



On the Soapbox

A vehicle for letting people within the industry express their point of view

Think back and remember how over the last 30 years, greenkeeping has improved both in the quality of the turf and grasses, and visually. The high standards to which you, the greenkeepers, maintain the golf courses throughout the years. Yes, all four seasons are now in play for the golfers.

The club members want to play all year round, and the travelling golfers, the visitors, also want to visit and play your golf courses throughout the year.

Visiting golfers bring in more finance to the golf clubs and also to the local areas. Yes, all things are about money and finances.

In 2010 it is not just the golf club finances that are tight it is worldwide.

The belts are pulled in, the course budgets are all adjusted and greenkeeping has to carry on.

Knowing many greenkeepers, as I do, I believe that the standards of greenkeeping will continue to improve throughout these very difficult times.

The standards of greenkeeping have improved beyond any expectations. You only need to view the TV footage which is shown regularly of events in the past.

Today we play on tees and fairways that are far better than some of the greens that are shown on these old films from 30 years ago.

Go back further and I can remember even bumpier courses, but then at those times we thought that the golf courses were great and some even fantastic.

I hope and pray that I am around in another 20-30 years to see the quality that you will achieve on your golf courses. How many more of you will be working in other countries around the world?

How many young greenkeepers will be preparing yourselves both educationally and in the workplace for the future in your given profession.

The world is a much smaller place now with all the modern technologies and fast travel.

Why does it take such a long time for a round of golf these days, when the tees, fairways, greens and all about and around a golf course is of a quality and condition which is so advanced and superior to those of 30 years ago when a round of golf lasted no longer than three hours 30 minutes.

The golf club members start their competitions earlier in the year and finish them later in the year. Your golf club needs the visitors

and the company days to survive more and more. You are maintaining your courses at competition standards for far longer periods throughout the years, 30 years ago there was not the amount of traffic on the courses as there is today.

You don't need me to tell you these facts. Every working hour down to the minute in the hours is now organised and programmed by your head greenkeeper/course manager to work and perform in all weathers and all conditions.

The greenkeepers' buildings are also the workshop for the repairs and maintenance of almost all the machinery and equipment used on the golf course. The modern day machines and equipment are so far advanced, what next?

This has reminded me of the years long ago when I read "The Eagle" comics Dan Dare pilot of the future. Jet planes and space craft.

Fantastic. Yes it has happened. Come on take a look into the future 60 years on and

ally and you the greenkeepers send in some extremely high quality photographs of your golf courses.

This competition was to show the quality, beauty and presentation of your golf courses. Also to help greenkeepers to keep fine records of the work in maintaining your courses.

Some of your photographs are now being used on club websites and in the advertisements in various magazines,

I am a retired 70 year old/young with a full time hobby, photographing golf courses I have many friends in greenkeeping.

I thank them all for their friendships and allowing me the privilege of photographing and recording the golf courses they have and spend their working days at.

The same thanks goes to the Managers/Secretaries at these golf clubs. To all greenkeepers wherever they may be thank you for the pleasures and memories that I have both golfing and photographing your golf courses.

My view of greenkeeping over the past 30 years or so...

ask yourself what machinery and technologies will the greenkeeper have to hand.

Hovering above the fairways, tees and greens with zappers and laser cutting the turf to heights and standards that is beyond or thought at this moment in time 2010.

30 years ago it was very rare that the greenkeepers were involved in club meetings or discussing the golf course, green keeping methods, golf course presentation and the quality with the members and golfers.

Today the greenkeepers hold meetings/seminars and evenings for discussions questions and answers, the greenkeepers have course walks and talks to answer the questions from the members.

Promoting the golf club is very important today, this is to bring in the visiting golfers bringing in additional revenue to sustain and maintain the improving qualities of the golf club and its golf course.

Showing the golf course and the clubhouse on the web site and using good quality photographs to show how good your course is.

A few years ago a photographic competition was started in your BIGGA Magazine. The competition has now developed annu-



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If you would like to view a few of my golf course photographs please e-mail me on:
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The views expressed within On The Soapbox are not necessarily those of Greenkeeper International