

# **Subject:**

## **Survey Results, State and National**

Two separate survey reports have just been released with striking similar results yet marked different vital statistics. The two reports are the "Profile of Golf Superintendent" by our national GCSAA headquarters. The other is a Florida survey of 146 courses compiled by Bob Sanderson, CGCS, Port Charlotte Golf Course. Both works are excellent data. With nearly every dollar answer you ever wanted to know about a golf course, but did not know who to ask. Because both had over a 30% response they are statistically valid.

The facts and figures lead up to "averages". Some people say averages are useless but some medium must be achieved. If you think the averages do not apply to you, try and find an average golfer and ask them where they play. No golfer will ever admit to being average. And likewise few courses will admit to being average.

When comparing our golf courses to those in other sections of the nation the constant argument occurs. Dollar wise it can not be done on an even basis. It is like comparing apples to oranges. This is true but, there is a direct relationship between rounds played, thus total income. And the budget spent to maintain the golf course because of additional play and yearly growing season. To put the two into focus look at the numbers from this angle. The Florida golf courses are very efficient for the dollar spent versus income.

The size of the golf courses were the same so throw out that factor on both sides. The national average was just two acres larger. The Florida golf courses played 52,000 rounds of golf with the national figure some 20,000 rounds less. This represents a 60% increase over the national total. Did we spend 60% more to maintain the playing condition of the golf courses. The answer is no. The national average of \$155,600 is the base figure. That would get you through your seventh month of a fiscal year in Florida. The state average is \$225,000, excluding executive courses. This is 45% increase over the national norm. The high income, big budget area of Palm Beach and Miami areas were different from other state figures but had an equal ratio to national

numbers. Both their income and maintenance budgets were about 65% above the national average.

The personal profile of the superintendent at the state and national level have interesting stories to tell. One of the most noteworthy stats from national was the education level. The quality of management professionalism is reflected by the fact that 36% of GCSAA survey hold a bachelors or advanced degrees. Another 28% have an associate degree. The age of the "dumb sod farmer" is long gone. Also the superintendent is playing golf. The national average of 42 rounds per year is probably 25% below a state average if such statistics were kept.

Vacations are where the Florida superintendent loses to the national norm. It is easy to understand why. It is not unusual for a Florida superintendent to not be able to take a full two week vacation. Usually your total is two weeks and that gets split into two or three short "get away" periods. The national figures will make us jealous. But not if you must throw snowballs in December or January like they do. Only 38% nationally have two weeks or less vacation. The national numbers tell us 31% get four or more weeks vacation.

One vital area is similar in spite of the larger work load. The national and state salaries differ only a few percentage points. The high budget area of the southeast Florida coast comes out 24% above the national salary figures. But salaries in three local state chapters are below the national salary rate by as much as 14%. The hours worked in Florida compare to that same percentage of additional rounds played. One Florida superintendent tells the story of a winter visit of a superintendent from upstate Michigan. The visitor asked when do you down machinery to rebuild it. He was told we take a forty-five minute lunch break and the mechanic works on the equipment then. The mechanic takes his lunch break at a different time. No four months off here!

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