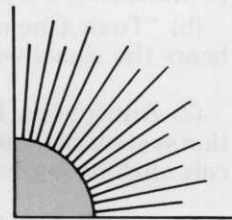


South Florida Sunshine



From Developer To Private Country Club

By KEN ANDERSEN

Many superintendents have asked me how working for a developer differs from working for a private country club. Having been employed as superintendent of a private country club and a developer, I have had the opportunity to see both sides of the fence.

Let me start with the developer. The developer I am talking about is the company (usually banks) who purchases a large amount of land, usually 500 to 1,000 acres, builds and maintains a golf course with all the fixings to go with it. This includes a pool, tennis courts, clubhouse, lounge, restaurant, etc. To make it attractive to home buyers who are looking for a country club atmosphere.

The developer is not in the golf course business but is in the business of breaking down the large amount of land purchased into single family home lots, condominiums, townhouses, etc. This is where the real profits can be found. Of course the developer does not want a poorly maintained golf course, but one that is inviting so they are willing to spend a considerable amount of money for landscaping common ground and for golf course maintenance.

The golf course superintendent is hired and usually answers to a project manager, not a clubhouse manager, nor a greens committee. This is a very important point. The superintendent does not have 300 to 400 members to answer to, or a greens committee, or a professional golfer. All negotiations for contract purposes, capital expenditures, budgets and problems are solved through the project manager. Now, let me say here, there are always exceptions but from my experience and talking with other superintendents in the same position, they all have similar circumstances. In my particular case all beefs, large or small were directed to the project manager before handed to the superintendent. The project manager would discuss with me any changes, additions or subtractions to the golf course.

Well, so far many of you private country club superintendents and others are probably saying, gee that is the type of situation I want to be in. There is one drawback, eventually the 300-400 members to be, or whatever the particular club can accommodate, will own and operate the golf course. This may be two years, it could be ten years, in my case it was six years. All of a sudden you have

300-400 bosses who think they know all there is to know about running a golf course. I call them sidewalk superintendents.

I personally felt much more secure discussing turf management with one project manager. You could build a good close relationship with him and feel at home discussing problems or projects. When discussing problems with a greens committee all it takes is one person who doesn't like the way you comb your hair or thinks he knows a little bit more than you about running a golf course. This is where your problems can start. You go home that evening and think about how to get that man to understand what your intentions are. You finally figure it out and the next day another board member disagrees with another point you have made or suggests we do it this way and not the way you have been doing something successfully for years. It then can snowball where you start second guessing yourself, lose confidence and your game plan is disrupted.

In my particular case a committee was appointed prior to the takeover. Well, almost immediately there were committee members walking through the premises taking notes, asking questions and observing every move the superintendent or his employees made. I even had a committee member greet me at 5:50 A.M. to ask me some questions. It was at this point I asked myself, "Do I really want to work under these conditions?" Well I cooled off after a few days and thought, O.K. after all they are going to own the club and they have a right to see how we operate. Up to this point even though I was answering to a project manager, I knew if I were to continue on as superintendent I would have to meet some if not all their demands. This turned out to be the most difficult time for me. If the members wanted a sand trap put in and the project manager did not, I would be caught in the middle of the line of fire. This is only one example, there were many more. O.K., enough of that. Next a letter was sent to all department heads (superintendent, pro, manager, etc.) as to the committee making a decision to keep or replace each particular position. I thought this would be good because the decision would be made by June 30, 1984 and the members would not take over until December 1, 1984. This gave me five months to search for a position in the event the committee chose to replace me.

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Unfortunately it did not turn out this way. Other than general discussions with the board members, my case was not brought up until August. During this month we had agreed on a contract and I received a hand shake, a pat on the back and a welcome aboard signal when leaving the table. After negotiating with the greens chairman, I knew I had my work cut out for me but I accepted this responsibility. Two weeks later I was informed that the greens committee decided to make a change. Shocked, confused and in a bit of a daze looking back I can see that many of the key people were making top salaries, including myself and were all replaced with lower wages. I might add it was not only the key people but employees who were in service for quite some time and making more than your usual dish washer, chef's helper or waitress. The last count of employees went from 210 to 140, in less than 2 months. As you all know private country clubs are a non profit organization and the majority of them raise annual dues or assess each member when money is needed. Historically my particular club was taking a loss each year. I am sure this is what the new members had to take a long hard look at. I do not feel it had anything to do with the particular employees capabilities but was prompted by one bottom line, the budget.

The legal takeover is December 1, 1984 but the members convinced the developer to allow their changes to be made before that time to create a smoother transition period. I think the thing that hurt me the most was the confidence I had in doing my job. I had been working with a popular agronomic consultant and receiving favorable reports, a newsletter from the committee had indicated the membership liked what I was doing and expressed their support and yet, without notice, I am presently looking for another position. ■

"More Than Just A Picture"

By MIKE BAILEY

This is the third of a three part series dealing with the art of photography. The first of the series dealt with the aspects of needing an above average camera to capture a great photograph. The second dealt with the basics of photography. This final chapter is primarily directed towards various concepts, equipment and techniques aimed for an advanced photographer. By the end of this chapter we will evaluate many items that can greatly aid your ability towards taking exceptional photographs. Just like in golf, you can have all the fancy equipment available but, if you cannot play the game or capture the scene, your efforts in both events will fail.

The first criteria that distinguishes a novice from pro is the photographers' lack of concern to take many pictures in order to get that extra special photo. The cost of film is the least expensive element for this science. Quite often I find a situation that I might not ever get to see again, so I will not be bashful to crank out an entire roll of film in the matter of just a few minutes. A photographers' general rule is to take as many pictures as deemed fit, in order to insure that at least one of various pictures of different composition, shutter speed, operative setting and fine focusing is exactly the one that the boss wants.

Even if you do not plan to take a great deal of pictures over a long period of time, you can still try this tip to save some cost on film. New York mail order photography shops sell "fresh", factory packed Kodak film at a substantial savings, when buying quantities of 10 or more, as compared to local discount stores. Upon arrival of your mail order film, to help keep fresh until the stated expiration date stamped on the side of the box, simply store the film in your refrigerator (not the freezer) until needed. Allow film to warm up to room temperature and you're ready to shoot.

Lets continue further about the care of your film. Realizing that film is a very thin layer of plastic where upon the negative will ultimately produce your photograph, we must exercise extreme care to ensure a quality photograph. First off, we can all relate to a conditioned environment when dealing with plants, well, this also holds true for your photographic equipment and film. Never expose the camera or film to extreme heat, such as the dash of a car or even the trunk. Always try to keep the camera away from direct sunlight. When on a trip here is another tip to be aware of. Airports and other security systems that use x-ray metal detectors can prove to be fatal to your pictures. True, the security personel and all the posted signs claim the detectors will not damage your pictures, however the fact is: An accumulative build up of 5 or more exposures can begin to fog your film. Always have your gadget bag checked by hand and passed around the detectors. To expediate matters, have all

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