

## Remember! You wanted to do this!

The first six months on the job, I must have said this phrase to myself five times a day. I would be lying if I didn't admit that I questioned my decision several times. The transition to an administrator versus a hands-on golf course superintendent was very difficult. Now, two years have almost passed and I look forward to going to work every day.

A few thoughts that hopefully will help someone in a similar situation some day:

1. Feel comfortable with the immediate professionals you work with on a daily basis. I would never have accepted this position if I had not felt extremely

comfortable with my relationship with the general manager and director of golf. Research these individuals' backgrounds, just as they are researching yours.

2. Hire good people and hold them accountable. This advice is never more important than in a large operation like this. If someone is not doing their job, and you have to do it, you do not need that individual. Harsh words perhaps, but you must realize this is the only way you will accomplish what you were hired for in the first place.
3. Have fun! It is imperative to maintain a positive mental attitude about your job. Truly enjoy what you do, and take pride in your accomplishments.

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## Logging a Typical Day

BY STEPHEN M. PEARSON,

CGCS

*The Falls Country Club*

**The Falls C.C., Wednesday, January 22, 1997 - Temperature 54°**

**6:00 a.m.**

My usual routine starts with opening up the main entrance gates and then the maintenance road gate. As I'm opening up the shop and driving equipment out I couldn't help but think about the past few days and how cold it was.

Saturday - 34 with heavy North winds, Sunday - 36 with no wind in the morning and heavy frost through many of the rough areas, Monday - 40 and again frost but lighter.

I know that Tuesday was a lot warmer but the frost damage from Sunday and Monday is unavoidable and its effected straw colored grass is obvious by the afternoon. Tuesday being a Ladies Member-Guest tournament was no time to charcoal greens so I planned on Wednesday morning.

**6:30 a.m.**

The crew is given their assignments this morning and we are leapfrogging

four walking mowers. (One starts at the practice greens, one at No. 1, one at No. 2 and one at No. 3 with each one going to the next uncut green until all are cut.)

This process allows the greens to get cut in front of the golfers but more importantly in front of my sprayer. I know the mowers won't cut much grass from those purple un-overseeded Tifdwarf bermudagrass greens, but they clean up better than the rollers that we've used the past two days.

Charcoaling greens is such a nasty process. Mixing is the worst part, of course, and very time consuming but you just have to do the best you can.

After spraying a green I like to get about 20 minutes to a half hour before any golfer gets to a green. That allows time for the material to dry on the leaf blade. Our membership has learned over the years the benefits of charcoaling so even when they get some on their shoes or balls they know it will wash off.

**7:45 a.m.**

I reconfirmed with our starter that our charcoaling is taking place as scheduled. I posted in the pro shop yesterday that this process would occur in the morning and also told my greens chairman and a few of the members that I see on a regular basis.

A little advance PR goes a long way. I also told them that I couldn't let anyone start on the back nine in the morning; otherwise it would be a real problem getting the greens sprayed ahead of them. By this time in the morning I've also fed our 30 pairs of exotic ducks that we've purchased over the past two years.

**8:00 a.m.**

The starter informs me that a single is going out in front of the others. Mr. H. wants to get in a quick 18 before he catches a plane to New York. That's OK but I know he plays fast and he'll catch my sprayer on the back nine.

Somehow we will work it out.

He understands the process anyway. Also at this time our outside contractor shows up to do our six-month preventive maintenance (PM) work on the pump station. That's no problem because it has been the same man for the past two years.

**8:15 a.m.**

My spray tech has already finished his first tank. He has mix/loaded his second tank and has continued where he left off. We cover about six to seven greens with one tank.

Using a field jet nozzle to put out a greater volume with the charcoal is the only way we've found to apply this solution without clogging nozzles. Normally



we use Delavan cone nozzles and it takes us two tanks to cover the 4 acres of Tifdwarf bermudagrass. With the fieldjet nozzle it takes us three tanks.

**8:50 a.m.**

The second tank has been sprayed through No. 12 green and the spray tech is back loading up the last tank. Some of the other golfers are now chomping at the bit to tee off the back nine. We are still holding them up. Mr. H. has just made the turn and is playing No. 10. He has to play through.

**9:05 a.m.**

The spray tech passes 10 tee on the way to finish 12 green. I'm standing at the tee talking to a foursome of walkers about the charcoaling procedure as he passes. Now they can start because it will take them 30 minutes to get to 12 Green. In the meantime Mr. H. is now finishing No. 12.

**9:15 a.m. - 9:40 a.m.**

We finish 12, jump over to 17 then back to 13, over to 16 and 15 then back to 14 and finish with 18. All in which is done so Mr. H. doesn't play immediately after we spray. He doesn't mind anyway.

**9:45 a.m.**

I check back in with the pro shop. I check out tomorrow's golf schedule and get more news on Friday's men's tournament.

I also check in with the controller and see if there are any updates on budget meetings. This is the time of the year when our budgets are prepared and various meetings are set up for review. I also swing back out to the pump house to see how our PM work is going. Everything's fine.

**10:15 a.m.**

Back at the shop. My assistant has gotten the rest of the crew started on their other jobs for the day. I check messages on the answering machine and follow up with returning calls.

By this time of the day everyone knows what they are doing to finish the day.

I get back to scheduling work for tomorrow and let the mechanics know what equipment we intend to use. Weather has such a big part to play in what we will attempt to do tomorrow and in subse-

quent days so I check our satellite information service and the computer screen to see what fronts are coming or if there are any weather changes that may affect our work.

**11:30 a.m.**

Lunch time for the crew. My lunch time may vary depending on what I may be doing at the time and how long it will take but I like to have lunch around this time, too.

We have a group of us that usually eat around this time at the Grill Room in the clubhouse - the general manager, head golf professional, controller, bookkeeper and our executive secretary.

I may spend up to an hour depending on the conversation and the various discussions that take place about company work, jobs or personnel. Sometimes I may have a casual conversation with a member which helps establish an open avenue for member involvement.

**12:30 p.m.**

I check back with our Irrigation PM contractor and he has finished. He's ready to repressurize and do the final adjustments. Thirty minutes and we're through. The station is back in perfect condition.

**1:00 p.m.**

Back at my office I've got some more calls and need to order some liquid fertilizers for next week. I fill out the appropriate Purchase Requisitions and set them aside to be signed later by the greens chairman and general manager.

The mechanics let me know that there is a major problem with one of our hydraulic five-reel units.

We are trying so hard to get this piece to last until May when we can buy or lease a new unit and phase this one out.

It has been costing us an arm and leg to keep running. Cost analysis shows that we have already bought repair parts equaling to one third of the original purchase price into this machine since we purchased it five years ago.

**2:00 p.m.**

Around this time of day I like to make a run around the golf course to see how the day's activities have gone and how the greens look for tonight's irrigation, if any is done at all.

A few probes with the soil plugger shows the need for a cycle on greens tonight. I stop by the clubhouse again to pick up mail which usually comes in around 1 p.m.. Nothing unusual. The usual amount of junk mail.

As 3 o'clock approaches, the crew is in cleaning off the equipment and I usually spend time with my assistant to talk about tonight's watering and the schedule for tomorrow. Equipment is fueled, greased and prepped for tomorrow if it hasn't been done earlier in the day.

It's after 3 o'clock now and the crew has gone home. I usually spend some time relaxing and just thinking about what other events or schedules are upcoming. In our work with its great diversity and ever-changing variables, you can never do too much planning.

Time out: 4:35 p.m.

## Working the Plan

BY PETE METCALF

*Golf Course Superintendent  
The Vineyards C. C.*

**T**he Vineyards Country Club is a 36-hole private country club with 750 golfing members. Our maintenance staff is made up of one superintendent, two assistants, one shop manager, one horticulturist and one crew foreman.

A typical day at the Vineyards begins at approximately 5:30 a.m. when the first people to arrive are the salaried employees. Yes, this even includes me, the superintendent.

My rationale for this early start stems from my belief that so often a well-thought-out schedule is doomed simply because weather conditions have changed from one extreme to another... overnight!

Therefore, rather than revising a schedule prepared for course conditions based upon the previous 24 hours, we schedule each morning following a quick check of current course conditions.