Wide range of public courses needed

During the past month, I've had the opportunity to play two levels of public golf in my own state of Florida. I say two levels because there's really no such thing as public golf: there are only two sides to the golf spectrum. I say two levels because both thrive, and gators sun their backsides in the shallows and on the banks of water hazards. It's a wide open links-style course with plenty of water, plenty of length and in decent condition (the greens were in great condition). The cost to play this fine course is approximately $25 with cart (per person). Buffalo Creek has a comfortable pro shop and coffee shop, and was fun to play.

The tongue: Quieting or creating the storm

You might think the worst problem is c o n c e r n about agronomics. Or pesticides. Or chemicals. Or just about anything. But communication? Communication has to do with speaking and listening—the latter being a major problem with too many of us. We should practice listening, make an art of it. All too often, we are just anxious for others to finish speaking so we can say what's on our own mind; and thus we never hear what they're saying.

Mechanics deserve more respect

By David Franz

Have you ever wondered what the golf club member thinks when he sees a matically manicured course? Does he think the superintendent is the best professional around? Or does he think the turf equipment technicians have their act together? I think the superintendent probably receives the accolades, while the equipment technicians are left wondering if they are doing the job right. But I think they are doing the job.

I feel it is high time turf equipment technicians of this industry stand up and take a bow for the tremendous task of maintaining today's complex and vast variety of equipment.

Turf equipment is a lot more precise and complicated than 15 to 25 years ago. Years ago, superintendents realized they weren't qualified to do the new equipment. So they found "mechanics" to do the job. At that time, anyone who was mechanically inclined could be a golf course mechanic.

A major industry change has come from low cuts on turf. Greens are mowed at one-eighth inch, tees are mowed at one-fourth to three-eighths, and fairways are mowed at seven-sixteenths to one-half inch.

This makes for fine putting, but also for headaches for the technicians.

I've started in this business 10 years ago, golfers wanted fast greens, and greens that looked good to boot.

It is the need for overtime on a budget that might not allow for overtime.

Aim the budget with not increasing as fast as technology and the price of equipment, pay scales did not rise even to attract skilled workers. So equipment got (and still does) get abused.

If it weren't for the technicians, the equipment wouldn't stay in working condition, the course would start to suffer, and the superintendent would start to look bad.

Technicians deserve credit for doing the job they do — not only keeping the equipment running, but also making sure that it is running efficiently and effectively.

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