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Going Postal

We’ve Got Mail

Bad Joke
I don’t have the article in front of me, but the one by a superintendent beating up on golfers’ intelligence was weak at best ("Dumb, Dumber, Dumbest" by Jerry Coldiron, CGCS, October). I apologize for the lack of humor from my fellow grass grower. The humor should be left with Golfdom columnist Geoff Shackelford and the other paid professionals. I hope this source of stand-up comic relief doesn’t snowball and turn your magazine into kindling like the others.

Jon L. Cuny
The Timbers GC
Frankenmuth, Mich.

Free Enterprise
William Shirley’s response to the October articles on management companies (Going Postal, November/December) should have been titled, "I Don’t Understand the Rules." Nowhere in the GCSAA’s Code of Ethics does it say anything close to what Shirley contends "is in direct contrast to the code of ethics." Providing a club president, course owner or any other individual at a golf operation with information on a service is not against any ethical code unless (per articles 12 and 13 of the Code of Ethics) it provides "false, misleading, slandering, defamatory" information or makes "misleading, deceptive or false statements or claims."

To inform a course owner, general manager, president, greens chairman, etc., of a maintenance management service is absolutely ethical by any standard of measurement, including the GCSAA’s. Shirley’s interpretation of the "rules" is just that... an interpretation. Welcome to the free-enterprise system.

Max B. Barrick
Vice President, ServiScape
Michigan City, Ind.

Another Perspective
Having recently read the pros and cons of management companies in your October issue, I’d like to offer the perspective of a general manager. When I took over the operation of the Admiral Lehigh Golf Resort and Spa more than a year ago, I found the golf maintenance was contracted with International Golf Maintenance. I was extremely skeptical of this arrangement and entered the relationship with my eyes wide open. What I found was that the arrangement has allowed me to concentrate on putting bodies in beds, butts on barstools and duffers in divots.

I’m not an agronomist, but I am a golfer. I inspect each course at least twice weekly and try to play at least one course each week. But with my ignorance of the finer points of turf management, I don’t need to be making the daily decisions about the health of my golf course. That’s not good for the course quality and can also lead to misunderstandings between the superintendent and the general manager.

The frequency of communication between myself and the IGMS regional manager is as close, if not closer, than with my department heads. It allows me to get more input on the agronomic aspects of our two golf courses, as well as assistance in borrowing equipment.

This summer, we rebuilt 18 greens and installed a state-of-the-art irrigation system. Had it not been for the regional manager’s supervision coordinating the construction, holding the hand of the pro shop staff, attending a members’ question and answer session, and holding the contractors accountable for the quality of their work, I’d be in a world of hurt. And what did it cost me? Nothing!

Mark C. Duffy, CHA
General Manager
Admiral Lehigh Golf Resort and Spa
Lehigh Acres, Fla.

About That Tree...
As a landscape supervisor, I enjoy reading Golfdom. As a tree person, I was drawn to the article "The Tree Doctor Is In" (November/December).

Upon reading the article, I became dismayed at the treatment of the lovely oak tree at Firestone CC. I can understand the desire to do what’s best for the tree, but it became apparent the people undertaking this project did not know enough about tree biology. I hope your magazine does not advocate this treatment for all trees with cavity problems. Alex L. Shigo’s book, Modern Arboriculture, might be of some help. The book is a must for any budding arborist.

James S. Arnett
Landscape Supervisor
Secession GC, Beaufort, S.C.