Some of the most enlightening details of any golf course will never be seen by golfers.

Make sure your facility is under the vigilant watch of a GCSAA Class A Superintendent.

Everyone knows that the superintendent’s visible role is in managing the golf course. And smart facilities understand the importance of having a GCSAA Class A Superintendent in this position, as the course is the primary link to their customers. But what a lot of courses fail to realize is how important a top superintendent can be to the business side of golf. With a Class A Superintendent at the helm, you’ll know that you have one of the top professionals not only watching after your course but also keeping track of your bottom line.

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- Multiple tee options enhance pace of play and offer the golfer a more enjoyable experience.
- Sound financial management program reduces tax liability by more than $12,000 a year by depreciating bunkers and greens.
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- Tree management program improves air circulation and enhances the turf’s exposure to sunlight, promoting higher-quality playing conditions.
superintendent John Zimmers, Jr.

As Rich Lerner was interviewing Zimmers and talking about the historically fast and intimidating greens – often kept at 15 on the stimpmeter – it was revealed that the greens were push-up, clay-based greens that had never been rebuilt! Whoa! Hold the horses.

This goes against everything we were ever taught and what we are told must transpire to have greens that can withstand increasingly outlandish golfer expectations.

Obviously there must be some missing information that the quick sound bite didn't cover. I mean, aren't we supposed to build greens according to USGA specifications calling for extensive laboratory testing of particle size conformity, percolation rates, pore space, organic content, drainage, etc, etc?

The fact that the USGA has held a record eight U. S. Open Championships at Oakmont only adds to my confusion. The Green Section just went on DEFCON 3.

Zimmers did offer up one mystical explanation involving the evolution of a mysterious strain of Poa annua bluegrass that grows or survives only on the property. Transplants to other locales wither and die. It grows only at Oakmont. Put the turf breeders on the case. Will Penn State, home of legendary grasses, please weigh in on that one?

Of course the other obvious ironies of the week included the contrast of the affable corpulent cigarette puffing Cabrera matching wits and whacks from the jungle formerly known as the rough with the buff, hard-body Woods who has a strict workout regimen and steely determined game face demeanor. I’m not criticizing Woods, actually I was pulling for him to win, despite picking Furyk in my Pick Your Pro contest. I think Tiger will break Jack’s major records, it was just ironic that the mook outperformed the machine when it counted on this day.

In many ways the common man’s victory was a nice reminder that good people, humble people, average work-a-day people can and do succeed in this high-tech, high-profile, politically correct world that we live in.

It was also a reminder to me that golf course superintendents who work hard to make ends meet with budgets that are squeezed ever tighter can find success. They are people, like Cabrera, who manage their drought-stricken or storm-ridden courses calmly in pressure-cooker situations with humor and determination and a love for the moment and for what they do.

It isn’t easy being a duck in pond full of alligators, but ducks can fly while gators crawl (and tigers prowl).
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