

# A day with club managers

**G**uess who isn't a big fan of committees to manage a golf club? Club managers. Or at least, the 40-plus club managers I had the pleasure of spending a couple of days with at a golf community in West Palm Beach, Fla. They are not big fans of committees who manage the affairs of the club and golf course.

More accurately, the complaint about committees was that they got lost in the details of small items and never tackled the big issues.

A club manager discussing committees and management of clubs jokingly, and with a little frustration in his voice, said that after many years of attending green committee meetings the hot topic of discussion was still whether bunker rakes should be placed inside or outside of the bunkers.

Let me back up a little and set the stage. It was my privilege to teach basic turfgrass management to the club managers at a weeklong education event sponsored by the Club Managers Association of America. The

event was entirely focused on golf and included a full day of education on turf management.

My impressions from the event were that club managers have a great respect for superintendents and the job that they do. While they are interested in turf management and would like to know why a certain practice is carried out, the club managers I was with had no desire to be a superintendent or tell the superintendent what to do.

I don't think the group questioned what a superintendent has done; they just would like to understand why it was done so they can be informed when golfers ask questions about things they have seen on the golf course.

A quick example to illustrate my point was a discussion we had on verticutting.

Several attendees had a limited knowledge of verticutting and more importantly, why verticutting is used to maintain greens. I described verticutting and its many variations and the situations where a specific type of verticutting might

be used to introduce himself to Mrs. Jones and her friends and began to build a friendship. For the first six months he never mentioned golf to Mrs. Jones, all he wanted to do was create an atmosphere where Mrs. Jones was comfortable.

Sometime later, he told Mrs. Jones that if she were ever interested in trying golf

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he would be glad to help her. About a year after first meeting Mrs. Jones, she told the co-director that she would like to give golf a try. Now Mrs. Jones is a regular golfer along with several of her friends, all new to the game.

The co-director of golf said the key in the process was getting to know Mrs. Jones first and develop a level of comfort where she felt at ease asking about golf.

While challenging, lead the green committee to the big items. After all, they look to you to lead the way.

The co-director of golf said that Mr. Jones was a regular golfer and that while Mr. Jones played golf, Mrs. Jones and her friends would relax by the pool. The co-director of golf took the initia-

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