

Smooth Transitions

Grinding, lapping, facing, filing, squaring, leveling, adjusting, rotating, and rebuilding are just a few of the things that technicians do to cutting units over and over again. This labor takes place thanks to sand, growth, sand, verti-cutting, sand and did I mention sand? Technicians do know the importance of sand on greens; in fact, it helps our cutting units look better as they roll across the turf in the middle of a hot, humid, season. Of course, sand topdressing also gives us job security. I hope everyone's season is going well and your courses are looking great.

I'm Kevin Bauer and I have worked in the golf course industry for twenty years. I started when I was thirteen years old searching for creek balls, attending golf cars, and eventually working on a maintenance crew. Chuck Totten, whom I met at a TETA meeting, gave me my first real break into the technician field. He provided me a chance to work for Kemper Sports Management and learn my trade. Soon I found myself working for Illinois Lawn Equipment where I was fortunate to gain factory training, and many other valuable experiences in this occupation. I then returned to Big Run Golf Club, where I first started but now as the Equipment Manager and not a golf car attendant. I was finally able to draw on all of my factory training, experience and put it to real everyday golf course use.

I have been married for 10 years to my wife Jennifer. Together we have two children Scout and Benjamin. I have served on the TETA Board of Directors for seven years and it has been a privilege to work with the other board members. There are many items, such as educational seminars, trade show events, EETC testing, and other things that are discussed and decided by the board, which benefit all technicians. As with most associations, TETA needs more participation from its membership. This will foster fresh ideas and offer new perspectives to add to our growing organization. I ask technicians to step forward and take part in serving each other.

Recently I have taken a job with the Lockport Park District and Prairie Bluff Golf Club. It has been very busy. As with any change, I am reminded how important teamwork is for success. I thank Terry Hogan of Big Run Golf Club for supporting me for the past seven years. Terry always worked with me and allowed me to incorporate a good periodic maintenance (PM) schedule while he realized the importance of my profession. I also thank Ken Shepherd at Prairie Bluff Golf Club for his overwhelming support and constant cooperation as I start my new adventure. Here two superintendents, who have different ways of running their courses, however, both recognize the importance and value of a good service technician.

They both have made it clear how a solid technician can benefit the course and the product they produce.

I worked hard to make the transition from one course to the next as smooth as possible. We worked hard to create a PM schedule at Big Run Golf Club and I wanted to ensure its success after I had left. A few key things to do prior to leaving any position are:

- Make sure all of the equipment records are organized, neat and thorough. Each piece of equipment has a history and I wanted to record it for my successor.
- Make sure all operators and service manuals are organized and clearly marked.
- Create a vendor list of the companies, contacts and account numbers that are often used. Often the new technician will bring their own contacts to their place of employment, but it is always a nice gesture to offer this information to the person (especially if they are from out of the area).
- Go through the parts room and remove any unnecessary clutter that only you knew why you were holding onto it. (Everyone has that piece or pile of pieces that you are saving for just in case, but only you know their value.)
- Repair the equipment as if you were staying at the club. If this is the year to rebuild cutting units then do so. Actions like these prove your character and value.
- Try not to leave problematic issues with equipment, without at least documenting or sharing them with the new person.
- Share any special modifications that you have done to machines with the superintendent and the replacement technician.
- Leave the cutting units in good order and adjusted properly.
- If possible, try to spend some time with your replacement and the superintendent going over the machines, schedules and your practices.

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*Possibly good place to stand the next time a thunderstorm rolls through Phillips Park G.C., Aurora.
Photo courtesy of Todd Schmitz.*

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Though some of us may never leave the place where we currently work, these are good practices to maintain everyday. You never know when an opportunity may come your way. By following these suggestions you will ensure our profession as a whole benefits, as you are able to leave a club or facility in better shape than when you began. The spirit of TETA is to share information, processes and ideas that make our jobs and tasks easier, more efficient, and beneficial.



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