

**W**hen I read best selling author John Feinstein's Viewpoint column, "An Eye Opener," in that *other* superintendent magazine, I was pleased that such a notable writer of sports stories and regular columnist for *Golf* magazine had such an epiphany about the extent of what superintendents do.

Even before his recent revelations, Feinstein wasn't ignorant about the duties of a superintendent since he worked on a golf course as a youth. Still, by his own admission, it took him until the 1999 U.S. Open to *really* understand how much a superintendent can affect the playing conditions of a golf course. He came to understand the intimate knowledge superintendents have about the way the game is played and how the course will react to various conditions.

It's a great feeling that a golf-knowledgeable writer finally "got it" about our profession. I confess, however, that at the same time I celebrated his discovery, I thought wistfully that his article would do more for the profession if it had appeared in *Golf* instead. It is nice for 23,000 GCSAA members to know Feinstein sees what a smart superintendent brings to events week after week during the golf season. Our profession and our association would be better served, however, if his revelation would also be printed in a publication read by millions of golfers.

It doesn't do us much good to have important golf commentators preaching only to the choir. While we will always need choir practice to stay sharp, it's time to make sure the whole congregation gets the message. It's important that they hear a new song and start singing a new tune.

Articles like Feinstein's are just the kind of lyrics and melody that need to be sent to those influential golfers that GCSAA is always trying to reach. Consumer golf magazines should print more insightful articles like Feinstein's to educate golfers about how important it is to have a good superintendent managing the course.

There are issues facing golf that will require players to re-evaluate their expectations in the game and on the course. The sooner they un-

## Go Tell It On the Mountain, Feinstein

BY JOEL JACKSON



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derstand the total golf picture, the better equipped they will be to deal with it.

In fact, if influential golfers ever stake their reputations on fixing the problems facing the game, they could have a tremendous effect on how we solve the broader challenges.

To do that, they need to understand intimately the knowledge and ability of that often quiet but hard-working man or woman currently keeping the green.

Whenever golf leaders meet, the focus is on growing the game, building (or not building) courses, attracting more players and limiting club-and-ball technology. Those are all worthy and necessary items when taken in context, but they pale in comparison to topics like where golf courses will get their irrigation water in the next five to 10 years. Who is fighting that battle besides superintendents?

The people who will manage golf courses in the next decade will be the most important people at golf clubs. We have been telling ourselves that for the past 75 years. It's way past time for more golfer-oriented publications and other allied golf associations to tell the world the same story — and with the same commitment they expend on balls-and-sticks issues.

Superintendents shouldn't have to seek the media to make their voices heard. In fact, it should be the other way around. Any golfer should know by now which person ultimately manages course conditions.

Seriously, I want to thank Feinstein for sharing his "eye-opening" experience with Pinehurst #2 superintendent Paul Jett's expertise at the 1999 Open. But please, next time, don't share it the choir — go tell it on the mountain, too.

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