

What to Do About Those Course Abusers

Noticed any ball marks on your greens lately? How's the litter around the litter basket; has it found a home inside the barrel or are your members off the mark again? How about the trees; are the rough riders still making figure-eights with tire marks?

If you accent the positive in response to these on-going questions of the incidence of much-ignored golf etiquette, maybe it's time to raise the possibility of subjecting frequent offenders to a clinic of another kind.

Golf clinics, as know them, are confined to the intricacies of the golf swing. There, the pro tells you how to grip the club properly, how to take it away in a straight line, come back with a lateral return — all the little things that go into hitting a golf ball far and straight.

This type of tutoring is very nice and essential, especially if the golfer doesn't know the difference between the Vardon grip and the pro putting side of the cup. But it takes in only half of a golfer's education. The other half, or appreciation of the golf course, usually is left to work itself into the player's head by accident or chance. How unfortunate — for the golfer and the golf course superintendent.

Some of the scenes on the golf course are cause for alarm, not to mention cause for the superintendent to wonder if those playing the layout realize they have an obligation to treat it as they do their own homes and places of business.

There are countless ways to abuse the golf course. A foursome of junior golfers race out of the clubhouse — their pockets stuffed with candy bars and their hands full of soft drinks. Before a second or third shot is taken, the fairway looks like the city dump with papers flying in all directions and paper cups challenging the grass for squatters' rights.

Tees are a particular sore spot, a locale where golfers do more damage with their pull carts than they do with tee shots. It's almost automatic for a golfer to drag his cart across the tee, select his club, make the shot, and then rip his way back to the fairway. Abuse? What takes a superintendent months to transform into a smooth and inviting area is turned into a scarred battleground in a matter of hours.

Greens constitute another area where golfers, whose minds are stuck on a single track of making their putt, ignore ball marks and perform other acts that inflict damage on the most significant product of a superintendent's maintenance efforts. It takes only a few seconds to repair a ball mark, but weeks of conditioning are needed to restore that spot to its original state if the golfer allows the penetration to go unattended.

One could go on and on with examples of course desecration, most unintentional but recurring because the golfer refuses to take a few moments to appreciate the grounds on which he plays. How many burnt-out cigarettes work their way into your delicate turf? Don't count them. You'll be there forever.

These and other forms of course abuse never will be completely eliminated. However, a course appreciation clinic could help to keep it to a minimum. But it does take cooperation and the makings of a new and constructive relationship between player and superintendent.

Starting with the juniors seems sensible. By no means are the newer golfers the only perpetrators in the act of abusing a golf course. However, they would be logical participants in a course appreciation clinic because of their impressionable status.

Sure, it sounds like a dead horse is being beaten because this same subject has been touched on here in the past. However, the incidents of abuse continue and have gone unchecked to the point where competition between golfers damaging the course and superintendents trying to preserve its playing condition has developed.

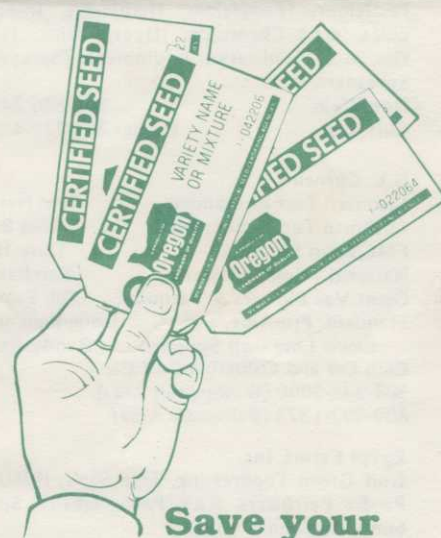
Actually, the highest station of responsibility lies with the country club officials or park commissions that administer municipal courses. Public courses are a separate entity. Their owners usually wield a heavier hand in demanding cooperation from players.

The golf course appreciation clinic, then, deserves to be explored and employed. There is nothing uglier than a course bent out of playing an aesthetic shape because golfers refuse to take part in retaining the condition a superintendent effects. If going to school will remedy the situation, so be it.

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The Oregon Blue Tag Program—the Details

To promote the recognition and desirability of Oregon Certified Seed, the Turf-Seed Corporation offers points toward either prizes, or in the case of qualifying turf associations, cash redemption. Points are awarded for each Oregon Blue Tag that carries the variety name or seed mixture name of a Turf-Seed, Inc., proprietary, with different kinds of seeds carrying different point values. These point values are as follows: CBS-1, Citation-1, Omega-1, Birdie-1, Oregon-1, Manhattan II-1, Birdie II-1, Columbia-2, Shasta-2, Midnight-2, N-535-2, Fortress-2, Shadow-2, Waldina-4, Aurora-4, Olympic-1. Tags saved should be forwarded to MAAGCS.



**Save your
blue tags**

Gerard Meets Vance For Match Play Title

Gerry Gerard defeated Dave Fairbank 2 and 1 in their semifinal match played at Piney Branch Golf and Country Club on July 12, and Nick Vance advanced to the final on a default when John Tutich and Frank Shirk failed to play their quarterfinal match before that date and were eliminated. Gerry and Nick will meet for the 1984 Match Play Championship, probably on September 11 at the Chevy Chase Club.

In the open play at Piney Branch, Bob Miller had an 80 less his 16 handicap for a 64 to win low net, while his son Tom, on leave from the Army, posted a 76 to tie Ed Cashman for low gross honors. Jerry Robine was second net with 65, Steve Cohoon had 67 for third, and George Renault was fourth with 71.