



In Bounds: *Anticipation*

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Anticipation, defined as to look forward to, to foresee and provide for beforehand. For many of us we conjure up the memory of an old favorite ketchup commercial complete with the lilt of Carly Simon's voice. Some have anticipated their honeymoon or a big fishing trip and still others look toward retirement. Besides hot dogs going cold and prom night, I am often reminded of my younger years whenever I hear the word anticipation.

When I hear or think about anticipation my father's image instantly comes to mind. His teachings through my youth frequently focused upon "anticipating" the future whether my next golf shot, my financial management, my educational choices or even how to fell a tree. An abbreviated form of the phrase, "proper planning prevents poor performance", anticipation in my youth was taught through trial, error and sarcastic mockery.

"Well Jack, your report card indicates a few terrible scores. You really should have anticipated a bad grade and studied harder or asked for some extra credit. Either you pick up your

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grades or there will be real trouble" or, "You should have anticipated throwing darts straight up into the air and running out from underneath them would only hurt the slowest of the bunch of you kids. Now go get those pliers so we can pull this dart from the back of your brother's leg" or "Had you anticipated swimming practice necessitates the wearing of a swimsuit, you would have brought yours and not be donning your underwear during the exercise." That last subtle message really hit a home run regarding the proper use of the word anticipate.

Anticipate, anticipate and anticipate! We learned to hate that mantra as my siblings and I grew into adulthood. However, the word has served my brothers and sisters in their careers and me as well in my position as a Golf Course Superintendent. I suspect that each of us in this industry is well-versed in the practice of anticipation.

On a grand scale we plan our seasons according to what we anticipate our players will demand. Our budgets are dictated by what we anticipate costs will be dependent upon supply, demand or even quantity purchases. And macro management skills are anticipated and applied reliant upon the golf and maintenance practice schedules.

Timing is so often critical in our industry. Anticipation of the impacts of golf course maintenance and when, where and how long a project may take bear direct consequences in our abilities to perform at high levels. Each task balanced upon anticipated outcomes and their impact upon play.

Expectation of the weather changes long, short and sometimes immediate will put our anticipation skills to task. For example; the Farmer's Almanac may indicate a long and snowy winter, does the Superintendent anticipate additional snow mold chemistry, perhaps covers or a "plan b" if there is an extended period of ice? Dew points are on the rise, will there be a need to apply a fungicide and if so, how long will the coverage last and, anticipating resistance in the future, what chemistry will be used? And from the looks of the radar and the forecast for tomorrow does one anticipate the need to water tonight and, if so, how much?

Anticipate your staff will take some summer vacation and make your team multitasked! Anticipate that hydraulic lines will rupture on any given weekend and check them Friday afternoon! Anticipate taking your course to the next level during a perceived special event even though your track can speak for itself on any given day! Anticipate play off the back nine even though there isn't supposed to be a cross over. Anticipate a personal meltdown and schedule yourself a little break! Anticipate a few long days away from home and send flowers today!

And when you are finished with that, anticipate your next vacation away from the challenges of labor. Anticipate time with your family for there will be no better time to make memories. Anticipate the geese migrating south, a skim of ice on the ponds and the first snow. And finally anticipate a moment alone to reflect upon how good you really are at providing your players with the finest course attainable, your children with the best possible parent and your wife the very best spouse.

Yup, the 'Big Guy' was right about anticipation. It can make a day fly away with thoughts of grand expectations, or it can make minutes seem like hours if not put into practice. On the flip side the lack of anticipation created some of the funniest memories of my youth, stories of fireworks and gasoline, flat tires with no spares, magnetic key boxes and pitching a tent at the base of a hill. Ah, the reminiscence of my trials, tribulations and lack of anticipation.

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