

Want to Improve Your Image? Go APE!

by Wayne Evans

Today's golf course superintendent has come out of the closet — he no longer is "the best kept secret in the club." As a result of the last 20 years of progress, we, as superintendents, are getting the recognition we deserve and are beginning to be seen as not only highly dedicated individuals but also as the best educated and informed executives in the club business. Still, you can hear superintendents say, "How can we improve our image?" Improving our professional image, of course, has to start with each one of us at our respective clubs, and I have found that the letters APE stand for six very important words that affect how we look, think, and act professionally.

The "A" stands for Attitude and Appearance. Your appearance generally reflects your attitude. A slovenly or unkempt appearance gives others the impression that you have a "don't care" attitude. If you appear rumpled and rag-tag, your members have a right to ask how you can keep an orderly golf course if you can't keep yourself orderly and clean-cut. A disheveled or dirty appearance, in addition to showing your lack of concern for detail, filters down through your crew, with undesirable results. But, appearance does not always reflect attitude; the best-dressed superintendent can still have a bad mental attitude toward his work, and this may reflect personal problems that are affecting him adversely. Negative attitudes are always counterproductive; your crew will notice them and be affected, and your members will watch carefully to see if your negative approach shows up in their golf course.

A positive attitude and a clean, neat appearance are essential to your successful image; improve them, and your image goes up. And if your attitude means you don't like your job, it's time to change jobs.

The "P" in APE stands for Personality and Poise, two highly important attributes of any superintendent. Poise shows we are relaxed and sure of ourselves under any circumstances, and being prepared for any circumstance, good or bad, adds to poise. We are most flustered by situations that are hard to handle because we haven't prepared for them. If you know your job and plan your work, you should never lack poise, whatever the situation. Personality, on the other hand, is formed early in life, when we develop the character traits that identify us and form our personality. The importance of personality is shown in a recent study at a large university regarding success — 85% of success was found to be based on personality and only 15% on ability. This means that two superintendents of equal ability will be judged essentially on which has the best personality. Try to determine your positive personality traits and nurture them, and do your best to eliminate or improve what you see as your negative traits.

Expression and Education are represented by the "E." Expressing yourself clearly and intelligently, both in writing and orally, is vital in communicating with your workers and members and enables you to explain the reasons behind your various programs on the course. Admittedly, oral expression is very tough for some of us; while it may be hard for us to talk to people on a one-to-one basis, speaking before a group can turn us into basket cases. An evening class in public speaking can do wonders for your poise and self-confidence, and such training will help you in your daily work even if you are rarely called on as a speaker.

The importance of education for the superintendent need hardly be explained. We should be continually adding to your technical skills, and with so many sources of added knowledge available to us, this is not a difficult task. Local and national meetings and seminars, the volumes of written material in books and magazines, and the everyday give and take with fellow superintendents all offer a wealth of knowledge. Staying abreast of current ideas and applying them to improve our job skills adds greatly to our self-confidence.

Improvement in these six areas, then, is the key to an improved professional image. Improving that overall image of the superintendent relies on what each of us can do to improve ourselves — that's where it starts. Come on, men, go APE!



Wayne Evans

1st Round Pairings In Match Play Event

Listed below are pairings and tee times for the first round of the annual Mid-Atlantic Match Play Tournament, to be played at Evergreen Country Club on April 12, using the full difference in handicaps, which are shown. There were not enough entries for Division II, but it will be set up if renewed interest is shown.

11:00

George Renault (26) vs. Bill Neus (27)
Ben Stagg (27) vs. Earl Mason (25)

11:08

Paul O'Leary (3) vs. Craig Rhoderick (10)
Tom Regan (5) vs. Harry Allen (8)

11:16

John Tutich (17) vs. Alex Watson (25)
Sam Kessel (22) vs. Lou White (20)

11:24

Bob Orazi (12) vs. Bill Shirk (13)
Nick Vance (12) vs. Virgil Robinson (14)

11:32

Dick Gieselman (30) vs. Dave Fairbank (30)
Jim Meier (27) vs. Mike Larsen (32)

11:40

Dave Kroll (11) vs. Ron Hall (11)
Bill Emerson (11) vs. Ken Braun (11)

11:48

Lee Dieter (40) vs. Gerry Gerard (40)
Mike McKenzie (34) vs. Wayne Evans (33)

11:56

Ken Ingram (16) vs. Grant Pensinger (17)
Walter Montross (16) vs. Stanley Lawson (16)

GWGCSA '83 Meeting Schedule Announced

The Greater Washington Golf Course Superintendents Association has announced its schedule of programs for coming season, as follows:

March 14 — Dr. Wayne Bingham, update on Ronstar on bentgrass putting surfaces.

April 16 — Gary Shore of WJLA

May 24 — Annual Picnic

June 28 — Dr. Houston Couch, fungicide update

July 26 — Dennis Brown, seed testing, is it worth it?

Aug. 26 — Dr. Jack Hall, natural rye grass turf plots

Sept. 27 — Dr. Roger Radcliff, ornamental and turf grass plots

Oct. 25 — Pro-Superintendent discussion panel and elections

Annual dues are \$20, and George Renault (273-7637) or Dick Gieselman (471-5291) can be contacted for details.