Committee for Golf Clubs, and the increasing number of clubs now adopting these recommendations has, in my opinion, demonstrated their appreciation of the skills and knowledge displayed by today's qualified, professional Greenkeepers. Long may that continue!

WORKING TOGETHER

I am pleased to say that significant progress is also being made towards the possible uniformity of creating Generic Risk Assessments for all clubs.

This is a joint venture undertaken by the AGCS and BIGGA, involving a committee of Course Managers and Club Secretaries/Managers, all of whom have had particular experiences with Health & Safety. The AGCS consultant, Brian Butler, will play a key role in the process, and both John Pemberton and I are keen to see progress is made.

The aim overall is threefold:

- To make the task of risk assessments easier.
- Create safer environments for greenkeepers.
- Set Industry standards for all clubs.

It is also hoped that, by creating a safer and better managed workplace, a club's Employer's Liability Insurance premium could be reduced.

GOLF CLUB MANAGEMENT JOURNAL

All 2,500 members of the AGCS receive a monthly journal, Golf Club Management. This journal is highly regarded as a great source of information, and the inclusion of a 14 page section entitled "Course Work - where the clubhouse stops and the fairway begins" provides our members with direct and practical advice about managing a golf course. That is not to say Secretaries could (or even should) possibly know better than BIGGA members, but more the provision of background information for the non qualified individual.

If you feel you would like to make contributions to this section, or perhaps have a viewpoint on how the relation between the Secretary and the Course Manager could be enhanced, then please feel free to contact us at the AGCS - 01934 641166 or hq@agcs.org.uk.

If your Club Secretary is a member of the AGCS, then he/she will receive two copies monthly. Please feel free to ask him/her for an opportunity to look at this material. If your Club Secretary is not a member of the AGCS, please contact us so that we may be able to help you.

BOOK REVIEW

A Natural Course For Golf, Compiled by Malcolm Peake

Published by The STRI, Bingley, West Yorks.

Malcolm Peake may not earn his living from golf. He may not even get the opportunity to play his beloved Temple Golf Club as often as he might want, but Malcolm Peake's enthusiasm for the game and particularly for the manner in which golf courses are maintained is second to none. You can also be sure that his knowledge of greenkeeping doesn't suffer by comparison when measured against the top Course Managers in the country.

A Natural Course For Golf is Malcolm's second book, his Confessions of a Chairman of Green, also published by the STRI, received much acclaim when it was launched in 2001.

This time Malcolm has dragooned some of his friends and associates from the golf industry as well as some of his celebrity friends from Temple Golf Club into contributing to a book which looks at all aspects of the game and in particular the maintenance of the course.

A heavyweight group of star names endorsed the book including Sir Michael Bonallack OBE, who wrote the foreword, and Mickey Walker, Colin Montgomerie and Nick Faldo all of whom welcome what Malcolm has achieved over the 88 pages of essays, photographs and cartoons.

The book aims at helping golfers to understand course management techniques and issues and as Malcolm says in his introduction "fuel informed debate and prevent criticism through ignorance" and explain the different types of golf - American target through to the natural British method which provides the book with its title. He also hopes that the book will increase golfers' confidence in their own greenkeeping teams and if he even takes a small step towards achieving that aim he would come close to being sainted by the country's Course Managers.

There follows a series of essays from such luminaries as five time Open Champion Peter Thomson; ex-Goodie Tim Brooke-Taylor, who writes amusingly on "the art of coarse management"; Martin Gunn, Course Manager at Temple GC; BIGGA Chairman, Kerran Daly, who contributes a superb poem "The Golf Course Manager's Lament"; David Oatis, of the USGA; John Duncan, General Manager of Royal Dornoch; renowned Golf Course Architect, Donald Steel; Jeff Parris, Alistair Beggs and Bob Taylor, of the STRI; David Garland, of the

European Tour; Jon Allbutt; Keith Duff, of English Nature; the late Jim Arthur, to whom the book is dedicated; Peter Wisbey, Course Manager, of Woodhall Spa; Chris Haspell, Course Manager of Horsholm GC, in Denmark; David Golding, of the GTC; Architect, Tom MacKenzie; Steve Isaac, of the R&A, and memorably, Terry Wogan, whose writing on "A Golfing Craic".

The list of "cast" sums up the book's ability to educate one minute and offer a belly laugh the next, and really that is the best way forward. You won't get the message across in a weighty, worthy, tome, people must want to pick the book up and delve into its pages and they will pick up information despite themselves while laughing at one of Tim Brooke-Taylor's "thoughts" on greenkeeping.

Sample - "Now look here. If it ain't broke, don't fix it. That's what I say to those new fangled course managers - more like coarse managers in my experience. What was wrong with calling them head greenkeepers? Or even 'Hey you'."

There is also contains a Glossary of Terms, some genuine and some amusing including "Green Speed - Not a hallucinogenic drug."

The range of information contained in the book is impressive and a copy placed somewhere in the club lounge or reading room might just have some long term benefits. Malcolm is to be commended for his enthusiasm and tenacity in compiling "A Natural Course For Golf"

The book is available from the STRI Priced £19.95 plus p&p,
Tel: Linda Gallagher on 01274 518908 or visit the STRI Website,
www.stri.co.uk, and follow the links to the Bookshop.

