



Pleasure in the Game

As part of the golf course industry and profession, our livelihood, sense of self-worth, and our passions lie in the pleasures surrounding the game. And, like fingerprints, the pleasures derived from the game of golf are different for everyone.

I am certain that the thrill of competition and the ability to pull off shots in the clutch is how most champion golfers would describe their pleasures of the game. Pleasures can also be experienced and explained by every golfer who has hit a well-executed shot, broken 100, made a birdie, hoisted a championship trophy, won a friendly \$20 Nassau bet, captured a MAGCS logo shirt, carded a hole-in-one, or enjoyed a round of golf laughing with friends and clients over a couple of cold ones. Indeed, golf's pleasures are numerous, individual, and far-reaching.

The greatest pleasure of the game of golf I have experienced is the friendship and camaraderie within our profession that is expressed in volunteerism.

Wikipedia defines 'volunteerism' as, "the willingness of people to work on behalf of others without the expectation of pay or other tangible gain." There is something very gratifying about serving our friends and colleagues during notable golf competitions. It could be a desire to lend a hand, a need to be a small part of something special, or the experience of seeing the organizational, conditioning, and preparation skills of the host superintendents. That willingness to serve and commit to our peers is what makes our profession unique and rewarding. That 'Band of Brothers' mentality that says, "You can count on my time and support; I'll do whatever you ask to help you coordinate and prepare your course for peak conditioning," is what is so special about our profession.

In the Chicagoland area, since 1990, the glory of MAGCS has shown brightly during some of golf's most celebrated amateur and professional competitions. That glory comes from our attitude of service. Whether the tasks were as mundane as raking bunkers or fluffing roughs, or as critical as mowing greens and setting hole locations, the MAGCS responded, as it has since 1926, with unfailing professionalism and devotion to the task at hand.

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I think if you were to ask Ken Lapp, or Oscar Miles, or Jon Jennings, or Dan Quast, or Scott Witte, or Tom Lively, or Dave Ward, or Roger Stewart, or Steven Cook, or Dan Sterr, or Steven Daurer to think back to their notable competition, I am certain each would say that they hold the devotion and commitment of their staff and volunteers in the highest regard, and appreciate their unified support and service.

My wife, Melora, works in a corporate environment where the competition is stepped on, stepped over, or pushed aside in order to advance your own product, and where business gained is good business. At the '99 PGA at Medinah, she saw our association's members volunteering their time and talents without recompense in preparing the course. She was astounded by the dedication displayed by the volunteers — from all walks of life, and from all classes of membership. She said, "This kind of open well-being, here-to-do-whatever-I-can-for-you thing just doesn't happen in the real corporate world." She's right.

Be it known, that working outside the 'real corporate world,' in the MAGCS's golf brethren, is just another pleasure of the game of golf. **-OC**