



# The 'Peace-of-Mind' Maintenance Plan

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As everyone knows, the management functions are composed of POMC — planning, organizing, motivating and controlling.

I would like to dwell on the aspects of planning (forecasting future problems and events and courses of action), and organizing (using the resources necessary to implement a plan) which we use in the maintenance operation at Firestone Country Club.

We are a large (36-hole), busy industrial golf course with 800 members and with close to 60,000 rounds of golf played over five months. With two major televised events a year, you can understand why planning is something we learned even before attending management courses, because it was forced on us as the only means of accomplishing our maintenance operations under the prevailing conditions.

Our planning starts with a club calendar consisting of all events for the six-month season. It lists men's, women's and junior programs and events as well as the professional tournaments, and it involves considerable coordination among the various committees so the overall calendar presents a manageable schedule. The calendar also includes key maintenance operations, particularly spring and fall aerification.

This kind of precise, long-range

scheduling is necessary to permit aerification over a two-week period without adversely affecting scheduled tournaments and events. It adds up to peace of mind for us, with a specific time set aside, as well as to the membership, which can count on fine playing conditions for all tournaments and functions.

Once assembled, the six-month calendar is transposed into a larger one in the maintenance office on which more frequent maintenance operations are scheduled and detailed. For instance, we note dates for verticutting fairways, fertilizing greens (including amount per 1,000 square feet, type and running total), and so on. This allows us to tell at a glance where we are and where we

should be in terms of day-to-day operations. If we want to topdress in two weeks, a quick glance at this comprehensive calendar will tell us whether or not it is possible.

We break this down further into a weekly forecast or plan. This forecast is posted in the employe locker area, two areas in the clubhouse and one copy is given to the general manager. On Wednesday of the preceding week we post the maintenance schedule for that week. On this is listed only operations affecting the golf game — aerifying, top-dressing, etc. It serves a twofold purpose by compelling us to plan each week in advance, and also to inform the membership of what we are going to do so they may make the

Left: Firestone superintendent Peter Miller maps out maintenance plan with an eye to long-, middle-, and short-range planning. Right: Assistant superintendent Jim Loke puts together the daily work schedule on the maintenance blackboard. The Firestone crew knows where it will be working any given day by the previous afternoon, and on weekends by the previous Thursday.



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decision as to whether they want to play under those conditions or not.

Obviously because of weather conditions not all programs can be followed but try it — you will be very surprised how well this system will work and how little time it will take.

The next step in the management function concept is organizing to carry out the plans. To do so on a golf course we have lists of jobs to be done in the event of rain, frost or any inclement weather, as well as for normal conditions. These are the areas we draw from for our planning schedules.

Each day a list is made up of all our personnel, listing individual duties for the particular date. This is posted on a large blackboard before the personnel leave that day for the next day. All weekend work is posted by Thursday noon.

A list of equipment needed that day is left for the mechanic and his helper so when they come in an hour early they have the equipment out and adjusted, gasoline and oil checked. If a special piece of equipment is required, advance notice for preparation is given.

When the personnel arrive in the morning and punch their time card, they only need to go to their equipment and proceed to their job assignment. If the weather is inclement, this is the time we draw on the list of jobs for rain, frost or whatever.

The daily job posting is also kept in file for record uses and delivered daily to the general manager. It seems that the better informed management is, the better relations between departments will be.

Obviously, motivation and control are necessary to the success of a management program. We have only dwelled on planning — seasonal calendar, monthly and weekly forecasts and organization of daily and weekend employee job lists.

These methods have worked extremely well for us at Firestone and I am sure, if given the chance, will work as well at any other type of golf course. In this day of rapidly increasing expenses, we can only use our resources as expeditiously as possible. □



Miller with his shop mechanic. A list of equipment needed for the next day is left for the mechanic and his helper so when they come in an hour early they have the equipment out and adjusted, with gasoline and oil checked.



A look at a small section of the Firestone maintenance complex. The Firestone tower in the background towers over the course and is a landmark locally and to national television audiences.